

Molly Listen

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Disneyland's map is a physical recreation of Walt Disney's classic movies, a vision for the future, and an ideal place for families to vacation together. For decades, Disneyland has been identified by its eight iconic areas: MainStreet, U.S.A., Tomorrowland, Fantasyland, Mickey's Toontown, Frontierland, Critter Country, New Orleans Square, and Adventureland. After purchasing Lucasfilm, Disney CEO Bob Iger released plans for a 14-acre park expansion to include a new Star Wars themed land. In this essay I will compare Bob Iger to a greedy and narcissistic cartographer, analyze the physical and financial implications of Disneyland's map, and discuss how adding Star Wars Land changes the identity of Disneyland using ideas from Perillo, Harley, Monmonier, Anzaldúa, and Olds.

Bob Iger was CEO when in 2012, Disney purchased the rights to Star Wars. Since then, he has unveiled plans to reconstruct Disneyland's entire landscape to make room for a Star Wars themed land. Likewise, the Disney CEO is similar to Tamburlaine in Chris Marlowe's play when he says, "Give me a map then let me see how much is left to conquer" (Perillo 4). In the business world, Bob Iger is at the peak of the pyramid, a cartographer in the way that he alone possesses the power to change Disneyland's landscape. In Harley's article, he refers to cartography as a "'science of princes'" (131). In this case, the business elite are granted authority to manipulate the land. Iger represents a greedy cartographer, anxious to make his own mark on the land, "Amerigo Vespucci pulls apart the sharp legs of his compass" (Perillo 1). This illustrates the idea that the most powerful people in society are given power through cartography. As J. Brian Harley said, "Maps are preeminently a language of power" (142). As a mark of his ownership and control, Star Wars Land is the equivalent of Bob Iger signing his autograph across the

Northwest quadrant of Disneyland's map. The framework of many maps is shaped by the most powerful members of society, and Bob Iger's grasp over Disneyland's map is no exception. With Bob Iger acting as a cunning cartographer, it is clear that Disney's management wants to capitalize on its newly acquired asset. The sheer size of Star Wars Land asserts dominance over the rest of the outdated terrain. This is similar to when Monmonier says, "Sometimes propaganda maps try to make a country or region look big and important, and sometimes they try to make it look small and threatened" (94). In this case, although it is smaller, Star Wars Land is made to look daunting in comparison to Disneyland. Exemplifying this, Harley also discusses the importance of text and color when making maps, "by over-enlarging or moving signs or typography, or by using emotive colors, makers of propaganda maps have generally been the advocates of a one-sided view of geopolitical relationships" (135). Demonstrating this idea, Star Wars Land is shaded in bright blue with bold, yellow letters making it appear dominant when compared to the dull green shade of the rest of the map. Although Disneyland has developed and progressed over time, it has never devoted an entire land to a single brand. For example, there is an "Indiana Jones" ride in Adventureland, and a "Star Tours" ride in Tomorrowland. The size and devotion to Star Wars Land is an attempt to profit from the Walt Disney Company's newfound ownership of Lucasfilm. As with the addition to Star Wars Land on its map, Monmonier describes how colonies, "turned to cartography as a tool of both economic development and political identity" (90). Taking Disneyland's historical land mass and devoting a large portion of it to the newly-acquired Star Wars enterprise is represented by its physical map. The size and dominance of Star Wars Land gives insight into Disney's expected financial gain in years to come.

The addition of Star Wars Land will change the map and the identity of Disneyland forever. Unlike Disney's other theme park in Florida, Walt Disney World, which is larger than 25,000 acres, Disneyland is only about 85-acres in size. Disneyland will have to close several iconic attractions to make room for the 14-acre Star Wars Land expansion. In terms of the historical identity of Disneyland, this is similar to Anzaldúa's experience with the Mexican-American war, "we were jerked out by the roots, truncated, disemboweled, dispossessed, and separated from our identity and our history" (30). Changing the layout of the park and eliminating attractions that have been there since Disneyland's opening in 1955 is symbolic of people losing their cultural identity and their land. This can also be compared to European imperialism when Harley discusses, "The scramble for Africa, in which the European powers fragmented the identity of indigenous territorial organization" (132). In this way, Disney's corporate executives are similar to Europeans as they dash to capitalize on new territory without a thought of its historical or sentimental importance. After the expansion is completed, Disneyland will have "all our cities twin cities, all our states united, one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all" (Olds 20-22). Re-sculpting Disneyland's map is essentially re-sculpting its identity.

Despite Disney CEO Bob Iger's resemblance to a power-hungry mapmaker, the apparent financial gain, physical alterations, and transformation of Disneyland's identity, not all change is bad. The creator of Disneyland, Walt Disney said, "Disneyland will never be completed. It will continue to grow as long as there is imagination left in the world." Just as Perillo, Harley, Monmonier, Anzaldúa, and Olds's perspectives on cartography can still be applied today, Disneyland, although changed by Star Wars Land, will develop a new identity. Disneyland's map may not look the same in another fifty years, but the changes made will reflect Walt's spirit

of imagination and adapt to changing audiences. In time, Star Wars Land's bright blue and yellow lettering will fade into the rest of the map and be indistinguishable from the identity of Disneyland.

