

of practical land tenure significance. (My copy also had Auckland as New Zealand's capital crossed out and replaced by Wellington in the author's hand. Was everyone thus privileged?) Detail is the devil of every exercise and it does matter.

Two final points: the bibliography highlights key works, but the detailed entries are of uneven quality and usefulness. Why not a few key items for each country? The long index is almost wholly of proper names and weak on concepts and ideas, the usual consequence of undue computer dependence. It is also occasionally wrong: de Soto is not to be found on page 19. This is a useful, opinionated, stimulating but not always reliable reference work. It focuses on a topic which ought to be central to geographical scholarship and deserves to be executed at a national level. Might the New Zealand Geographical Society be prepared to sponsor *Who Owns New Zealand?*

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Maps as mediated seeing: Fundamentals of cartography

Gerald Fremlin and Arthur H. Robinson. Trafford, Victoria, B.C., Canada, Revised edition, 2005. 292 pp. ISBN 1-4120-6682-4.

Maps as Mediated Seeing is, to put it as briefly as possible, a lengthy argument that topographical and thematic maps are mediations between objective reality and the viewer's reality. Maps are not seen as a form of language; they are more than a direct transmission of ideas and concepts, they function through gestalt psychology. The objective of good map design is to provide a visually appealing, highly legible image that conveys information successfully.

Arthur H. Robinson had a large impact on cartography. In 1952, his seminal cartography work, *The Look of Maps: An Examination of Cartographic Design*, was published. He was a significant force in map design research, with the notable personal achievement of designing the Robinson projection for the globe. This

was used for many years by the US National Geographic Society. Robinson died in 2004 at the age of 90; *Maps as Mediated Seeing* is a post-retirement project for one of his past graduate students, Gerald Fremlin.

Robinson's *The Look of Maps* contained no actual geographical maps and neither does *Maps as Mediated Seeing*. There are a few line diagrams, but no colour illustrations, nor topographic or thematic maps. The diagrams are surprisingly difficult to follow (see p. 215, fig. 6 for example). The authors have included up to half a page of explanatory text in some cases in order to describe what the diagram is trying to convey (not vice versa). As someone with a background in publication illustration in various academic fields, I find this somewhat incongruous with the cartographic design arguments detailed in this book; Robinson's early artistic background makes this doubly surprising. It is also interesting to note that the work was initially published in the Journal of the Canadian Cartographic Association, *Cartographica*, and that Fremlin openly admits that it was reported to be a 'hard read' and was not seen as overly user-friendly.

Chapter one contains nine short essays, each dealing with an idea, such as the definition and understanding of 'topography'. Chapters two to seven discuss topographical map design and definition. Chapters eight to eleven discuss thematic map design. Topographic and thematic map designs are the two main themes of the book. Chapter twelve discusses the use of pictures and 'non-map graphics' in maps. This is a very brief chapter which describes such things as 'iconic regions maps': for example, a picture of a moose on a map may indicate this is 'moose country'. The final chapter is comprised of six short essays which Robinson says were included for technical reference and were difficult to incorporate into the main text. An afterword looks at the future of cartography, albeit rather briefly, with particular reference to GIS technology. GIS is seen as offering opportunities for map design research not previously available, the speed of execution and direct control available to the cartographer being paramount in this. The authors have not attempted to discuss in any real depth the use of maps in digital media such as

cell phones, airport terminal screens, nor car GPS screens, to name but a few.

Maps as Mediated Seeing provides an in-depth examination of the fundamentals of cartography. Small details are expanded upon to an almost extreme level, sometimes in areas not obvious to nor expected by the casual map user. The book succeeds in demonstrating that a map does not merely contain and transmit information to users, but that it interacts with the subjective world of the users and that good map design should take the objective (reality) → subjective (cartographer) → subjective (percipient) process into account. Yes, a huge body of published research already exists on map design, especially cognitive map design dating back to the 1970s and 1980s, and the authors acknowledge this. *Maps as Mediated Seeing* is an accumulation of knowledge from two researchers who have been involved in the field of cartography throughout the second half of the 20th century.

Much of the map design research undertaken within academia has failed to reach mass users and designers of maps. With the advent of computer-based illustration and GIS, with their associated low costs and short production times, it is likely that there will be a resurgence of interest in map design research. This relatively recent contribution has its weaknesses, notably the aforementioned lack of illustrative maps to enhance and emphasize many points that are made in the text. The extensive use of footnotes, sometimes to the level that they take over two-thirds of a page, only serves to distract from the main body of text and break the flow of discussion.

The book is clearly not for those who are merely interested in a basic map design methodology; such readers would be better served by Robinson's joint work, *Elements of Cartography* (1995). I would recommend *Maps as Mediated Seeing* as worth reading if one already has a basic background in cartography and wishes to delve further into the fundamentals of map design philosophy and psychology. While a fascinating read, it is not a book for the novice cartographer.

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Approaches to human geography

Stuart Aitken and Gill Valentine (eds). Sage, London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi, 2006. 349 pp. ISBN 0-7619-4263-7.

I recommend this book to readers as it is refreshingly edited with some idealism. The editors' target is to make philosophical and theoretical issues interesting, accessible and understandable for beginning students, to simplify 'sometimes complex and convoluted links' (p. 1) between theory and practice, and to function as a basic aid for research projects, theses and dissertations. Thus, the book is trying to address beginners of undergraduate study in geography as well as to provide a resource for postgraduates. Co-edited by Gill Valentine, this edition builds on others in the series of *Key Concepts* by Holloway, Rice and Valentine, 2003; *Key Methods* by Clifford and Valentine, 2003; and *Key Thinkers* by Hubbard, Kitchen and Valentine, 2004. In *Approaches to Human Geography*, Aitken and Valentine link some of the former themes – theory, methodology and practice – to illustrate how researchers, their ideologies and the environment of their fieldwork are closely connected, influence each other and hence need to be approached from different angles in order to be fully understood. The three main parts of the book are arranged into an overview of philosophies and theories behind geographical thought, an autobiographical section of eminent researchers in geography, and a reflective part displaying various methods and approaches to geographical practice. More recent approaches to geography make up the main contribution to this edition.

Part one covers 11 different frameworks, starting from positivism and humanism, and then, in almost random order, discussing feminism, Marxism, behavioural approaches, structuration, realism to actor-network and relational theories, post-modern, post-structural and post-colonial theories. Although authors were able to utilize their research interests to address their philosophical frameworks, all explicitly identify and explain their theoretical perspective. Thus, the editors succeed in their aim of assisting students to understand underlying philosophies in reading geographical material. I was, however, slightly disappointed with the editors' 'passnotes' section that followed up