

Matthews, S. V. and Elmer, Martin E. (Eds.). ***Atlas of Design, Volume Three***. Milwaukee, WI: North American Cartographic Information Society, 2016. 98p. \$35.00 US.

Prepare to spend several hours poring over the fascinating assortment of maps included in the ***Atlas of Design, Volume Three***. This hard-bound atlas contains 32 separate maps selected from amongst hundreds of entries by a team of North American Cartographic Information Society (NACIS) editors “...to spread a variety of the top mapmakers’ ideas about what it means to make a good map, and inspire others to follow their lead.”

The maps appearing in the atlas primarily originate from either the United States or Europe and are extraordinarily different from one another. Included are maps that have incorporated caricatures, illustrations, 3-D bird’s eye views, landscape imagery, transportation routes, infographics and numerous other visualization techniques. There are maps drawn entirely by hand as well as those that have been digitally-produced using the latest cartographic software. In addition, there are maps of underground worlds (cave systems in Kentucky), mythological creatures (monsters appearing in the folklore of the United States), socio-political events (lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea of those fleeing conflicts in North Africa), and even antiquarian-style topographic maps of planets in our solar system (Mars). What unifies the volume is that each of the maps chosen for inclusion are extremely effective in communicating visual stories about the universe in which we live.

Every map in the atlas is shown in its entirety but at a reduced scale as page dimensions are 12 in. X 9 in. Quality and colour of the reproduced images are excellent. There are also additional enlargements of specific sections of each map which serve to illustrate interesting map features. One-page summaries containing author commentary accompany all maps in the atlas. They provide general insight into the creative processes involved in the map development and focus on design decisions by authors in their choice of underlying map data and cartographic techniques. Details concerning specific technologies and software applications used to create the maps are typically not included. A handful of these summaries include hyperlinks that direct readers to digital versions of the map or websites providing background details. Despite readers possibly recognizing certain maps that have circulated on social networking sites (e.g., “The Magnificent Bears of the Glorious Nation of Finland” by Annukka Mäkijärvi), the variety of maps and included author insights distinguish this collection from what can be located for free on the WWW.

In summary, the ***Atlas of Design, Volume Three*** is recommended resource for college/university library collections. Students and faculty members are sure to find creative inspiration from these interesting examples of amazingly well designed maps.

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