



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the third and final issue of *Cartographic Perspectives* for 2025. First and foremost, I would like to inform readers that Margot Carpenter has decided to step down from her co-editorial role handling the Cartographic Collections section of the journal; I wish to thank her publicly for all of the work she has done behind the scenes handling that section. In her place, Jack Swab has graciously agreed to co-edit that section alongside Garrett Dash Nelson, who remains in place.

Turning to the present issue, it contains two peer-reviewed pieces, entries in the Practical Cartographer's Corner and Views on Cartographic Education sections, and six book reviews. First off, Merritt et al. have used a mixed-methods approach to look at “second-order” climate beliefs in the United States (“beliefs about what others believe,” 6). In a heartening conclusion, at least for cartographers, they find evidence that the use of maps can produce a “decrease in false beliefs” (19). Further, they find that people tend to vastly underestimate the concerns others have with respect to climate change; something, I'd argue, speaks poorly of the media environment and framing of the issue (perhaps a follow-up study might explore that).

Next, Bachmann and Kaiser ask the rather significant—and as they note, not terribly well studied—question of “how might web mapping contribute to the learning of geographical thinking through interactivity?” at the secondary school level (29). Their study finds, also rather hearteningly, that interactivity is “likely to contribute to the learning of geographical thinking through map interpretation” (29). I strongly recommend this article not only to scholars, but also to teachers, as well as anyone else interested in working with secondary school students using maps; of particular note, they offer empirical evidence that while background technical ability plays an early role in understanding, that decreases over time—a handy study to have on hand when needing to justify the use of a new mapping technology in an educational setting!

What I particularly appreciate from the authors of both of these pieces is how upfront they are about the intrinsic limitations of their studies. Too often, we derive grand claims about society writ large, despite relying on restricted study groups (usually students). These studies are forthright about their limitations, grounded in their conclusions, and still produce hopeful and productive areas for future work.

In the Practical Cartographer's Corner, Sui and Lessani explore the design principles behind effective use of kashida justification in map labeling. I had, previously, not been familiar with kashidas and their elegant use in Arabic map labels. The authors explain the technique, offer practical tips on how to create them in digital GIS environments, and follow with design advice on their use.

The six book reviews run the gamut from a fascinating academic text on the history and significance of ocean route mapping by Caputo (reviewed here by Johnson) to a more traditional *Atlas of Iowa* by Shepard et al. (reviewed by Guo). Sui's review of Short's *The Rise and Fall of the National Atlas in the Twentieth Century* left me particularly intrigued by the author's use of the concept of the "ideological state apparatus" which I strongly associate with Althusser (1970), but here developed in pursuit of more inclusive, participatory maps that foreground often marginalized voices (75). Reyes's *Conducting a Map Collection Review* (reviewed by our new editor, Jack Swab) provides a concrete set of processes to follow when faced with the daunting task of library deaccession; while Shepard's *Mapping with Altitude* reviews approaches towards handling altitude and verticality in map representation (reviewed by Balram). Finally, *The Infographics Lab 2023–24 Anthology* (reviewed by Phillips) offers a reflective, introspective analysis of the output of University of Oregon's prestigious data and design lab. Phillips calls out, in particular, the chapter on "slow mapping," a praxis I find increasingly important in a world beset by AI.

Finally, in *Views in Cartographic Education*, Ramsey offers a reflection upon and advice for the creation of formal mentoring programs (here, the one NACIS recently instituted). A quote I wish all readers to see is simply that "Organizations are usually more than happy to let you create something, as long as you are willing to step up to lead it" (65) as I think it embodies the ethos and importance of NACIS (and, by extension, *Cartographic Perspectives*). We are an organization fundamentally built by members to serve members. In these extremely uncertain times—where many organizations are facing existential crises as a result of rapidly shifting financial terrain—I think it's important to end 2025 by recalling that. NACIS is its membership and *Cartographic Perspectives* is here to serve them. So, in conclusion, if there are ideas (even wholly new sections) that you think would serve the NACIS community, please, reach out to me. A fully open-access journal with no page fees is an anomaly in this world of for-profit scholarly production regimes; let's treasure and foster its growth together.

See you in 2026 with new policies, a new special issue (organized by Will B. Payne and Eve McGlynn) and much more!

As always, thank you.

***Jim Thatcher***

