In a field that was long dominated by written text alone, multimedial forms of communication and artistic expression are increasingly finding their way into the forefront of research and teaching. The MSU German Studies program embraces a broad view of our mission at the intersection of cultural studies and language studies, and faculty have been developing a range of courses that highlight the complex cultural content of everything from cinema to comics, from physical objects to maps. One such offering is a fourth-year course entitled "Mapping Germany," in which students learn to engage with published maps as complex texts, and to think spatially—creating their own new maps in the process—about literary and other written texts.

In my talk, I will describe the methods I use to put these ideas into practice, share some examples from a website students and I have developed to showcase this work, and make a pitch for everyone to take advantage of the amazing resources of the MSU Map Library.

Pictured here are a German colonial map of Tanzania (then German Southeast Africa) alongside a hand-drawn map made by an eyewitness to a local rebellion against colonial rule.