

Alternate Methods to Visualize 2016 U.S. Presidential Election Result

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Abstract : Politics in America is polarized. The best illustration of this is the 2016 presidential election result map. States with megacities like California, New York, Illinois, Virginia, and others are marked blue to signify the color of the Democratic party. States located in inland and south like Texas, Florida, Tennessee, Kansas and others are marked red to signify the color of the Republican party. Such a stark difference between two colors, red and blue, combined with geolocations of each state with their borderline remarks one central message; America is divided into two colors between urban Democrats and rural Republicans. This paper seeks to defy the visualization by pointing out its limitations and search for alternative ways to visualize the 2016 election result. One such limitation is that geolocations of each state and state borderlines limit the visualization of population density. As a result, the election result map does not convey the fact that Clinton won the popular vote and only accentuates the voting patterns of urban and rural states. The paper seeks whether an alternative narrative can be observed by factoring in the population number into the size of each state and manipulating the state borderline according to the normalization. Yet another alternative narrative may be reached by factoring the size of each state by the number of the electoral college of each state by voting and visualize the number. Other alternatives will be discussed but are not implemented in visualization. Such methods include dividing the land of America into about 120 million cubes each representing a voter or by the number of whole population 300 million cubes. By exploring these alternative methods to visualize the politics of the 2016 election map, the public may be able to question whether it is possible to be free from the narrative of the divide-conquer when interpreting the election map and to look at both parties as a story of the United States of America.

Keywords : 2016 U.S. presidential election, data visualization, population scale, geo-political

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