LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

First and foremost, I would like to apologize for the brief delay in delivering issue 109 to our readers. For those wondering, we aim to have the fall issue out around the time of the NACIS conference. The delay this year was not due to a lack of excellent content, as you'll see shortly; but rather our efforts to address a few ancillary issues we think will bring real value to our community.

The most important of these is a **readership survey** that we would like to encourage every reader to consider taking. One of the more humbling aspects of running a journal with nearly four decades of publication history—one that includes some of the more influential pieces in modern cartography—is the knowledge that what I write here may end up read by interested parties decades down the line. In that case, I regret to inform you we likely won't be taking into consideration your responses to this survey; but, if you're able to respond by the end of 2026, I assure you we will.

At the editorial board meeting during the NACIS conference, we had much to discuss, particularly around the ways that generative artificial (or is it now "super"?) intelligence has reshaped, and will continue to reshape, both the practice of cartography and our study thereof. Specifically, we asked ourselves how the journal should deal with the use of generative AI in submissions. As may be expected, opinions ran the gamut; but, with respect and care, we found a path forward we're planning to institute. I expect to announce and publish it with our upcoming winter issue (110, the last of 2026).

Now, as to this issue, it is filled with the wide range of high-quality cartographic work that defines our journal. Each of the three research articles is one that I've been looking forward to sharing with our readership. Roth et al. provide an empirical investigation of what types of maps have been appearing in popular news media over the past years. Following up on some of the authors' own works (notably Roth 2021 and Kelly 2022), this study finds "a decrease in the use of maps in news stories and a simplification of these maps from 2014 to 2021" (43), which unsurprisingly aligns with pressures to lower costs, increase speeds, and—of course—enact the "cartographic silencing" found in some conservative media (Fish and Kreitzberg 2023, 2492). In particular, I was interested in the decline in news map interactivity, and I am curious as to how the availability of automated coding through LLMs may impact newsrooms moving forward (though this is not an endorsement of such).

The Mapes and Spence piece is, to me, just a wonderful cartographic study. It builds from the principle that we design spaces based upon our societal and cultural values and that mapping said spaces can reveal those values. Embracing counter- and critical mapping traditions, it ground-truths equity in access to bathrooms on a college campus. Methodologically interesting and sound, topically relevant, and well written, it's a piece I am delighted to share with our readers.

Finally, we have a piece by Inwood et al. that explores the educational comics of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee from the 1960s, which they argue "represent an example of an insurgent counter-mapping of political power and the imagining of Black socio-spatial futures" (6). While the authors acknowledge that these comics do "not look like 'traditional' maps," it is that very difference which made them "all the more powerful" (22). From newsrooms to bathrooms to voting rights, taken together these articles demonstrate the range and power of cartography—both in its praxis and its study.

In addition, we have a mix of section content on offer. De Róiste follows up on our **special issue** on ethics in cartography by tying that frame directly to education: starting from the principle that "geographic context matters" (69), she develops a praxis in which "a good educator is in a constant state of becoming rather than achieving" (75). As I, once more, muddle towards the end of a too busy term, those words struck a chord. We then have six book reviews ranging from *Maps on Vinyl* (a "fun excursion through a compilation of cartographic artifacts," 96) to a new entry into Belt Publishing's "(City) in 50 Maps" series (*Pittsburgh in 50 Maps*, which balances "the serious and the silly," 89). Other books include *Around the World in 200 Globes*, *Drink Maps in Victorian Britain*, *The Spice Ports*, and *Shelter: An Atlas*. Reviewers found much to enjoy in each, and I hope at least one ends up on your shelf.

As always, I remain honored to serve as editor of *Cartographic Perspectives* and look forward to hearing from our readers through both the **survey** and any other means.

Best,
Jim Thatcher

REFERENCES

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