



The Power of Maps

By Denis Wood

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The Power of Maps By Denis Wood

This volume ventures into terrain where even the most sophisticated map fails to lead--through the mapmaker's bias. Denis Wood shows how maps are not impartial reference objects, but rather instruments of communication, persuasion, and power. Like paintings, they express a point of view. By connecting us to a reality that could not exist in the absence of maps--a world of property lines and voting rights, taxation districts and enterprise zones--they embody and project the interests of their creators. Sampling the scope of maps available today, illustrations include Peter Gould's AIDS map, Tom Van Sant's map of the earth, U.S. Geological Survey maps, and a child's drawing of the world. THE POWER OF MAPS was published in conjunction with an exhibition at the Cooper Hewitt Museum, the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design.

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The Power of Maps By Denis Wood Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

This book accompanies an exhibit called "The Power of Maps," which is being held at New York City's Cooper Hewitt Museum from October 1992 to March 1993. For those not fortunate enough to see the exhibit, the book stands by itself. It aims to show that every cartographer has an agenda of some kind and to assist the map user in figuring out that agenda. The writing is entertaining but a bit wordy and irritatingly full of ellipses. In addition, though cocurator Wood's thinking is often quite good, the reader must still beware of flights of fancy, as when he gives a facetious reason for why United States Geological Survey maps don't have full legends on each. For general collections and collections on cartography.

- Mary L. Larsgaard, Univ. of California-Santa Barbara Map & Imagery Lab Lib.

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Review

"If compelled to cite only a single book on cartography to stock a desert-island shelf or to assign to the eager novice, this is the automatic choice....Although I have been drawing and poring over maps, as well as reading about them, since childhood, I received more revelations about their essential nature and larger meanings from this one powerful, disturbing, totally convincing essay than from all the other books, articles, and lectures on the subject I have ever encountered." --Wilbur Zelinsky, The Pennsylvania State University

"Combining both topical issues relevant to lay readers and serious scholarship, Denis Wood's *The Power of Maps* will provoke, amuse, tweak, and inform anyone who has had occasion to use, or merely peruse, a map--which is to say, everyone. It is a relentless entertainment--relentlessly challenging to traditional assumptions about cartography, relentlessly witty as it deconstructs (read: demolishes) the pretense of neutral, 'scientific' map-making, and relentlessly contrary in reminding us that maps reflect social choices and serve particular political interests." --Stephen S. Hall, author of *Mapping the Next Millennium*

"Perhaps the simplest thing to say is that there is nothing quite like it! There are, of course, countless conventional accounts of cartography -- usually a combination of the history of cartography and a catalogue of its technical achievements-- but these are usually Whiggish tales which celebrate the progressive advance of cartography towards 'Truth.' Apart from a short discussion of so-called 'propaganda maps' (which is there simply to mark a departure from the norm, so to speak, an anomaly) these books rarely offer any sustained discussion of what one might call the cultural and political implications of maps and mapping. With the current explosion of interest in cultural politics and social theory, both inside and outside human geography, there is an obvious need for a discussion which resists those conventions. I can think of only Mark Monmonier's *HOW TO LIE WITH MAPS* -- which from all accounts has done extremely well, but is narrower in scope than Wood's text -- and the late Brian Harley's marvelous essays on deconstruction and mapping -- which may well be too abstract for many readers. In any event, I have no doubt that Denis Wood's book will be a major contribution to this emerging discussion of the power and politics of maps and mapping: it is written in a clear and accessible style but none the less deals with some of the most complex issues in contemporary debates over power, knowledge and spatiality. It is immensely engaging: the examples and illustrations are to the point and by no means obvious, and the issues that are raised extend far beyond the confines of any purely academic discipline. This is one of those rare books that will prompt its readers to re-think some of their most taken-for-granted assumptions and the ways in which those conventions bear on their everyday lives."-- Derek Gregory, The University of British Columbia

"Denis Wood's book *The Power of Maps* sheds a brilliant new light on our customary experience of maps....You will never look at any map the same way again."

(The Christian Science Monitor 1992-10-18)

"....The last word on maps."

(The Trenton Times 1992-10-18)

"He has some important, indeed compelling, things to say about maps...Wood not only incorporates a great store of historical detail into his essays, he sees maps as peculiar historical texts, as repositories of layers of knowledge and labor that can be revealed if we know how to read" them....I highly recommend this unconventional book to historians of science of any period."

(Isis 1992-10-18)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carolyn Hoffman:

Spent a free time to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their free time with their family, or their friends. Usually they performing activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same thing every week. Do you feel it? Do you want to something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Can be reading a book could be option to fill your no cost time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of e-book that you should read. If you want to try look for book, may be the book untitled *The Power of Maps* can be excellent book to read. May be it may be best activity to you.

Roman Leonard:

The particular book *The Power of Maps* has a lot info on it. So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was published by the very famous author. The author makes some research prior to write this book. That book very easy to read you can get the point easily after looking over this book.

Nancy Nault:

Playing with family in a park, coming to see the sea world or hanging out with pals is thing that usually you may have done when you have spare time, in that case why you don't try point that really opposite from that. One activity that make you not sensation tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you have been ride on and with addition details. Even you love *The Power of Maps*, you can enjoy both. It is excellent combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh seriously its mind hangout fellas. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its named reading friends.

Bonnie Daves:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray you, why because this *The Power of Maps* publication written by

well-known writer who knows well how to make book which might be understand by anyone who have read the book. Written with good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and creating skill only for eliminate your current hunger then you still uncertainty The Power of Maps as good book not simply by the cover but also from the content. This is one e-book that can break don't evaluate book by its cover, so do you still needing an additional sixth sense to pick this!? Oh come on your looking at sixth sense already said so why you have to listening to another sixth sense.

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