PREFACE
ISSUE MAPPING THEORIES AND DIGITAL METHODOLOGIES

ISSUE MAPPING

Stakeholders, students, issue professionals, workshop participants, practitioners, advocates, action researchers, activists, artists and social entrepreneurs are often asked to make sense of social issues that concern and affect the organizations and projects they are involved with. In doing so, they have to cope with information sources both aggregated and disaggregated, where opposing claims clash and where structured narratives are unavailable, or are only now being written. At the same time, the issues must be analyzed, for they are urgent and palpable. The outcomes of the projects also need to be communicated to the various publics and audiences of their work. These issue analysts employ a wide range of strategies and techniques to aid in making sense of the issues, and communicating them, and as such they undertake, in one form or another, what we call 'issue mapping.'

In a small workshop setting, the analysts may draw dots and lines on a whiteboard, and annotate them with sticky notes and multi-colored markers, in order to represent actors, connections, arguments and positions. At the sign-in table, at a bar-camp, hundreds of activists write down on a large sheet of paper the URLs of their organizations or projects, forming a long list that is typed into the computer for the mapping to proceed. Analysts will map the links between the websites, and put up a large map for the participants to pore over and annotate. The attendees will ask questions about the method behind the mapping, and also how their nodes can become larger and less peripheral. Indeed, issue mappers may use hand tools and software to capture and process network and issue data. They output visualizations that show alignments, reveal patterns and display affinities. They are just as likely to display disalignments, and opposition.

Issue mapping is concerned with the social and unstable life of the *matters on which we do not agree*. It is concerned with how the actors involved are connected to each other, or otherwise associated with each other. The question is how to identify and trace the associations, and how to render them both in narrative and visual form so that they are meaningful to one's fellow issue analysts and their audiences.

This publication is a practical guide to contemporary issue mapping for issue analysts, increasingly using online data and software, but also markers and sticky notes. It is intended to be a companion volume for those who already include or wish to include issue mapping in their work. We would like to introduce the techniques and tools together with mapping theory. We believe that only half of the problem lies in how to retrieve and process digital information, and the presence of tools and their manuals do not necessarily guarantee a good mapping. Instead, we believe that it is necessary to provide researchers with conceptual frameworks that will help them imagine what could be achieved with the tools and data, and especially what kind of questions they can answer.

Ageing Places: Digital Methodologies for Mapping the Issue of an Ageing Europe, as the title suggests, documents the practice of an issue mapping on ageing. We chose the case study of the ageing of Europe, among other reasons, for it is a contemporary issue with increasing activitiy around it. Ageing as an issue refers to the instability currently arising from the idea of a society in which for the first time the old outnumbers the young. How to map it? We have selected three leading authors who have shaped the field of issue mapping, namely, Bruno Latour and his theories about social cartography, Ulrich Beck and his writings about risk cartography, and most recently, Jeremy Crampton and his ideas about critical cartography. With ageing as a case study, we apply their concepts and, crucially, operationalize them into mapping techniques with digital methods and tools.

Each of the three main chapters in the publication is dedicated to the application of one author's cartography or mapping in a practical way: how to use digital methodologies to map ageing as a controversy and social issue, how to map ageing as a risk and how to map ageing from the perspective of neo- and critical cartography, employing the new online mapping tools, such as Google Maps and Mindomo.