

If you want to develop a distinctive personal aesthetic, cartography is NOT the field for you (compared to painting or illustration or graphic design etc)

- We all work from similar basemaps
- Must follow 'Cartographic Convention'
- Symbols and representation are highly formalized

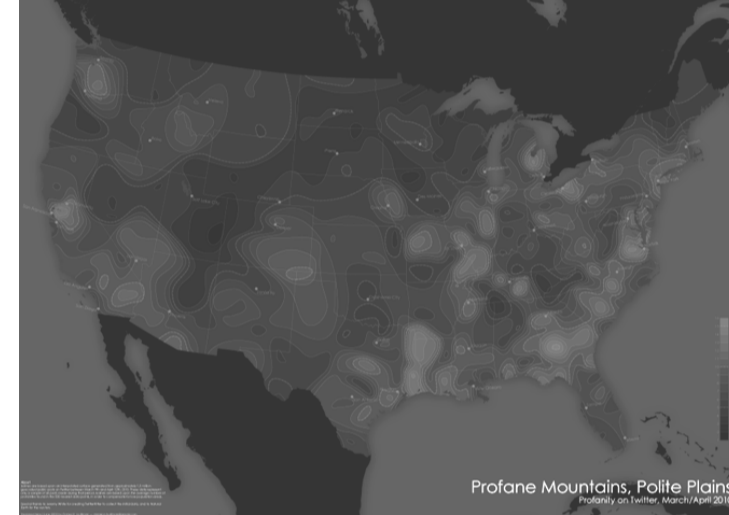
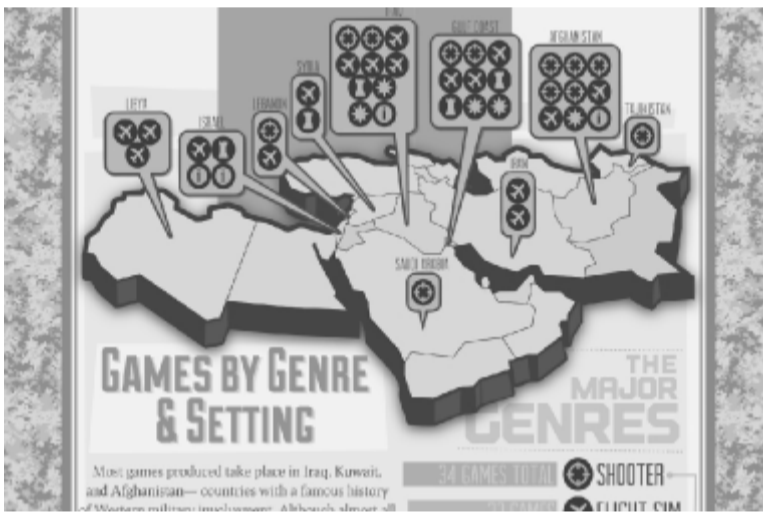
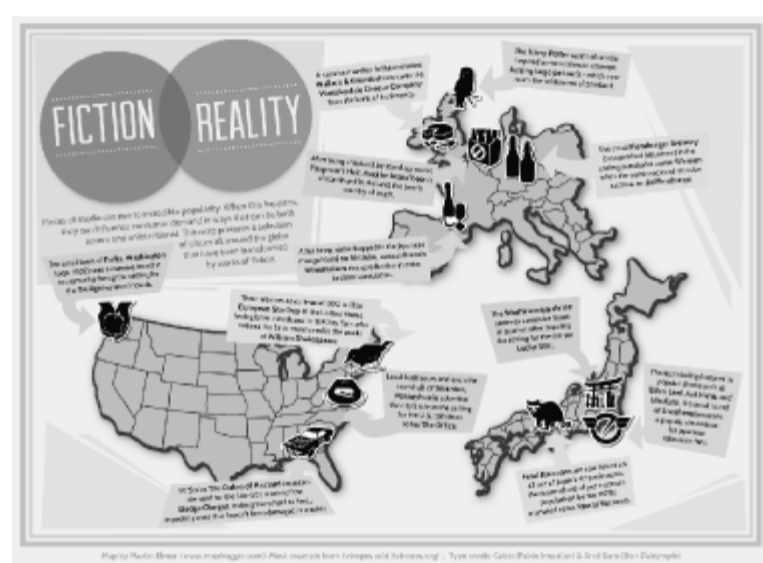
And yet...

We know that an infinite number of solutions exist for any graphical problem (so there's got to be wiggle room aesthetically)

A formal approach to aesthetics? Dondis, Muehlenhaus

Page 110, A Primer on Visual Literacy

Page 83: http://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/59585/1/Muehlenhaus_umn_0130E_10941.pdf



A formal(ist) Approach: Comparing/Contrasting Elmerian v. Huffmanian Design

Exaggerated Visual Hierarchy, emphasis on titles and prose

Map as Figure, embraces island effect

Thick Linework

Palette: Neutrals + Accent

Heavy, Geometric, rounded sans (midcentury American design)

Pictorial symbolization

Angular/Irregular/trapezoidal forms

Balanced Visual Hierarchy, emphasis on data

Map as Ground, avoids island effect

Lineless when possible

Palette: Dark Grays + Accent

Regular, Geometric, Neo-Grotesk sans (midcentury European design)

Abstract / geometrical symbolization

Regular/Rectangular forms

Whoa, it's the same when I'm not doing Cartography (flickr.com/omnitarian)

So Anyway:

Want to develop a personal Style? (or at least make a visually novel map?)



Get inspiration from OUTSIDE OF CARTOGRAPHY ("bad artists copy, great artists steal") [best artists synthesize!]



Look at their LOW-LEVEL GRAPHICAL TECHNIQUES (Drop Shadow! Extrude! Texture! Wobble lines!)



Make LOTS AND LOTS OF COOL AND EXPERIMENTAL THINGS

(Play around with stuff) (Fake it 'til you make it)