Atlas of Oregon CD-ROM
James E. Meacham, Erik B. Steiner, Editors
2-CD set, PC and Mac Compatible, $49.95

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Some time after receiving the *Atlas of Oregon, Second Edition*, this reviewer also received a copy of the *Atlas of Oregon CD-ROM* (two compact disk set). While a considerable amount had been previously heard regarding the printed version of the atlas, less had been heard about the CD-atlas so it was approached with fewer preconceptions.

The CD-atlas authors address the purpose of its creation in the introductory material on the first disk. They note that the CD-atlas was created to use the thousands of maps developed during the Oregon Atlas book project and to "develop new and compelling ways to present the same information using multimedia design tools". They also note that the CD-atlas is *not* intended to compete with or be a replacement for the printed atlas, but it is rather intended to be a "complementary reference and learning tool".

The CD-atlas operated without difficulty on both a Macintosh G4 computer (OS 9.2) and an older Dell Optiplex computer (Windows NT). The Macintosh required the installation of the CarbonLib extension that is included on the first atlas disk. Once the extension was installed, the CD version worked well. It initially seemed the CD response time was slower than most readers would prefer. This impression changed when the CD-atlas was used in a new Dell Optiplex computer (Windows XP) that also contained a current and considerably speedier CD reader. The CD-atlas response times were noticeably quicker on this computer making the CD-atlas considerably more enjoyable to use.

In its appearance, the *Atlas of Oregon CD-ROM* is visually harmonious with the printed version of the atlas. Choice of colors, fonts, and design elements is attractive. While the CD design contains more visual elements than the cover design of the book, it is tastefully packaged. The contents of the first disk are analogous to the contents in the thematic portion of the printed atlas. The second disk contains reference maps and aerial photos.

Once the CD-atlas is initiated, a title page appears. Along with the title, this page displays a colored globe centered on Oregon, and four "clickable" options. The "*Introduction*" option leads to a single-page display that gives a general description of the CD-atlas and goals behind its creation. The "*About the Atlas*" option leads to another page of options where one can learn about the CD-atlas authors and designers, read acknowledgements, publication and copyright information, etc. The remaining options allow the CD-atlas reader to "*Begin*" or "*Quit*".

When the CD-atlas reader selects the "*Begin*" option, a display appears that is equivalent to the *Table of Contents* in the printed version of the atlas. A general description of the CD-atlas, disk 1 display is as follows.

Three main sections of information: *Human Geography*, *Economy,* and *Physical Geography* are indicated by large buttons at the bottom left half of the screen. When the cursor pauses on these buttons, a fly-up menu of topics within that section appears. Once a topic is selected, it changes color to assist the user in remembering which topics have or have not been selected. It should be noted that while the topics are often the same as those in the book version of the atlas, they are not always identical. Because of this, readers wishing to examine the treatment of the same topic in both versions of the atlas might occasionally experience minor confusion.

Four buttons appear at the bottom right side of the screen. These buttons are assigned the functions of printing the screen on a page of paper, showing a state map of Oregon, providing user help, and returning the user to the opening screen of the CD-atlas.

The button assigned to show the state map of Oregon is particularly noteworthy. This option displays a full-screen state map with main layers to show *Counties*, *County Seats*, *Rivers and Lakes*, and *Relief*. Each of these four layers also contains a sub-layer that shows labels of the layer's features. The layers can be toggled on or off so it is possible to make separate maps containing any combination of these layer features. It is especially useful that this state map of Oregon can be accessed quickly, at any time, and it is printable. The CD-atlas reader can easily print useful and attractive base maps of Oregon either with or without labels. Readers should heed the advice in the "Quick Tips" section of the User's Guide informing that best printing results when "landscape" is selected in the printer settings.

Each map contains its own interactive settings. These settings aid in navigation and in many cases allow the reader to interact with the map data, see additional graphics, or read additional information. The level and type of interactivity varies from one page to the next. In addition to their value in navigation, viewing, and interaction, these actions become educational. The act of panning around the state to see what is being shown at a particular location or zooming in for closer examination allows the reader to repeatedly interact with the counties, locations, and physical features of the state. Readers

of the CD-atlas (especially the "non-Oregon" readers) will likely master knowledge of place and feature locations in the state more efficiently than will readers of the printed atlas. This seems even more certain since the reader of the CD-atlas is only a button-click away from the extremely convenient state map of Oregon that has already been mentioned. While the printed atlas suffers from lack of such a handy reference map, especially among the thematic maps, the CD-atlas provides this in a superb fashion.

The importance of being able to cross-reference or compare maps was briefly discussed in the review of the printed atlas. Since this is so fundamental in a reader's use of an atlas, it deserves a second mention. In a conventional atlas, cross-referencing or map-comparison often becomes an onerous exercise of page number memorization, page marking, or repeatedly returning to the *Table of Contents*. The CD-atlas however, provides tools to considerably increase the ease and efficiency with which cross-referencing or map-comparison is performed. The CD-atlas furnishes easy-to-find buttons for clicking and quickly moving from one map to another. One can simply use the "clickable" *Table of Contents* however the designers have added an extra tool very useful for moving between maps. There is a button at the top of the screen labeled "*Compare*". This button allows the reader to instantly switch between two different maps with a single click. Cross-referencing or comparison by use of maps has never been quicker or easier.

The maps contained in the CD-atlas maintain the high graphic quality of the maps found in the printed version. Of course the finest lines and most subtle color differences found on the printed page suffer somewhat when viewed on a computer monitor and can differ markedly when viewed on different monitors. However given the limitations of RGB monitor viewing, the maps remain graphically pleasing and seemed impressively similar to the printed versions. Quality control appears to have been carefully conducted. While comparing several maps between the CD-atlas and the printed atlas, only one map in the CD-atlas was found to be missing a type label that was included on the same map in the printed atlas.

The contents of the second disk in the CD-atlas set include aerial photos from selected locations in Oregon. These locations are: Alsea Bay, Astoria, Belknap Crater, Crater Lake, Hells Canyon, Hood River, Mount Hood, Portland, Smith Rock, Umatilla, and Warner Valley. No rationale was visible to explain the inclusion of photography from these specific locations. One could perhaps assume this photography covers specific physical or environmental features in Oregon. Since they are from different regions in the state, perhaps the purpose of the photos is simply to demonstrate Oregon's ecological diversity. This section is not included in the printed atlas. Similarly, the printed atlas contains a reference section not found in the CD-atlas.

It has long been this reviewer's preference to read text and view graphics on a printed page rather than on a monitor screen. Initially, using the two versions of the *Atlas of Oregon* did not alter this preference though it was soon evident that the *Atlas of Oregon CD-ROM* possesses distinct advantages when compared to its printed counterpart. One of its advantages lies simply in the fact that such a well-produced atlas exists on CD-sized media. The convenience of having the *Atlas of Oregon* on two compact disks provides a tremendous payoff in terms of the density of good quality information provided per amount of storage "real estate" required.

The more the CD-atlas was used, however, the more its interactive qualities became valued. This aspect makes using the atlas both enjoyable and educational. In the opinion of this reviewer, this is the most important way in which the CD-atlas complements the printed version of the *Atlas of Oregon*. It allows the reader to manipulate images, view the data at varying scales, easily compare between maps and even print base maps for one's own use. These capabilities are what carry the atlas beyond merely being a reference tool to truly serving in the capacity of an educational tool.

Given the quality of the CD-atlas, not many suggestions for improvement come to mind, however there are two minor items. Flexibility in the use of this atlas would be increased with the inclusion of a "minimize" option to allow users to more conveniently use other software while keeping the CD-atlas active. Using the *Alt-Tab* or *Command-Tab* keys (*Alt-Tab* for Windows, *Command-Tab* for Macintosh) enables readers to alternate between different programs, however a minimize button located on the CD-atlas screen would be helpful. A second suggestion would be to place the "*Next Section*" button in exactly the same position throughout the atlas. This would allow the reader the option of quickly paging through the different sections of the atlas with his or her eyes remaining on the contents of the pages rather than having to shift to the top of the monitor to relocate a button because its location has shifted. Since the "*Previous Section*" button does appear to retain its position, the reader would have the option of going to the end of the material contained on each disk and quickly page toward the beginning. Again, these are certainly minor matters.

In comparison to print atlases,

production of atlases in electronically readable formats is still young. *Atlas of Oregon CD-ROM* succeeds in assisting the maturation of this process. It admirably achieves the goal of its designers that it becomes a complementary reference and learning tool to accompany the outstanding printed version of the *Atlas of Oregon*. The *Atlas of Oregon CD-ROM* is also most highly recommended.

The Map that Changed the World: William Smith and the Birth of Modern Geology
Simon Winchester. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers Inc. 10East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022, 2001. 325 pp, maps, diagrams, illustrations, suggested reading list, index. Hardcover. USA $26.00 Canada $39.50 (ISBN: 0-06-019361-1).

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Simon Winchester has a knack for digging up beautiful stories from the lost pages of history books. My introduction to Winchester came in the same delightfully surprising manner in which he spins his tales. I literally stumbled across Winchester's work one night in a dimly lit Nepali tea-house, tripping over a well-worn travelers copy of his remarkable description of the creation of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. As I carried that chronicle throughout my travels, Winchester's eye for historical detail and penchant for anecdote caused me to wonder, "Why I had never heard this story before?" Really, a mental institutionalite wrote the definitions quoted at keynote speeches and in term papers across the world? That book, *The Professor and the Madman*, succeeds in bringing vivid life to the creation of one of the most important, and commonly taken-for-granted, books of our time.

Winchester's most recent opus, *The Map that Changed the World*, succeeds in much the same way. Here, Winchester replaces the dictionary for something far more familiar to me, a geologic map. I must admit my bias here; I was excited to read this book from the moment it landed (again by chance) in my hands. If Winchester's writing had me excited about something as mundane as the dictionary, how could I *not* like this new tale about the creation of the world's first true geologic map? Bias aside, I loved this book. Even if you are not versed in the intricacies of geology, Winchester is able to describe the detail and significance of this map, entitled (in appropriately English fashion) "Delineation of the Strata of England and Wales with part of Scotland exhibiting the Collieries and Mines, the Marshes and Fen Lands Originally Overflowed by the Sea, and the Varieties of Soil According to the Variations in the Substrata, Illustrated with the Most Descriptive Names." Instead of repeating this loquacious title again, I will borrow a page from Winchester's account and subsequently refer to it as "the map". The map is one that defined the field of geology, marked a paradigm shift in scientific inquiry, revolutionized the coal industry which drove the industrial revolution in early 19th century England, and is the theoretical basis for the billions of dollars spent on modern petroleum exploration. While this wonderful cartographic element of the story is not to be understated, the true complexity and brilliance of the map is found through Winchester's riveting account of its cartographer, William Smith (1769-1839). The artistic mastery and scientific endeavor contained within the map was entirely the product of this singular man. Winchester's tale follows William Smith from the depths of a debtors prison, back to his childhood fossil digging days in Oxfordshire, across his young apprenticeship as a canal digger, and arrives at his peaceful retirement by the sea in Scarborough. His story is very readable throughout and supported by wonderful anecdotal tangents, that enliven the life, work, and historical context of William Smith in way that can only serve to honor one of history's great scientists and cartographers.

In Winchester's tale, we first meet this great scientist and cartographer as he emerges from a debtor's prison, penniless, hopeless, and thoroughly crushed by the conservative society of early 19th century England. In a time that should have been the pinnacle of Smith's career, he finds himself stripped of his due glory as the "father of modern geology," robbed of his priceless fossil collection, and thoroughly disconnected from the map he spent his lifetime creating. This paradoxical injustice was a product of the certitudes of religious dogma and class structure that defined Smith's world. Through this injustice, Winchester gives the reader a glimpse of what is to come in the book. More importantly, he uses this paradox to speak volumes about the historical context of Smith's life and work. Thus, in the first chapter, Winchester shows the reader the importance of Smith's work; it was to eventually crumble the foundations of English society. It was not Smith's original intention to begin this Copernican revolution, he was just a curious and innovative blacksmith's son from Oxfordshire. Smith was only revolutionary in that he innately possessed what is now known as a scientific method.