

University of Southern Maine ANE 633 [GEO 450]

# THE MAPPING OF NEW ENGLAND

Matthew H. Edney

Osher Chair in the History of Cartography

Spring 2009



## PAPER 1: CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

### TASK

Examine and analyze the context of one map (defined below). The content of the map will of course be part of the analysis, but it is not the focus as it was for the semiotic, textual reading undertaken in paper 1. Rather, the purpose of the contextual analysis is to explore the social role of the map: who made it, when and how did they make it, how (if at all) did the map circulate, and who might have read it? The goal is to decide why the map was made, how it might have circulated, and how it might have been read.

Broadly speaking, contextual analyses work at two levels: first, a precise analysis of the map itself and its maker; second, a more general analysis of the map in the larger social context. The first level of analysis is directed by evidence presented by the artifact itself. The second level is shaped by the mode within which the map was produced and read: what social institutions regulated the map's creation and use? Also, with what other practices might the map be aligned? (Consider, for example, the manner in which large-scale land survey maps are part of the larger array of practices dealing with observing and recording property boundaries.) What social divisions (by gender, race, class) govern the reading of the map? What was the purpose of the map? That is, what is the **precise** discourse within which the map was produced and intended to be consumed?

To answer some of these questions, it will be necessary to consult the secondary literature. I will provide help once students have undertaken some initial investigation. Sources of information other than the map must be cited (refer the course's style guide).

Write up the analysis in a five to seven-page paper. Please use a cover page. Feel free to use any appendices you might wish to use (although this is not required/necessary).

### SUBJECT MATTER

Please consult the list of maps provided on my web site. Students are not required to study one of these, but should seek my permission to use any other image. The map chosen cannot be the same as used in Paper 1.

## **FEEDBACK**

I will be out-of-town from 19 through 29 March. I will be checking email regularly in the meantime, so feel free to email me any questions you might have about the project: edney@usm.maine.edu.

In the meantime, students are expected to use the 'free' week as a research week, to study and reflect upon the map with great care and attention, and also to explore similar maps that might be available on the web.

## **EVALUATION**

Students will be evaluated according to the completeness and logicity of their analysis. Consideration will also be paid to grammar, style, etc. Overall, this paper is worth 15% of the total course grade.

## **DUE**

The papers are due in class on 6 April 2009.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

Completion of this task requires consultation of other documents all available on my web site

1. List of maps suitable for analysis;
2. Course style guide;
3. Guide to online websites