The Map Library in the New Millennium

Edited by Robert B. Parry and Chris R. Perkins. London: Library Association Publishing, 2001. 267 pages. $67.50, hardcover. (ISBN: 0-8389-3518-4).

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The Map Library in the New Millennium is a collection of invited essays on the state of map librarianship during a time of turmoil: the present. The cause of the turmoil is the inclusion of digital spatial data into the midst of the traditional library environment aided and abetted by the availability of geographic data in digital form and the ubiquitous desktop computer with GIS software. This digital data, accompanied by the means to manipulate it, provides a vast array of possibilities and complications for librarians when added to their traditional duties that have revolved around caring for collections of paper maps and aerial photographs.

R.B. Parry, Senior Research Fellow and Map Curator, University of Reading (England) and C.R. Perkins, Senior Lecturer in Geography and Map Curator, University of Manchester (England), are the editors of this seventeen-chapter volume. Over the past decade they have collaborated on three other works of interest to map librarians and those undertaking research in the fields of geography and cartography: *World Mapping Today* (1987 and 2000), *Information Resources in Cartography* (1990), and *Mapping the U.K.* (1996). In this volume they have invited thirteen experienced cartographers, GIS specialists, and map librarians/curators to examine the role of the map library in an environment that is becoming increasingly digital. The contributors, including Parry and Perkins, are from the United Kingdom (6), the Netherlands (1), New Zealand (1), Canada (1), and the United States (5) with seven of the authors associated with departments of geography or geomatics, six associated with libraries, one map publisher, and one map dealer.

The introductory chapter, by Parry and Perkins, is a review of the evolution of map librarianship and chapter 2, by Carol Marley (McGill University) is an introduction into basic map reference and how it is being changed by the inclusion of digital spatial data. Chapter 3 by Nick Millea (Oxford) discusses how external changes (e.g., legislation, government mapping production, technological advances) have impacted library administrations and their subordinate map libraries. Chapter 4, written by Patrick McGlamery (University of Connecticut) provides an overview of automation of general library functions as well as the impact of GIS on map libraries and in chapter 5, Jennifer Stone Muilenburg (University of Washington), introduces GIS and discusses the results of a survey on the use of advanced technologies in map libraries in the spring of 2000. Parry, in chapter 6, discusses cartographic packages on CD-ROM while Michael Peterson (University of Nebraska), chapter 7, and Menno-Jan Kraak (ITC), chapter 8, discuss the wide variation of maps available on the Internet and the World Wide Web. In chapter 9, Jan Smits (Koninklijke Bibliotheek) explains the importance of metadata and the various standards that are being used and developed around the world. Chris Baruth (University of Wisconsin) in chapter 10 examines how the new technology assists in protecting old maps while increasing their dissemination. In chapter 11, Perkins reviews spatial data, considering how access has changed over time, while Robert Barr (University of Manchester) considers intellectual property rights and their effects on document delivery in chapter 12. Pip Forer (University of Auckland) in chapter 13 compares the traditional mapping industry to the new digital one while examining the effects on map library practices. In chapter 15, David Fairbairn (University of Newcastle) considers the changes in the expectations of map users due to the availability of digital data and services. Moving out of academic circles, Alan Godfrey (Alan Godfrey Maps), in chapter 14, considers the benefits of traditional paper maps and charts as a publisher-historian and worries that map librarians may be moving toward a future that will change research opportunities, while Russell Guy (OMNI Resources) discusses how map dealers have changed their methods of map acquisition and face new marketing techniques and competition while pondering the possible future of the business of maps in chapter 16. The final chapter is a debate on the future of map libraries and map librarianship in academic institutions between Perkins and Parry. Nearly each chapter concludes with an extensive list of references, electronic as well as printed, and the book includes a three-page listing of acronyms and is indexed.

The goals of the authors of this volume were to provide a means for examining the current state of affairs within academic map libraries and open discussion as to their probable future configurations. While not intending to be the final word on what should be occurring in every instance, the contributors were asked to assess the current trends and their impacts on librarians/curators and users of spatial data. These goals have been met to the extent that the chapters have tried to touch on internal as well as external changes in administration,

acquisitions, cataloging, and reference duties while reviewing the arrival and increasing importance of digital spatial data in geographic research as well as the World Wide Web as a delivery method. It is a wide territory, covering, as it does, historical as well as current events in map librarianship.

The major change in map librarianship over the past twenty years has been the inclusion of GIS into the map library, which is an outgrowth of what might be called the digital revolution. Contributors Marley, McGlamery, and Stone-Muilenburg assume libraries should provide GIS services because of the increasing amounts of digital data being acquired by them. This is an understandable decision because there is little more frustrating to librarians then having physically inaccessible (digitally "locked" or "invisible") materials in a collection when there are patrons who want to make use of them but who lack the ability to do it themselves. While multiple authors supported the idea of GIS and digital spatial data having a natural home in the map library, the discussions varied as to what cartographic services might be provided under the umbrella term of GIS. Are map librarians limiting themselves to producing outline maps and simple distribution maps or are they trying to help users correlate and analyze data in order to produce the more sophisticated statistical maps? No author suggested that perhaps there were boundaries beyond which map librarians might be wise not to venture, although the Association of Research Libraries report (Soete, 1997) quoted by McGlamery (p. 51) noted that GIS technicians could provide cartographic support in map libraries in the future while librarians would fill managerial roles. Interestingly, while Marley (p. 23, 25) and Stone-Muilenburg (p. 67-68) peripherally mentioned the additional educa-

tional needs of map librarians in a GIS environment, and Perkins (p. 249) commented on some of the new skills required, there was no single author who focused on what might actually constitute an adequately trained map librarian in the Twenty-first Century.

Although Millea (p. 36-37) referred to the decision by some North American map libraries to add cartographic laboratory functions to their traditional responsibilities as radical, it does not seem radical enough to deal with the complexities and vast quantities of available spatial data, digital or not. Map libraries, by leaping on the digital bandwagon, are attempting to insure their continued existence by trying to control access to spatial data by providing GIS services. While it is the right of any institution to protect its future existence, it is unlikely that map libraries, or even most libraries, are funded well enough to provide cartographic laboratories sufficient in size to handle all the patrons who could potentially benefit from using digital spatial data in their research. If digital spatial data and GIS are to be provided across the board to all library users then funding those facilities (building space, hardware, software, and staffing costs) must be seen as the responsibility of the highest authority, the university administration. It is not that North American map librarians are so radical; it is that they have not yet noticed that their choices have changed their mindset and mission before a new institutional setting and funding have been established.

However, according to materials found on the World Wide Web, Harvard University has two projects/proposals under consideration that could be the beginnings of that new setting: the Harvard Geospatial Data "Liboratory" and a Virtual Data Center for quantitative social science data. The "Liboratory" suggests providing access to geospatial data

throughout Harvard's libraries and laboratories, not restricting access to it from the map collection alone. While providing GIS access is not specified, one of the tasks is:

> "Install and maintain a web-based geo-spatial mapping service that allows visualization, exploratory analysis, subsetting and format conversion of digital geospatial data holdings."

The Virtual Data Center (VDC) for quantitative social science data is an expansion of the role that the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) has played for American universities for many years. This proposal discusses developing a software layer that would enhance user access and permit the linking of distributed data sets from many sites thus enlarging the database. Because this is virtual, those patrons requiring individual assistance would still need someone and/or someplace to go, but that someplace could be any location that the institution decided to establish, be it a library or a teaching laboratory. If the institutional will existed, a seamless facility, providing the archival and reference functions of a library and the teaching function of a teaching laboratory, could be designed to provide access to geospatial data no matter what the format.

The Map Library in the New Millennium is an excellent work on modern map librarianship that provides seventeen chapters guaranteed to educate and provoke the reader. The editors, R. B. Parry and C. R. Perkins, are to be commended on several accounts. They have chosen contributors who have provided informative and engaging essays on topics of interest to map librarians and have organized and edited the chapters so that the volume does not feel as if it has a multitude of authors. Almost as valuable as the text itself are the

references listed at the end of each chapter; they are a gold mine of international publications and Web resources.

This book is recommended to all map or geospatial librarians, whether or not they are located in academic collections. They have the hardest path in the future and it would serve them well to learn what has been tried and what is left to accomplish. A number of contributors made suggestions for further research, so a careful reading will provide practicing map librarians with suggestions for publications and presentations. While library administrators will find much of interest in these chapters, they may find that the chapters by Millea, Peterson, Kraak, Barr, Fairbairn, and the Perkins and Perry debate will cover topics of immediate interest to them. Geography and GIS faculty, as well as other non-librarians, should gain insight into what is at stake if map libraries should be allowed to decline or disappear instead of evolving into something else.

Only one addition and one correction are suggested. In the Introduction (p. 2), the date of the establishment of the Geography & Map Division, Special Libraries Association, was not stated. The Division was established in 1941. Also in the Introduction (p. 6), the North American Cartographic Information Society is given as the North American Cartographic Association.

Harvard Geospatial Data "Liboratory" http://www.provost.harvard.edu/harvard_mip/libor_sum.html

King, Gary, Principal Investigator (1988) *An operational Social Science Digital Data Library* http://www.dli2.nsf.gov/projects/harvardproposal.html

Parry, Robert B. and C.R. Perkins (1987) *World Mapping Today*, Butterworths.

— (2000) *World Mapping Today*, 2nd ed., Bowker-Saur.

Perkins, C.R. and R.B. Parry (1990) *Information Resources in Cartography*, Bowker-Saur.

— (1996) *Mapping the U.K.: Maps and Spatial Data for the 21st Century*, Bowker-Saur.

Soete, G. (1997) *Issues and Innovations in Geographic Information Systems: Transformation Libraries*; 2, ARL Office of Leadership and Management Services.

Map Library Bulletin Board

The Ohio State University Libraries Map Room

The Map Room of the William Oxley Thompson Memorial (Main) Library at the Ohio State University houses a unique collection of cartographic materials on campus. There are approximately 80,000 maps in the collection. The Map Room also maintains a reference collection of over 3,000 atlases, gazetteers, journals, bibliographies and books on mapping and cartography. While the Map Room map collection may seem small for a large research library of Ohio State's size, it should be kept in mind that there is a second library collection of maps on campus — in the Geology Library. The Geology Library map collection houses a complete set of current USGS topographic maps at the 1:24,000 scale, as well as tens of thousands of geologic maps from mapping agencies all over the world.

The Map Room staff consists of one full-time librarian and one student assistant. The student works approximately 12 hours per week. The Map Room is open from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The Map Room in the Main Library retains a complete set of the USGS 1:24,000-scale topographic sheets for the following states: Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. The collection also includes a complete run of the 1:250,000- and 1:100,000-scale United States topographic and planimetric sheets.

Until recently the Map Room was a full map depository for the maps of the Canada National Topographic System distributed by the Canada Map Office. This collection includes basic scale maps (1:50,000) and the national series (1:250,000). The 1:50,000-scale series contains over 12,000 sheets, while the 1:250,000-scale series is made up of some 900 sheets. The library also receives the MCR sheets of the National Atlas of Canada Reference Map Series as part of this depository program. However, a few years ago the depository agreement was revised and the Canada Map Office suspended the free distribution of the 1:50,000-scale topographic maps to most American map libraries within the program, while continuing to ship the National Atlas of Canada Reference Map Series sheets. Fortunately, the production rate of the basic scale maps has slowed over the past couple of years. And since fewer sheets have been issued during this period, we have been able to purchase the new 1:50,000-scale maps of Canada as they have been released.

Another large and valuable collection in the Map Room is a series of nautical charts distributed by the Coast Survey of the National Ocean Service, a division of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). These