



The mapping behind the movement: On recovering the critical cartographies of the African American Freedom Struggle

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ABSTRACT

Responding to recent work in critical cartographic studies and Black Geographies, the purpose of this paper is to offer a conceptual framework and a set of evocative cartographic engagements that can inform geography as it recovers the seldom discussed history of counter-mapping within the African American Freedom Struggle. Black resistant cartographies stretch what constitutes a map, the political work performed by maps, and the practices, spaces, and political-affective dimensions of mapping. We offer an extended illustration of the conventional and unconventional mapping behind USA anti-lynching campaigns of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, highlighting the knowledge production practices of the NAACP and the Tuskegee Institute's Monroe Work, and the embodied counter-mapping of journalist/activist Ida B. Wells. Recognizing that civil rights struggles are long, always unfolding, and relationally tied over time and space, we link this look from the past to contemporary, ongoing resistant cartographical practices as scholars/activists continue to challenge racialized violence and advance transitional justice, including the noted memory-work of the Equal Justice Initiative. An understanding of African American traditions of counter-mapping is about more than simply inserting the Black experience into our dominant ideas about cartography or even resistant mapping. Black geographies has much to teach cartography and geographers about what people of color engaged in antiracist struggles define as geographic knowledge and mapping practices on their own terms—hopefully provoking a broader and more inclusive definition of the discipline itself.

1. Purpose

This paper offers a conceptual framework and a set of evocative cartographic engagements that can inform Geography as it recovers the seldom-discussed history of maps and map-making within the African American Freedom Struggle. As part of the fight for civil rights and racial equality, African Americans engaged in “counter-mapping,” transforming the collection, analysis, visualization, and dissemination of social and spatial data into tools of activism, community building, and public pedagogy along with using their embodied practices to unsettle what traditionally counts as mapping and cartographic performance. These oppositional cartographies document the effects of racism and challenge white supremacist power structures, affirm the value of Black life and socio-spatial visions, and produce knowledge that can assist in mobilizing for social change. The story of Black counter-mapping expands our understandings of Geography and is part of the broader

acknowledgment of the array of geospatial work undergirding anti-racist struggles and creating a more affective and responsive cartography. Recognizing and understanding these contributions in wider disciplinary discussions have always been important and needed, but urgently so now. As we write this piece, demonstrations are taking place across many cities, and rightly so, in defense of Black lives against police brutality, systemic racism, and the ongoing resurgence of white nationalism.

The idea of counter-mapping emerges from a growing disciplinary emphasis on critical cartographic studies (Crampton and Krygier 2005), which calls for a decolonizing of the privileged worldviews projected in and through maps and transforming the authority to write the earth. Retelling the story of civil rights struggles through counter-mapping contributes to Black Geographies, a growing intellectual and advocacy movement interested in exploring the central role of geography within understandings that center the agency of Black communities through

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making of space (McKittrick and Woods 2007; Bledsoe et al. 2017; Allen et al. 2019). Scholars of Black Geographies seek to un/recover spatially emancipatory ways of thinking and acting and alternative systems of geographic knowledge production important to contesting the power of racism. A critical cartographic approach is a viable avenue for analyzing the racial politics of Black spatial knowledge production. Yet, we stress that the spatiality of Black Geographies is not reducible simply to maps but includes a larger array of resistant place-making practices and spatial representations. Moreover, examining traces of Black mapping practices can be elusive for those accustomed to traditional cartographic archival work. As Kelley (2020, 3) aptly notes, many of these practices were “necessarily clandestine, ephemeral, and transmitted through a network of knowledge and kinship, rather than on paper.”

Organized into two major sections, our conceptual framework introduces some of the central ideas behind critical cartography and counter-mapping along with a Black Geographies perspective on knowledge production. Included are brief, thematically organized examples of Black resistant cartographic practices. The second section offers an extended illustration of the conventional and unconventional mapping behind anti-lynching campaigns of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, highlighting the knowledge production practices of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), the Tuskegee Institute’s Monroe Work, and noted activist Ida B. Wells. Recognizing that civil rights struggles are long, always unfolding, and relationally tied over time and space, we link praxis from the past through ongoing resistant cartographical practices as scholars/activists continue to challenge racialized violence and advance transitional justice. We include the memory-work of the Equal Justice Initiative. We do not intend our discussion to be a comprehensive cartographic or spatial history of Black resistance; indeed, we hope this discussion can inspire the development of further work in this area.

As we argue and demonstrate in this paper, anti-racist resistance has resulted in maps and mapping practices that will seem familiar to geography students, teachers, and researchers, while in other instances, we are asked to think about cartography in less standard and more embodied and political-affective ways. That is the very significance of the approach we offer, which is not to impose disciplinary norms of cartography and geography upon the African American story but to allow Black communities to educate us about what they define as geographic knowledge and mapping practices on their own terms. Indeed, one should not necessarily expect subaltern groups to comply with or even think in the same terms of elite, professionalized, and often white-centric definitions of geography and maps.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Critical cartography and counter-mapping

As Del Casino and Hanna (2005) argue, making and using maps are moments when people creatively rework the meaning and application of geographical knowledge. Although maps are long a cornerstone of Geography, many in the discipline treat them as simply objective sources of locational information or tools for analyzing and visualizing broader spatial patterns and processes. The past few decades have seen efforts to pursue more expansive and critical understandings of what cartography means, who puts it into service, and the consequences of mapping (Crampton 2009). Critical cartographic studies pay close attention to the work behind maps and mapping (Wood 2010). By work, we emphasize the human labor and social practices behind map-making as social actors and groups engage cartographic objects, practices, and spaces. We also recognize that maps have the capacity to influence or “work on” people’s views, attitudes, and moral judgments related to their lives and the lives of others and thus have key implications for patterns of social inclusion and exclusion. In this respect, critical cartography recognizes a dialectical relationship between social relations and mapmaking. As Kwan (2007) reminds us, mapping and other forms of geographical

knowledge cannot be separated from the embodied feelings, values, and ethical practices of social life—which then shape decisions about what and who to map (or to ignore).

Critical cartographic studies also recognize the extent maps are embedded within understandings of social power and the question of who has the authority (or not) to engage in mapping (Harley 2009). Mapping, rather than simply being a tool for charting, representing, and analyzing the earth, has long been a “political technology” (Rose-Redwood et al. 2020) for claiming, naming, numbering, and bounding spaces for the purpose of their control, thus allowing these spaces to be put in the service of colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, neoliberalism, racism, and a host of other political-material orders. Powerful institutions such as governments, corporations, and universities have traditionally controlled map-making and the production of authorized geographic knowledge. Yet, through counter-mapping practices, less powerful, historically marginalized communities are increasingly realizing the value of maps to their own struggles for self-determination and material well-being (Peluso 1995; Maharawal and McElroy 2018).

Counter-mapping is the conversion of cartographic and calculative practices into important tools of social and political resistance, a way of creating alternative geographic knowledges, data structures, spatial representations, and embodied practices that assist in mobilizing against inequality and provoking moments of public debate and re-education. Dando (2010, 2018), for example, explores the counter public cartographies of 20th century women’s rights activists, who created a “suffrage map” that was widely disseminated in posters and pamphlets which proved persuasive in the struggle to gain the right to vote. Dando sees this activist mapping as part of a gendered fight to claim public space and a challenge to the masculine, imperialist history of much state-based mapping and knowledge production. While counter-mapping can involve appropriating “the tools of institutional map-making” and applying “them in situated, bottom-up ways,” it also can result in a wide range of experimental forms and creative practices and collaborations depending upon the practical needs and political objectives of the marginalized group (Dalton and Stallmann 2018, 94).

In sum, counter-mapping challenges us to question traditional assumptions about who constitutes a map-maker, whose interests are served by maps, and even what constitutes a map—suggesting that cartography is better conceptualized as a process rather than merely an object or mere scientific tool (Kitchin et al. 2011). Geographers—from established scholars to students (Solís et al., 2020)—are being asked to become more reflexive about how mapping practices are always deeply embedded within social values, power dynamics, and struggles for justice and fairness. We argue specifically for a critical cartography agenda that examines the role of counter-mapping in challenging the operation of racism—which is arguably the most pressing and unreconciled dimension of social life in the United States, if not the wider world. While discussions of anti-racist counter-mapping are often set in the contemporary period or the relatively recent past (Mason-Deese 2020), there is a history of resistant cartographic practices within the African American Freedom Struggle often under-discussed by geographers (but see McKittrick 2011; Hanna 2012; Inwood and Alderman 2020; Kelley 2020).

Recovering these antiracist cartographies, while certainly important to understanding of the spatiality of the Black social and political experience, is also key to advancing how we conceptualize and politically realize counter-mapping and thus further “undiscipline cartography” (Crampton and Krygier 2005). As Kelley (2020, 2–3) asserts, “For centuries, black and Native communities in the Americas engaged in mapping practices that preceded, exceeded, and evaded the mapping conventions of white settlers and enslavers....critical cartography has something to learn from the long history of black cartographic practice.” This learning process requires that we delve not only into how African American communities deployed conventional definitions of data and mapping techniques but, importantly, how they also produced alternative cartographic representations, practices, and spaces that in and of

themselves challenge normative ideas of what maps should look like and the kind of social work they do. Our next section explores further the intersection of critical cartography and Black geographies

2.2. Black geographic alternatives

Historically, African Americans have been “displaced [and] rendered ungeographic” by white supremacist constructions of space that established Black Americans as “others” (McKittrick 2006, x). Despite such impositions, African Americans have always worked to develop places of their own through spatial practices that produced alternative geographies of resistance. McKittrick (2011) famously coined the term “Black sense of place” to capture this contested state of being and belonging for African Americans. Recognition of a Black sense of place disrupts not only everyday white privilege and supremacy but also conventional academic studies in Geography and other fields. While scholarly studies increasingly identify and challenge racism and injustice, they nevertheless have tended to neglect the humanity, resilient creativity, and agency of Black communities and thus continue to “re-isolate the dispossessed” and perpetuate a placelessness for people of color (McKittrick 2011, 958).

Lying at the heart of Black Geographies is a dialectic in which spaces for Black communities are created both *for* them through processes of control and *by* them through means of resistance. As such, “Black Geographies approaches *racism* as a process that undergirds socio-spatial organization” while simultaneously recognizing “possibilities for alternative, anticolonial, [anti-racist], and liberatory forms of geographic knowledge and world-making” (Hawthorne 2019, 9, emphasis in original). Critically, the tension between oppression and resistance informs not only a set of social and political practices and worldviews but is manifest in a range of material practices that have contemporary resonance. Whereas geographers have focused on the Blues Epistemology (Woods 1998) and other forms of emancipatory practices, we argue that counter-mapping and the inscription of place and power through maps is undertheorized. Mapping, by its very definition, is world making, and we argue for centering these ideas more fully in our theoretical and pedagogical explorations of Geography.

Mapping and its relationship with Black Geographies reflects this dialectic between control and resistance. On the one hand, cartographic practices have long created spatial representations that participate in controlling people of color and how they are valued and treated socially. As Eaves (2020, 1) notes, “Black subjects and spaces have most often been rendered as mere data points on a map and measured in quantitative and environmentally deterministic ways.” She also observes how the quantitative analysis often accompanying map-making has “combined racialized categories with pathologized circumstances,” such as measuring the concentration of certain forms of criminality and disease within racialized neighborhoods, “to produce negative renderings under the social construction of race.” Maps and spaces created through cartographic practices have been weaponized further in the name of structural racism to regulate and disadvantage communities of color. Such attempts include partitioning and exploiting African places and peoples for the sake of empire building (Bassett 1994), surveilling and controlling enslaved communities on plantation landscapes (Randle 2011), designing an architecture of segregated public places (Weyeneth 2005), and processes of redlining, urban renewal/removal, and gentrification that have written many Black neighborhoods off the map (Aalbers 2014).

On the other hand, a Black Geographies perspective recognizes the possibility of alternative constructions and knowledges of space and place, thus highlighting “the various ways Black communities create their own unique political practices and senses of place” (Bledsoe et al. 2017, 8). At the same time that cartographic practices have been used *for* controlling, dispossessing, and even stigmatizing Black people and places, mapping also constitutes a “subaltern and subversive cartographic practice” exercised *by* oppressed people of color to resist racism and

assert their right to claim, move through, and belong within society and space (Hanna 2012, 51). An understanding of African American traditions of counter-mapping is about more than simply inserting the Black experience into our dominant ideas about cartography or even resistant mapping. As Rose-Redwood et al. (2020) warn, the political efficacy of counter-mapping has limits and can have the unintended effect of reproducing erasures and inequalities when its cartographic content and protocols do not affirm and center the lived resistant experiences and place-based knowledge production of colonized groups. Of critical importance is that Black resistance has “produced its own spatial production and called for its own spatial representation,” and we must acknowledge the wide range of appropriated and indigenous ways in which African Americans have mapped a path toward freedom (Kelley 2020, 3–4).

Bledsoe and Wright (2019) argue that Black geographic expressions exhibit “inherent pluralities,” prompting us to consider “the different, sometimes conflicting, manners in which movements and individuals envision and enact Black liberation” (420). Thus, it is important to recognize that alternative knowledge systems and counter-mapping practices of Black communities are not monolithic but situated within specific spatiotemporal contexts and created for particular political goals and audiences involved. For many Black political actors and groups, counter-mapping was (and is) key to educating a white-dominated culture about the contributions and struggles of people of color. This idea certainly motivated famed civil rights leader W.E. B. Du Bois when he and a group of students at Atlanta University prepared over 60 vibrantly colored maps, graphs, charts, and tables for the Paris Exposition of 1900 (Calloway et al. 1899). He sought to de-legitimize prevailing racist stereotypes of Black people held by white European and American audiences. Du Bois and his team “deployed the western methods of cartography [and visualization] that had been used to marginalize and exploit Black life” to depict how much African Americans in Georgia and the nation had achieved economically and socially so soon after slavery and in the face of rampant and brutal Jim Crow racism (Fig. 1) (Wilson 2018, 42). Later, emerging from the Harlem Renaissance, Black illustrator and photographer, Louise Jefferson would produce a series of pictorial maps of the US from the 1930s to the 1960s that included African American people and places frequently ignored by a racist nation and publishing industry (Yessler and Alderman, 2021).

While the antiracist cartographies of Du Bois and later Jefferson were intended to reach and affect the wider white society, other forms of counter-mapping serve goals internal to Black communities. As Mason-Deese (2020, 423) notes, “social movements have engaged in counter-mapping as a form of developing and circulating a shared analysis and of directly creating new relationships and networks, and building the movement’s power.” In converting data and produced knowledge into a strategic, actionable resource to raise Black political consciousness and combat White supremacy, SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) workers of the 1960s engaged in conventional cartography, such as the choropleth county-level mapping of racial inequalities in income and education. Yet, the civil rights organization also developed a creative method of counter-mapping the spatial networks of white power and racial capital that supported discrimination within communities with the hopes of identifying pressure points to exploit through social mobilization (Fig. 2) (Inwood and Alderman 2020).

Black mapping can constitute the bodily practices of collecting, disseminating, and using data that open up the community-building and strategic conversations necessary for generating alternatives to the status quo. The now iconic *Negro Motorist Green Book*—a travel guide published from the 1930s to the 1960s for and by African American to locate safe, accommodating establishments in the face of Jim Crow racism—is such an example. Bottone (2020) argues that the *Green Book*, although it contained not one single standard map, represented a “counter-map” because the spatial data contained within it helped travelers of color move across and inhabit a not-so-open highway in oppositional ways and to locate and participate in major Black urban

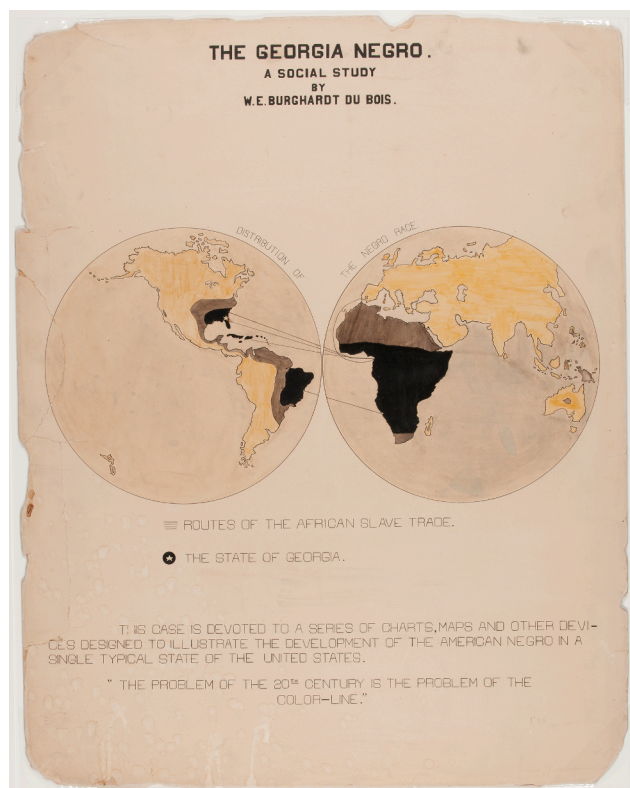


Fig. 1. Map created by W.E.B. Du Bois and his Atlanta University team to introduce a series of 1900 Paris Exposition data visualizations on the social life of African Americans in Georgia. Du Bois' cartography linked Black Americans to a wider Pan-African identity forged out of the oppressive history of slavery and racial exploitation (Source: U.S. Library of Congress).

cultural and political spaces of the day. These segregated spaces were embodied sites of African American knowledge creation and information sharing and later became important incubators of formal political protest during the civil rights movement. The routes and stops realized through the *Green Book* continue to frame place interactions, leading some to trace and reflect critically on what is left (or not) of segregation-era Black neighborhoods and business districts. The travel guide has inspired others to produce or call for contemporary, “new” *Green Books* (e.g., Miles 2017) to protect travelers of color in light of the still unreconciled dangers of traveling, driving, and even jogging while Black.

As way of deeper exploration, we use the remainder of the paper to explore the varied counter-mapping strategies that accompanied anti-lynching activism. We situate our analysis within a multifaceted understanding of how Black liberation takes place and has place within anti-lynching campaigns and efforts. Anti-Black violence is a key battleground of the African American Freedom Struggle that exposes the long history and still unresolved place of racialized murder in U.S. society as well as the efforts of anti-racists to create conditions for liberation through cartographic praxis.

3. Critical cartographies of anti-lynching

Racism—as a biopolitical force—has long structured “the political negotiation of life” (Tyner 2013, 702), controlling, often violently, the mobility, reproducibility, and survivability of people of color. Between 1877 and 1950, white lynch mobs murdered at least 4000 African Americans, whose bodies were subjected to any number of brutal treatments such as hanging, burning, mutilation, dismemberment, or shooting (Equal Justice Initiative 2015). Our focus is on anti-Black lynching violence, which claimed the vast majority of victims nationally; however, mobs did kill—to different degrees regionally and

historically—Native Americans, Chinese, Mexican, and other immigrants, as well as certain marginalized white groups (Belew 2014).

A culture of lynching became institutionalized within 19th and 20th century America, carried out with impunity as perpetrators killed without fear of punishment by law. Lynchings were often announced beforehand in local newspapers, speaking to how much these horrific acts were community sanctioned. In the case of public spectacle lynching, which could attract thousands of people to watch, the torture leading up to the actual murder would be prolonged for the mob as they posed for pictures (some of which were made into postcards), bought souvenirs from the victim's body, and even picnicked.

Despite the perverted claim that lynchings were provoked and hence justified because of the threat of dangerous African American males raping white women, the reality is these murders were carried out at the mere accusation or rumor of crime. In reality, mobs punished Black men, women and children for transgressing the white racial order, whether allegedly committing petty crimes or the non-criminal but lethal offense of not showing enough deference to a white person. Lynching was a common tool of racial subjugation, a white defiance to growing Black social and economic gains and demands for political rights. Lynchings could grow into large-scale violence against the entire Black community, and they created broad atmospheres of racial terror that permeated African American communities who lived wondering when (not if) the killing would start (Equal Justice Initiative 2015).

The white mob brought incredible precarity and uncertainty to Black communities, but it catalyzed resistance as African Americans sought public condemnation and federal help in outlawing the practice (Wal-drep 2008). Resistance was expressed on many fronts, from references to the terror of lynching in music (e.g., Billie Holiday's *Strange Fruit*, Robert Johnson's *Hell Hound on My Trail*, and Blind Lemon Jefferson's *Hangman's Blues*) to the decisions of African Americans to escape the South during the Great Migration, and even instances of armed Black self-defense (Booker 2001; Hill 2015). Anti-lynching rallies, boycotts, and demonstrations also took place, such as in 1919, when over 10,000 people participated in a silent march in New York City, and in 1934, when Howard University students wore nooses around their necks as they picketed a national crime conference that failed to place lynching on the meeting's agenda (Markovitz 2004).

African American activists and organizations, along with sympathetic white individuals and societies repeatedly pushed for a federal anti-lynching law, claiming that mob-led executions denied Black citizens their right to the due process of law, a central tenet of the United States Constitution. In the 120 years since the introduction of the first federal anti-lynching bill, the US House of Representatives and Senate have repeatedly failed to pass such legislation. More recently, the murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and others—modern-day lynchings—have sparked calls in Congress for the passage of the Emmett Till Antilynching Act (Salant 2020). The legislation, named for the 14-year-old African American lynched in Mississippi in 1955, would make lynching a federal crime. Despite widespread bi-partisan support (it passed the US House of Representatives with 410 votes), one Senator, Rand Paul has blocked the bill from being considered by the US Senate. This opposition by a Southern Senator (though Paul was born in Pittsburgh, PA) harkens back to the darkest days of segregation when a Southern block of Senators refused passage of even modest legislation protecting the rights of Black people in the United States.

The lack of action by the US Congress to pass legislative protections for Black people galvanized a key part of the anti-lynching campaigns of the late 19th and early 20th centuries: the counting, analyzing, and mapping of victims of anti-Black mob violence (Dando 2015, 2018). These efforts were meant to bring public pressure on Congress and to shame the federal government to take action. When placed within the broader understandings of counter-mapping, this geospatial work was more than a database, but involved producing an anti-racist knowledge system built upon locating, measuring, and symbolizing Black deaths at the hands of racism—even as that process carried the danger of overly

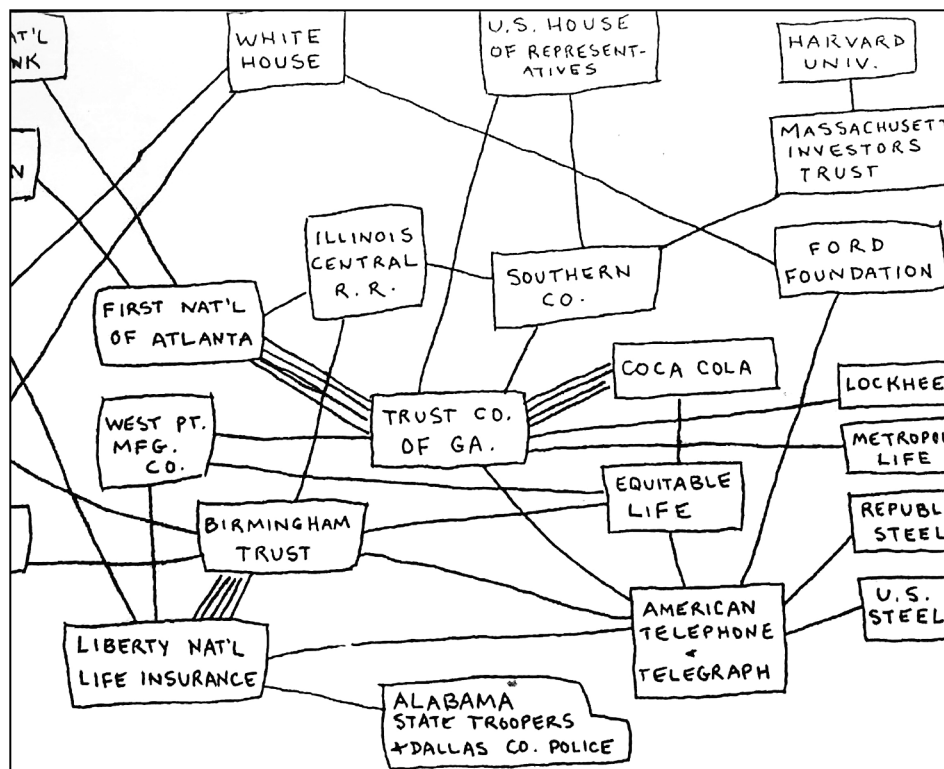


Fig. 2. SNCC's mapping of the economic and political connections and power structures undergirding Liberty Life Insurance Company's relationship with the Alabama State Police, as part of identifying pressure points to exploit for direct action, 1965. Source: SNCC Document Collection, Civil Rights Movement Archive (crmvet.org).

abstracting those murdered.

In the following sections, we examine the diversity of cartographic praxis and alternative geographic knowledge production surrounding Black anti-lynching activism. The discussion does not conform to a strict chronological order. It begins with the counter-mapping of the NAACP and the Tuskegee Institute in the first half of the 20th century, highlighting the products and practices that most geographers would conventionally identify with cartography. Next, we use the late 1800s activism of Ida B. Wells against white mob violence to understand how the embodied practices, movements, and knowledge of African Americans necessitate an expansion of what constitutes counter-mapping beyond standard geographic images and techniques. We end by leaping forward to contemporary data and memory activism, particularly on the part of the Equal Justice Initiative, to make the point that anti-racist counter-mapping of Black murder and precarity is an always emerging and never complete project in the United States.

3.1. Anti-lynching persuasive mapping

Many anti-lynching proponents were driven by a belief in the power of numbers, information, and the use of scientific evidence in combating racist attitudes, practices, and conditions—still a highly charged proposition in today's post-truth struggles (Alderman and Inwood 2019). By collecting, tabulating, interpreting, visualizing, and publicizing data on Black murders, anti-lynching campaigns engaged in counter-mapping focused on shifting the terms of white and Black discussions of lynching in an effort they believed would secure a legal remedy for mob violence. A politics of scale was written directly into their calculative and cartographic practices: activists sought to remove “information about lynching...from the clutches of the neighborhoods that sponsored lynching” and to shift “the authority to judge the legitimacy of violent acts to a national audience” (Waldrep 2008, 66). Re-scaling the production of knowledge and responsibility from the local to the national

was seen as essential to gaining white public sympathy for federal legislation and emboldening Black defense of their 14th Amendment rights. Moreover, reframing anti-lynching as a nationally critical civil rights issue was a direct challenge to the traditional hegemony of local authority in the US and constitutional arguments that “in the American federal system the national government had no power to prosecute ordinary crimes, like murder and lynching” (Waldrep 2008, 16). While unsuccessful as it relates to anti-lynching legislation, this shift in scales was central to broader federal efforts in the 1950s and 1960s to advance civil and political rights in the United States. As a result we argue much of the counter-mapping behind anti-lynching was about shaping public opinion and gaining the support of elected officials, creating what Tyner (2019, 27) calls “persuasive mapping.”

A foundational step in building a national database came in 1882 when the *Chicago Tribune*—a newspaper increasingly devoted in the late 19th century to social science and civil rights reform—began combing local newspapers across the country to compile and publish an annual count of lynching murders. The newspaper recorded lynchings by date and place (city & state) along with victim name, alleged offense, and race/nationality (Waldrep 2008; Cook 2012). (Interestingly, *The Washington Post* and *Guardian Newspaper* revisited this strategy to document police killings in 2015.) While the *Chicago Tribune* reported lynching deaths as a coarse inventory rather than in chart form or a traditional map, they worked nonetheless to locate Black communities and lives marked by racialized violence. Building upon the *Chicago Tribune* lynching figures, collecting information from other sources, and employing their own varying definitions of lynching, Black civil rights institutions such as the NAACP and the Tuskegee Institute later organized and analyzed data more systematically to produce statistical reports and choropleth and dot maps showing the location and frequency of murdered African Americans (Waldrep 2000).

The NAACP published some of its first maps showing the national distribution of lynching deaths in the book *Thirty Years of Lynching in the*

United States, 1889–1918 (NAACP 1919) (Fig. 3). The maps, by coming at the front of the volume, helped frame the national scale of the problem of mob violence before the civil rights organization presented its full study. While geographers might be tempted to focus on this cartography alone, it is important to recognize that counter-mapping of lynching was a much broader project that included a variety of ways of describing, analyzing, and visualizing geographic data. The NAACP report was especially concerned with documenting state and region-specific patterns in lynching murders—as well as by race, gender, and alleged offense of victim—through various charts, graphs, chronological lists, and the stories of one hundred murders drawn from newspaper accounts and the Association's own investigations. The NAACP book, clearly situated within the association's ongoing education and publicity campaign, took a somewhat tempered, 'just look at the facts' approach and noted its decision to refrain from editorial comment. Strategically, the Association surrounded its counter-mapping in a calibrated discourse that represents anti-lynching as an objective, rational solution in the face of overwhelming proof of a national problem that is a "common shame, of all Americans" (NAACP 1919, 5).

Probing deeper into the NAACP archives, Dando (2018) discusses another compelling example of Black persuasive cartography; a map entitled "3436 blots of shame" that depicts the number and location of lynchings from 1885 to 1922. The map was drawn by "Miss Madeline Allison," secretary to W.E.B. Du Bois during his time as founding editor of the NAACP magazine *The Crisis*. *The Crisis* frequently published NAACP-generated statistical figures on lynching murders and, in contrast to *Thirty Years of Lynching*, offered full-throated editorials and politically charged analyses of lynching. Allison's map, like earlier NAACP maps, portrays lynching as stretching from east to west and well into the north, even as the Southeast has the heaviest concentration of reported mob violence. Her map was initially published in an issue of *The Crisis* (Allison 1922) but was later sent to newspapers for a wider publication reach and included in a leaflet likely distributed to members of the US Congress in support of the unsuccessful Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill (Dando 2015, 2018).

The Tuskegee Institute's Department of Records and Research, headed by Black sociologist Monroe Work from 1908 to 1938, also saw the importance that data analysis could play in anti-lynching advocacy.

Actively compiling, verifying, and calculating information on lynching murders, Tuskegee could claim for many years to have the most extensive lynching database in the US. Work's research department generated dozens of lynching reports and published lynching statistics in the widely used *Negro Year Book*, an encyclopedic reference on Black life that included several maps. Work contributed to the production of a now iconic map showing lynching deaths in the US from 1901 to 1931 (American Map Company 1931) (Fig. 4a & b). It is difficult to trace the complete biography of this map, but Pfeifer (2004) indicates the cartography accompanied a report on lynching carried out by the Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC). The CIC, later to evolve into the Southern Regional Council, was an Atlanta, Georgia-based organization largely led by white progressive southerners who opposed mob violence and sought to educate other whites about racial injustices. Jessie Daniel Ames, who consulted with Monroe Work and served as the Director of Women's Work for the CIC, also started the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching, which, as Dando (2015, 2018) discusses, practiced its own evocative cartographic activism in brochures and broadsides.

Unlike the NAACP maps that focused on state-by-state distribution of lynching murders, the map derived from Tuskegee data works at a different resolution and level of public responsibility—identifying the specific counties with reported mob violence. The map also innovatively displays an inserted statistical table reporting the number of cases in each state in which the exact locations of lynchings are unknown (over 15% of reported lynching deaths could not be traced back to a specific county). Work, like all anti-lynching data advocates, lacked complete records of lynching or even a satisfactorily inclusive definition of what constituted a lynching, versus say "race riots" in which white mobs roamed cities to terrorize and murder members of the Black community as they were encountered (Waldrep 2008). The Tuskegee map reminds us of the challenges of mapping against the power structures responsible for the lynching and dislocation of Black life; those racist structures can obfuscate efforts to reconstruct the injustice. The map also speaks to the limits of conventional cartography, with its emphasis on locational specificity, to map the unmappable and adequately represent the evidentiary silences and memorial cavities of racialized murder.

Monroe Work, like the NAACP, saw the necessity of ensuring that

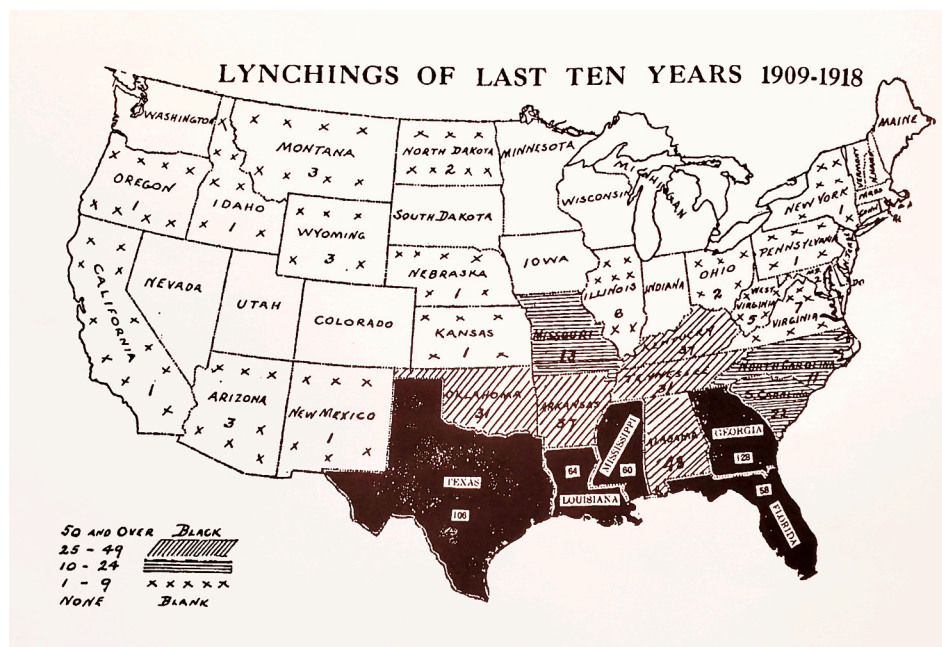
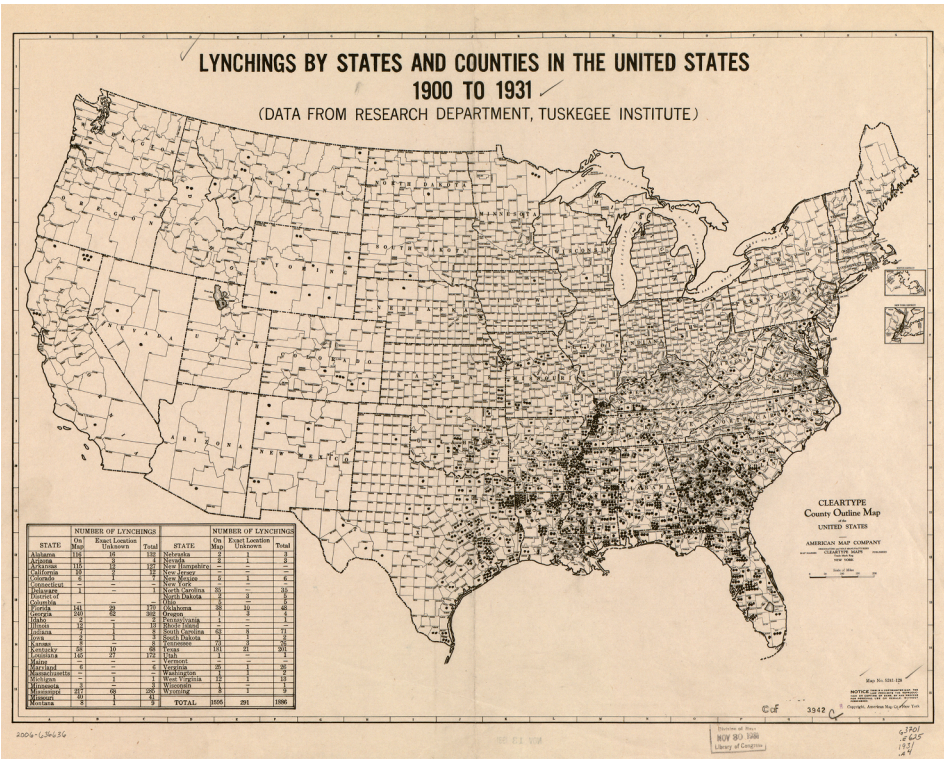


Fig. 3. Lynching deaths by state in the United States compiled and published by the NAACP as part of its program of persuasive mapping against white mob violence. Source: *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889–1918* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, National Office, 1919).



(a)

STATE	NUMBER OF LYNCINGS			STATE	NUMBER OF LYNCINGS		
	On Map	Exact Location Unknown	Total		On Map	Exact Location Unknown	Total
Alabama	116	16	132	Nebraska	2	1	3
Arizona	1	3	4	Nevada	2	1	3
Arkansas	115	12	127	New Hampshire	—	—	—
California	10	2	12	New Jersey	—	—	—
Colorado	6	1	7	New Mexico	5	1	6
Connecticut	—	—	—	New York	—	—	—
Delaware	1	—	1	North Carolina	35	—	35
District of Columbia	—	—	—	North Dakota	2	3	5
Florida	141	29	170	Ohio	5	—	5
Georgia	240	62	302	Oklahoma	38	10	48
Idaho	2	—	2	Oregon	1	3	4
Illinois	12	1	13	Pennsylvania	1	—	1
Indiana	7	1	8	Rhode Island	—	—	—
Iowa	2	1	3	South Carolina	63	8	71
Kansas	8	—	8	South Dakota	1	1	2
Kentucky	58	10	68	Tennessee	73	3	76
Louisiana	145	27	172	Texas	181	21	201
Maine	—	—	—	Utah	1	—	1
Maryland	6	—	6	Vermont	—	—	—
Massachusetts	—	—	—	Virginia	25	1	26
Michigan	—	1	1	Washington	1	1	2
Minnesota	3	—	3	West Virginia	12	1	13
Mississippi	217	68	285	Wisconsin	1	—	1
Missouri	40	1	41	Wyoming	8	1	9
Montana	8	1	9	TOTAL	1595	291	1886

(b)

Fig. 4. Map of lynchings by state and county, United States, 1900–1931 (a) with tabular data inset (b) documenting cases of murders with unknown location. Produced by American Map Company using data from Tuskegee Institute Research Department. Source: US Library of Congress.

counter-mapping was a living, circulatory process that moved Black knowledge and concern about lynching into new locations and political arenas (in hopes of moving people emotionally and morally to support the cause of anti-lynching). This dissemination is as much part of counter-mapping of Black knowledge production as the mechanics of tabulating numbers and placing dots on maps. Waldrep (2008) reports

that Work was highly successful in disseminating the Tuskegee lynching data, sending them in 1914 to the Associated Press, all major Black newspapers, and three hundred white newspapers. A year later, *The World Almanac* would publish Work’s annual lynching count (Waldrep 2008). By the early 1920s, approximately two thousand newspapers received Work’s numerical reports on mob violence (Roth 2018). He

also cooperated with the NAACP and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America to publicize statistics and other data on lynching with the hope of changing attitudes and laws, especially in the blood-soaked Southeast (Guzman 1949). During the failed passage of the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill in 1922, Work sent each member of the House of Representatives a statement derived from his analysis that squarely countered white justifications for mob violence, “showing that that four-fifths of the lynchings in the South were for crimes other than rape” (Guzman 1949, 450).

Arguably, part of the popularity of Monroe Work’s counter-mapping was that it did not appear on the surface to be confrontational. He framed the presentation of lynching reports as neutral facts that seem to speak for themselves rather than, in reality, being politically situated and deployed. Work had a deep faith in objective truth while also being embedded within the institutional culture of Tuskegee, strongly associated with Booker T. Washington’s more conservative approach to the struggle for Black civil rights (Waldrep 2008). The Tuskegee lynching data could and did provoke white opposition, but they came to be regarded as a trusted “official” source of information within many public circles (Roth 2018). Yet, Work’s data collection contained noted omissions and under-estimated the full biopolitical toll of racism on African Americans. Waldrep (2008, 81) points out that Monroe Work, like the *Chicago Tribune* before him, generated tallies of murders by collecting articles on lynching from the country’s newspapers. Thus, “[h]is lists of lynchings relied on local whites’ willingness to accurately report all lynchings” and whether the canvassed newspapers called a killing a lynching. The work of the Tuskegee sociologist illustrates how counter-mapping is never a clean break from dominant structures and how a Black production of knowledge is better conceptualized in terms of its relational encounters and struggles with white supremacy, rather than merely as an oppositional binary.

3.2. Embodied counter-mapping of Ida B. Wells

The roots of the strategic data-based activism carried out by the NAACP and Monroe Work can be largely traced back to noted civil rights advocate, suffragist, and journalist Ida B. Wells (later Wells-Barnett). Remembered for advocating for the first major (and one of the most radical) attacks on the white lynch mob, Wells—like other anti-lynching advocates after her—mobilized social science methods to assemble and mobilize a “truth apparatus” of statistics, press accounts, investigations, photography, and her bodily practices and movements “to offer testimony to lynching’s antidemocratic barbarism” (Raiford 2012, 299). Wells was heavily drawn to the cause by the 1892 lynching of three friends in Memphis when their grocery store posed economic competition to a local white entrepreneur. As a co-owner and writer for the Memphis African American newspaper, *Free Speech*, Wells soon after penned an outspoken editorial condemning lynch law, leading to violent threats against her life, the burning down of her newspaper’s office, and her forced and permanent departure from Memphis. Living afterwards in New York City and later settling in Chicago, she continued to write and speak against lynching, supported federal protection against mob violence, and encouraged African Americans to use boycotts, emigration, and the press to protect themselves and push for an end to the murders (Bederman 2008; Greene and Gabbidon 2012).

Wells innovated a technique that was later repeated throughout the anti-lynching campaign; she conducted some of the first tabulations of the frequency, spatial distribution, and alleged offenses of lynching victims, using the aforementioned annual tallies of murders published by the *Chicago Tribune*. She combined this data analysis with her own compiling of news reports of mob violence, field investigations of lynching cases, and an educated but also lived understanding of the history of white supremacy to produce an anti-racist knowledge of lynching violence shared with national and international groups. The result was an impressive series of anti-lynching speeches, newspaper articles, essays, and pamphlets—some of the most widely cited being

Southern Horrors (1892), *The Red Record* (1895), and *Mob Rule in New Orleans* (1900). In much of her writing, Wells marshalled statistics and other evidence to de-legitimize the rape myth used to justify anti-Black lynching, finding that the charge of rape applied to only one third of the African Americans identified as victims of lynching (Giddings 2009).

While scholars such as Dando (2018) note that Ida B. Wells did not directly generate what we would see as standard maps as part of her advocacy, we argue that restricting cartographic practices to a narrow academic understanding forecloses the geospatial significance of her activism. Wells did not create maps defined by traditional conventions but, as we illustrate in this section, her style of counter-mapping was embodied. The maps were constituted through her representational practices, movements, and networked activism as she sought to raise public (especially white) consciousness and condemnation of lynching. Wells’ approach was also embodied in that she projected forward, from behind the lynching inventories and tabulations, the Black bodies, lives, and communities being impacted by mob violence. In doing so, Wells asserted “that [Black] places, experiences, histories, and people that no one know[s] do exist, within our present geographic order” (McKittrick and Woods 2007, 4). Kwan (2007) argues that bodies, emotions, and subjectivities have often been absent from traditional framings of geospatial technologies and techniques, and a consideration of these issues is important to realizing a resistant and socially just approach to mapping.

Through her writing, speaking, and reworking of representations of race and history, Ida B. Wells produced an alternative public knowledge system about racism in the US Southeast—where lynching was especially frequent and brutal. She produced knowledge and projected a uniquely Black spatial imaginary, a Black sense of place, that was oppositional (a counter-map) to the social and geographic images perpetuated by white lynching proponents, or their silent accomplices, who promoted the idea of Black males as rampant rapists and murderers incapable of self-determination. Drawing from the cognitive tradition of mapping, we can understand that Wells’ counter-maps were less about producing a material cartographic artifact and more about challenging how people imagine, make sense of, and map the world in their minds, attitudes, and actions. Wells’ spatial imaginary, and the resistant regional image she hoped to construct, sought to locate and explain lynching within the bodily and political-emotional experiences of living under and against southern white supremacy and the growing political, economic, and legal disenfranchisement of African Americans in the Post-Reconstruction era.

In the pamphlet *Southern Horrors*, Wells (1892/1969) is clearly “talking back” (hooks 1989)—through early Black feminism—to dominant racist and patriarchal regional depictions and understandings of black-white sexual relations and identities. In addition to proving that white mobs lynched African Americans for any number of offenses or excuses, her data analysis and investigations in the late 19th century proved that many rape stories were false and uncovered that many lynched alleged rapists had long, voluntary relationships initiated by white women, who then cried rape to cover up those relationships. Wells challenged the idea of white feminine purity and noted the hypocrisy in southern lynch mobs claiming to uphold the honor of white women given that during and after slavery, white males often assaulted and raped black women, which she documented in detail in *Southern Horrors* (Wells 1892/1969; Greene and Gabbidon 2012). According to Bederman (2008), behind Wells’ mobilization of data was an “inversion” of the dominant discourse of manhood and civilization at the time, challenging the frequent depiction of Black men as savage rapists and showing instead the white lynch mob to be lustful, unmanly and cowardly.

Rather than pursuing a strategically dispassionate approach adopted by some anti-lynching crusaders who proceeded her, Wells sought to construct a highly affective mental image of lynching victims, often evoking emotional, uncomfortable reactions from her audiences by making visible the brutality of white supremacy that otherwise might not be apparent in only statistics and news reports. Photography was an

important but under-appreciated part of Wells' counter-mapping of lynching, according to Raiford (2006). In *The Red Record*, Wells appropriates a photograph of a Black man lynched in Alabama in 1891—initially generated to celebrate the moment of mob violence—and transforms it into a tool for exposing white rather than Black criminality in the South. It represents a pioneering use of visual culture for civil rights later employed extensively by the NAACP and SNCC. Wells realized the power of such photography during her British speaking tours in 1893 and 1894, a way to take possession of and reframe the meaning of the Black body, corroborate her assertions, and create spaces for further discussion about race and violence in the South. Raiford (2006) contends that such photographs provided her audience with bodily evidence of what Wells depicted as a national crime but also affected her own embodied authority on stage: “As an outspoken black woman denouncing the American South, photographs functioned as passports that provided entry into progressive circles and the dominant public sphere” (26).

Ida B. Wells engaged in embodied mapping of lynching in other ways, through her own socially meaningful movements and collections of data across and within spaces. As part of the move toward a processual approach in cartography, scholars now point to the need to understand the full range of mapping practices, a shift, in the words of Kitchin et al. (2013, 494), “from ontology (what things [maps] are) to ontogenetic (how things [maps] become).” In this respect, counter-mapping is about more than simply generating a geographic image that challenges dominant power relations, but it is also about participating in geography knowledge- and data-making practices that in and of themselves are acts of resistance. Such an idea certainly applies to Ida B. Wells, who was not content with the analysis of secondary data but saw the need to visit and investigate the scenes of lynching murders. For example, in the months following the lynching of her friends in Memphis, Wells visited several execution sites, reportedly as far away as Texas, to collect previously ignored (suppressed) evidence and interview eyewitnesses and relatives of victims about the causes and impacts of mob violence. She did that while strategically navigating what were very likely hostile places and engaging in her own racial-political negotiation of life as a Black woman asking sensitive questions about a murder in towns where many in the white community were culpable (Truman 2015).

The ability of Ida B. Wells to offer a persuasive, anti-racist public reimagining of lynching was intimately connected with her carrying out, bodily and socially, counter mobility practices; moving through racially wounded places in defiant ways for the purposes of gathering intelligence and support to fuel the struggle against white mob violence. Wells' successful speaking tours in Great Britain are an example of the resistant quality and cartographic implications of her travel. Those international movements proved very important in the politics of redefining the scale of public concern for lynching, not only abroad but also domestically (Karcher 2005). Frustrated that white American newspapers, especially the influential ones in the North, were unaware or dismissive of mob violence as a social injustice, Wells traveled abroad to paint a scathing picture of the “American atrocity” of lynching (Zackodnik 2005). Writing columns while also speaking in Great Britain, Wells leveraged the moral outrage and support of British reformers, journalists, and other segments of the public to direct attention, embarrassment, and even anger back home. In the words of Wells, “America cannot and will not ignore the voice of a nation that is her superior in civilization” (quoted in Bederman 2008, 61). Wells produced an alternative, geographic representation of America as barbaric for tolerating lynch law and she employed her speeches, writings, and very demeanor to map a major spatial-racial pressure point—she “wanted British Anglo-Saxons to pressure American Anglo-Saxons” to condemn lynching (Bederman 2008, 63).

From the perspective of many white Americans at the time, Ida B. Wells had engaged in a transgressive act by traveling to Great Britain to air America's dirty laundry (Zackodnik 2005; Bederman 2008).

However, through this resistant practice, she actively reworked her activist networks and transformed anti-lynching into a transatlantic issue, expanding the geography of communities opposed to lynching—which Wells saw as critical to stamping out mob violence. In thinking about what counts as counter-mapping and how marginalized groups create their own cartographies, Wells' story prompts us to consider the resistant ways she redrew the map of anti-lynching activism and exploited white supremacy's global interdependences. Importantly, redrawing the map of anti-lynching solidarities did not simply happen because Wells showed up in England. She engaged in creative geographic translation and resonance making, using her rhetorical skills to knit southern anti-Black mob violence into the social and political concerns of another country reluctant to meddle in American affairs. She did so successfully by invoking the earlier histories of British involvement in the abolition of slavery and positioning/mapping the atrocities of lynching with current British debates about the “white slavery” of the sexual trafficking of young working-class girls (Zackodnik 2005). Wells carried out a counter-mapping of the broader moral and geographic significance of lynching that forced a public acknowledgment of the barbarity of lynching by the USA Northern Press and Northern white middle class. “Wells could not force white Americans to *oppose* lynching but, in 1894, they could no longer *ignore* lynching” and she certainly altered the terms and scale of subsequent debates over reform in the States and beyond (Bederman 2008, 70, emphasis in original).

3.3. Counter-mapping and the contemporary struggle for black lives

For some readers, the anti-lynching campaigns of the late 19th and early 20th centuries may seem like the distant past. Yet, in the wake of continued extrajudicial killings of Black men, women, and children in the United States, it is clear that the efforts of Wells and others are of *critical and meaningful* contemporary significance. The counter-mapping work of activists/scholars and their response to these unfolding injustices is key for the broader movement to end anti-Black racism. For example, mappingpoliceviolence.com uses Web-based geospatial analysis to track and map the communities and individuals killed and harassed by police forces within the United States. Other collective efforts, such as mappingprejudice.org, combine GIScience and cartography with creative storytelling to address the lasting impacts of racial covenants and housing discrimination that are the foundation of our contemporary urban landscapes. Further efforts document the dispossession and resistance surrounding gentrification (antievictionmap.com) along with exploring future alternatives to living in racially segregated cities (livingtogetherlivingapart.com). *Data 4 Black Lives* (d4bl.org), brings data scientists together with activists to “work in and on the front lines of Black communities,” articulating principles that would have resonated over 100 years ago with the original anti-lynching campaigns. Given the paucity and unreliability of official statistics related to police brutality and mortgage discrimination, the information generated by these activists is critical to building Black Lives Matter justice movements centered around freedom and emancipation from the long and troubled history of white supremacy. While these contemporary counter-mapping projects appear new and revolutionary, and to some degree they are, they are part of a longer tradition of anti-racist activists using cartography as a critical tool to undermine structural inequality. That history is more central to geography than much of our discipline realizes or promotes with more traditional academic treatments of the map and mapping practices.

Several of these current anti-racist counter-mapping projects continue the work of reconstructing the geographies of lynching violence, especially as part of the wider project of transitional justice. The transition from an oppressive society requires actively remembering and telling stories about histories of racialized violence as part of the memory-work of coming to terms with the continuing legacies of that violence and discrimination. For example, *Monroe Work Today* retells the story of the Tuskegee sociologist and other “heroes” of anti-lynching

while also applying GIS techniques to map and analyze historical lynching, recognizing that knowledge of the specific locations of those killings can be a key part of the truth-telling and reconciliation process. Historical sociologist Geoff Ward created the *Keeping the Red Record* to document patterns of racist violence from the era of lynching and beyond, using that data to investigate places shaped by the generational transmission of racism and how “histories of enslavement, lynching, and other racial terror and dispossession relate to inequality, conflict, and violence in the same places today” (Racial Violence Archive 2020, np).

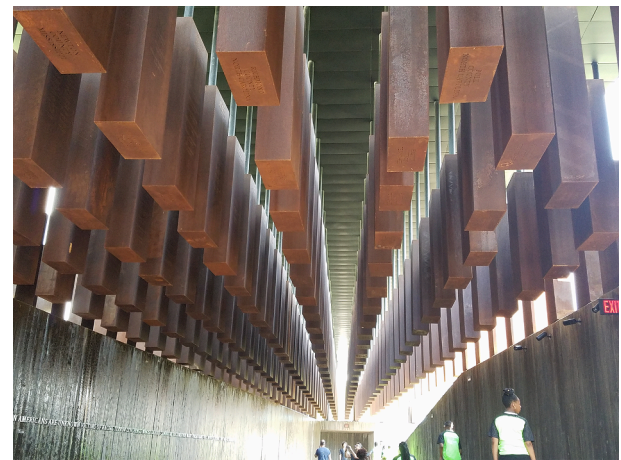
The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI), established by African American social justice lawyer Bryan Stevenson, is the most ambitious effort in the geospatial work of remembering “racial terror lynching” in America. The result has been a major report on the history of lynching in the US (Equal Justice Initiative 2015), a program to encourage communities to locally memorialize sites of lynching, and a monument to the victims of white mob violence (formally known as the National Memorial for Peace and Justice) along with a museum addressing the legacies of racialized violence—both located in Montgomery, Alabama. Undergirding the EJI’s work is the belief that challenging contemporary racial inequalities in policing and mass incarceration requires a historical understanding of legal and extra-legal violence against Black people, especially the un-reconciled and often neglected history of lynching.

Upon entering the EJI memorial to lynching victims, one encounters rows and rows of suspended corten steel monuments, a visual allusion we believe to the way in which many victims were hung from trees. Each suspended form references by name a county where lynching murders took place along with the inscribed names of those murdered and the date of the racial terror (Fig. 5a & b). When releasing cartography from its bonds of convention, we can interpret the Montgomery memorial as a highly charged counter-mapping of the pervasive and painful place of lynching in America. Its steel monuments document the over 800 counties complicit in this violence, but the resistant power of that data inventory comes from the intense affective atmosphere created by the symbolic and material weight of the county monuments. This emotional experience pushes visitors to acknowledge and take responsibility for that violence (and its legacies) and imagine the possibility of more socially just futures.

4. Concluding remarks

Audre Lorde (1984) made the now iconic declaration that “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” to draw attention to the impossibility of resistance making genuine and long-lasting social change if we continue to frame the terms and tactics of those struggles within the dominant social ideas, structures, and technologies at the root of oppression. For some readers, our attempt to conceptualize and illustrate historically and geographically the role of counter-mapping in the African American Freedom Struggle may be seen as falling victim to Lorde’s concerns. True enough, simply the appropriation of mapping by activist communities and the reduction of Black lives and deaths to data points and statistical figures, even for clearly progressive purposes, can risk repeating the same erasures and pathology-making long perpetuated by Western cartography. Yet, what we have tried to capture is the possibility of a much deeper and more critical way of seeing counter-mapping as a fundamental *recasting of the master’s tools* by the oppressed.

Recovering and doing justice to Black critical cartographies, and recognizing their potential to effect change and dismantle power structures, requires that Geography conceive of the geospatial beyond just considerations of techniques, tools, and industry trends and to understand it within the affects, meanings, and politics of racial inequality. Counter-mapping is part of broader ways of knowing, dwelling within, and resisting discriminatory worlds while creating places and embodied practices for affirming the value of Black life. To reaffirm once again, oppositional cartographic practices—while certainly evident in what we have traditionally defined as maps, data, and data science—are etched



(a)



(b)

Fig. 5. National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama surrounds visitors with steel monuments, each representing a different county in which the racial terror of lynching occurred (a). Upon each monument is inscribed the county, date, and identity of African American victims of historical lynching (b). Photographs by authors, June 2018.

into an even larger array of geographic images, stories, movements, and landscapes of the Black experience.

Ida B. Wells’ efforts to draw attention to the ritualized killing of men, women and children draws from a longer cartographic legacy operationalized through Black people’s knowledge systems and experiences of living within a society built through their annihilation. From the indigenous knowledge and ways of reading the landscape made famous by Harriet Tubman and the underground railroad through the work of W.E.B. Du Bois to map black life in the US South and continued through the creation of the *Green Book*, Black geographies not only has much to teach cartography and the wider discipline of geography (Kelley 2020), but is the foundation stone to a broader reorganization of the very discipline itself.

Our discussion of resistant cartographic practices relies upon a wider, still unfolding story of Black “geospatial work” that must be part of the discipline of geography and wider social sciences. Geospatial work

is a term meant to provoke a deeper understanding of the ways the African American Freedom Struggle uses counter-mapping, along with a host of other place-making practices and social and spatial knowledge systems (Alderman and Inwood 2016). In living with and against white supremacy, Black communities have long carried out geospatial work in both public and subtle ways. This includes how people of color have developed cognitive maps, way-finding tools, and environmental knowledges to navigate and disrupt racialized landscapes (Ginsburg 2007; Zeisler-Vralsted 2019). Counter-mapping also undergirded the creation of Black geographies of transport, migration, and travel to circumvent and resist discrimination (Alderman et al., 2013; Inwood, 2014; Pryor, 2016; Sorin, 2020). In addition, building counter-public spaces, protest encampments, freedom farms and schools, maroon communities, and other places of self-determination required spatial planning invariably guided a resistant cartographic sense (Bledsoe 2017; Bottone et al. 2018; McCutcheon 2019).

By situating Black Geographic practices as central to how we conduct cartographic research, teaching, and outreach, we not only open doors for a more inclusive discipline, but most immediately help to create a cadre of engaged students/mapping professionals who have the technical expertise to incorporate lived experiences of oppression/resistance that can remake and reimagine our worlds. The time is now to do this. A Black sense of place is about more than recognition of a set of historically grounded practices; if employed and engaged with by the broader cartographic community it can push us to rethink how we understand maps, how we understand our world, and how we realize the emancipatory possibilities of geography representing that world in ways that break out of traditional and staid representations.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Derek H. Alderman: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing, Supervision. **Joshua Inwood:** Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing. **Ethan Bottone:** Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Writing - original draft.

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