

Then too, the author is given to sudden insertions of some quite startling assertions, equally unequivocal and factually questionable. “Contour lines are being replaced by three-dimensional perspective views...” (67), is one such, but the bald statement that “...images are only a map (an orthographic projection of the Earth’s surface having a constant scale) if the image is perfectly vertical and the terrain is absolutely flat” (69) is a real corker. Where can that have sprung from? First off, there is that flatly absurd definition of a map (as demonstrated by Jacob [2006] and Denil [2011]), and, second, the author (if anyone) should know that no actual photograph is orthographic (although photos can be ortho-corrected). There are other examples of quirkiness lurking between the covers, but the point needn’t be belabored.

You may think that these objections are pretty minor, but they mar and diminish the smooth and placid finish on what is otherwise an admirable production.

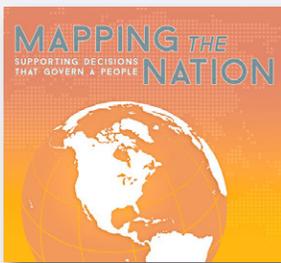
Despite these shortcomings, *Essential Earth Imaging for GIS* is well worth having. It is not a bible of remote sensing, like Avery and Berlin’s *Fundamentals of Remote Sensing and Airphoto Interpretation* (1992) was, back in the

day; it is not full of formulas, detailed explanations, and stereoscope-ready image pairs, but it is a good, basic introduction to the remote sensing essentials that matter for GIS. The complexities of modern earth imaging can be bewildering, even for experienced hands, and good, basic, essential texts are hard to find. The concise explanations found within this book can help clarify critical points, both for oneself and when one is looking to explain things to others. I know I am happy to have a copy on my shelf, and, not infrequently, in my hand.

## REFERENCES

- Avery, Thomas Eugene, and Graydon Lennis Berlin  
1992. *Fundamentals of Remote Sensing and Airphoto Interpretation*. New York: Macmillan.
- Denil, Mark. 2011. “The Search for a Radical Cartography.” *Cartographic Perspectives* 68: 7–28. doi: [10.14714/CP68.6](https://doi.org/10.14714/CP68.6).
- Jacob, Christian. 2006. *The Sovereign Map*. Translated by Tom Conley. Edited by Edward Dahl. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

## MAPPING THE NATION (SERIES)

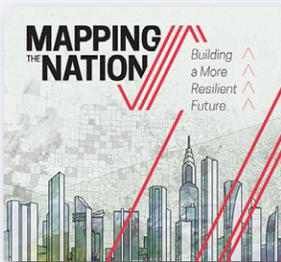


Mapping the Nation: Supporting Decisions that Govern a People

Esri Press, 2014.

144 pages, maps, credits. \$19.95, softcover.

ISBN: 9781589483477



Mapping the Nation: Building a More Resilient Future.

Esri Press, 2015.

108 pages, maps, credits. \$19.99, softcover.

ISBN: 9781589483910

**Review by:** Russell S. Kirby, University of South Florida

Since 2011, Esri Press has been publishing a series of books featuring maps generated by federal government

agencies using GIS software. These books, published in large format, softcover editions, are attractively produced with high-resolution graphics. The two volumes reviewed here are respectively the fourth and fifth books in the series. Each has the same structure, beginning with a foreword by Jack Dangermond, President of Esri, Inc., and a brief introduction, then continuing through a series of chapters focusing on US government departments and a final chapter on independent government agencies, followed by a brief conclusion and some information concerning the sources of the maps included in each chapter.

For someone unfamiliar with GIS and its many potential applications, these books—printed on high-gloss paper with strikingly colorful maps, plus photographs and quotations from leading government agency officials—reveal both the wealth of spatial data managed by federal agencies and creative ways to display that information and, in some cases, enable the public to examine it interactively. And, perhaps, the inquisitive reader may also take the time to learn more about Esri, Inc., the producer both of

this series of books and of ArcGIS, the software used to create most of the maps included within their covers.

For someone familiar both with GIS and with available public-use spatial data sources, the books may still hold some interest, as they contain many maps examining issues of current political, health, or ecological concerns. A few examples from each book may serve to illustrate this point. As part of a chapter on Department of Defense map, page 53 of *Mapping the Nation: Supporting Decisions that Govern a People* features a US Army Corps of Engineers map comparing the extent of the historic 1927 flooding in the lower Mississippi River valley with the more recent spring 2011 flood. The striking differences reveal the effectiveness of an extensive network of levees along the riverbanks as well as numerous dams on tributaries upstream that created a series of what my introductory geology professor called “Democratic Lakes.” Both floods covered large swaths of the lower Mississippi River basin, but the 1927 flood caused vastly greater damage and loss of life.

In the same volume, readers familiar with mapping remotely sensed data may find interesting the maps from the National Agricultural Statistics Service of the US Department of Agriculture depicting the USDA NASS Cropland Data Layer (26–27). Some minor details, such as a legend, are omitted, both in the composite map and in two separate strata, but the interested reader who wishes to explore more is given the resources to do so.

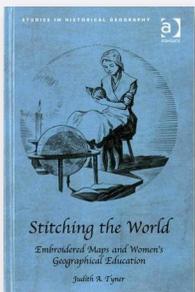
Another interesting example, found in *Mapping the Nation: Building a More Resilient Future*, is a map from the National Center for Education Statistics of the US Department of Education that displays the proportion

of school-age children living in households with incomes below the federal poverty rate (46). This map shows one year from a series of annual maps beginning in 2005; on the agency website the enterprising reader can see the full series. The maps, depicting poverty within state by school district, show both the complexities in the national geography of school districts, and some idiosyncrasies in the national school district shapefiles, especially in the Great Lakes region. These maps can also be compared to one provided by the US Census Bureau (19), depicting the poverty ratio for essentially the same age group of children as a smoothed surface rather than as choropleth maps.

For readers with smartphones, most of the maps in each volume are accompanied by QR codes that can be scanned to access websites with additional information about the maps and the underlying data sources. For the slightly less technology-savvy reader, most maps also include URLs that can be entered to access the same resources.

These books fulfill a purpose for Esri: opening the eyes of those unfamiliar with the potential power of GIS to generate interesting maps that produce both insights and new lines of inquiry. To some extent the contents may also inspire a few readers to examine the underlying spatial data more closely, or even to seek employment at one of the many federal agencies whose work is highlighted. However, these volumes are clearly prepared for marketing purposes. While Esri may make them available at professional conferences and to others who might share them with students, trainees and young professionals, this reviewer would not recommend that libraries or GIS professionals purchase these volumes, even at the relatively reasonable cover price.

## STITCHING THE WORLD: EMBROIDERED MAPS AND WOMEN’S GEOGRAPHICAL EDUCATION



By Judith A. Tyner.

Ashgate, 2015.

142 pages, numerous black and white illustrations, 46 color plates. \$104.95, hardcover.

ISBN: 9781409426356

**Review by:** Karen M. Trifonoff, Professor Emerita, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

Through the centuries cartographers and others have created maps on and with a variety of different media, from sticks and stones, animal skins, paper of all kinds, through to the digital maps of our current world. Within this variety is a small but important subset of maps on fabric, stitched with threads of many colors. These maps, created by young girls and women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are an important but not widely known segment of cartographic history. In *Stitching the World: Embroidered Maps and Women’s Geographical Education*, Judith A. Tyner gives us a glimpse into the story of how