

tickets on specific rail lines. Some railroad maps were even purposely manipulated to make the routes to the mineral fields look shorter or closer in proximity than they actually were in order to gain passengers.

Railroads also made tourism possible on a much grander scale than previously imagined. Yellowstone National Park was presented to the public in an imaginative 1884 mapping brochure called *Alice's Adventures in New Wonderland*, which shows the Lewis Carroll heroine enjoying the park's natural splendor. Another tourist publication of the period compared the Colorado Rockies with the Swiss Alps.

The final entry in *Mapping Manifest Destiny: Chicago and the American West* describes the establishment and rise of Rand McNally, a name now synonymous with private sector mapping products. William H. Rand and Andrew McNally came to Chicago in the 1850s. They began as printers and stationers before moving into map publishing in the 1870s. They devised a unique system of mass production and a signature cartographic style that met a wide variety of consumer needs. Their maps were low in cost, simple in scope and carefully targeted to specific business audiences.

I found *Mapping Manifest Destiny: Chicago and the American West* an absolute delight to read. Each of the four main sections of the book is further broken down into related categories, and each category includes several illustrative maps. The chronological approach to each section, as well as to the book overall, provided a natural flow that thoroughly enhanced my enjoyment of its contents. The maps and compendium are skillfully arranged with minimal sequential overlap so that the reader is never compelled to go back and forth between sections in order to compare public and private sector approaches or subject matter within the same time period. The quality of the map reproductions is excellent throughout, as is the overall design and layout of each page, category, and section through the dispersion of color. It is simultaneously an informative and eye-pleasing book.

I would highly recommend this book to anyone with an interest in cartography, railroads, Chicago, the American West, history, or exploration. My favorite aspect of the book is that it presents the American West not as the legendary home of cowboys, Indians, gunfighters, and outlaws that we've seen romanticized in the movies and television series of the past few decades, but as it really was, through the eyes and art of the cartographers who actually experienced it firsthand. *Mapping Manifest Destiny: Chicago and the American West* takes the reader on an enlightening journey through time and place, with ample stopovers along the way for discovery, reflection, or simply enjoying the scenery.

Our Dumb World: The Onion's Atlas of The Planet Earth

Scott Dickers, editor-in-chief.

New York City, Little, Brown and Co., 2007.

245 pp., maps with fictitious sites, graphs with incorrect statistics, and altered photos.

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I must preface this review with the admission that I have often felt that most cartographers, including myself, take our work far too seriously. This volume puts that notion to rest, starting with the cover where the reader is informed of the dubious enticements to be found within: 1) fewer clouds on maps; 2) better-veiled xenophobia; 3) curvier latitude lines; 4) Bono-awareness rating for each nation; 5) long-standing border disputes resolved; 6) collectible flexi-disc with "The Smooth Sounds of Cartography"; 7) 30% more Asia; and 8) a free globe inside.

With that to greet the reader, we discover, upon opening the atlas, that no credit is given to anyone claiming to be a cartographer or even a mapmaker. The staff compiling this volume includes editors, designers, writers, photographers, and graphic artists. This group of wise guys has put together a book that tries to make fun of every state, country, race, ethnic group, national leader, cultural practice, sex, religion, activist group, animal, and landform. They have also designed the maps to help the reader misunderstand our world by playing on stereotypes and warping any facts to suit their sense of humor.

That aside, the first six pages cover topics often seen at the beginning of "normal" atlases: an introduction, a section on "How To Use This Atlas," and a brief section on the principles and history of cartography. The introduction includes what appears to be an antique map allegedly produced in 1621 and titled "Il Nostro Mondo Stupido," reputedly still in use by the Bush administration. The how-to section does its best to insult the reader's intelligence while advising that the atlas should be put back on the bookstore's bookshelf. Included in this section is the sage advice to use scissors on the atlas pages to resolve border disputes. The cartography section then informs the reader how boring our discipline is while providing an eclectic sample of thematic world maps, including distribution of wealth and Bono-awareness, the results of the Davidson family Risk night, a map to Erica's party, and continental drift. This last topic humorously depicts the rest of the world drifting away from the U.S. by 2015, which counters the similar image distributed by the AAG with the message, "We are not alone."

The body of the atlas is divided into continental sections, plus the Middle East. Strangely, the poles and Greenland are also treated separately but not noted in the table of contents. Related to this oversight, the country index at the back of the book lists the North and South poles with all of the countries, but fails to list Antarctica. Each section starts with a view from space of a "cloudless" satellite composite of the featured continent. Every country is presented with a map filled with points of satirical silliness, a flag accompanied by an off-the-wall comment, altered photos of people and places, and Facts and History sections filled with enough politically incorrect pseudo-facts to keep the reader confused. Before continuing, I must note that the number of four-letter words and sexual graphics used in this atlas will offend some people, and its humor is certainly not appropriate for young children.

As can be expected with a book published in the United States, the North America section is divided into regions of the U.S., followed by the other North American countries. Our country is described as "the land of opportunism at any cost—even life and liberty," and "In America, any millionaire can, through hard work and determination, exploit others to become a billionaire" (9). The American history time-line includes comments such as "[in] 1951, hysteria over communism spreads across nation. President Truman outlaws sharing", and then in "1967, The 'Summer of Love' is followed by the 'Autumn of Chlamydia'" (12).

Most of the maps that appear here and elsewhere in the book appear to be reproductions of isometric elevation maps with greens for lowlands through buffs to grayish-white for high altitudes, but no legends are indicative of that gradient. On closer inspection, the color gradients are not consistent between maps; for example, countries in the Saharan region all have only yellow and buff gradients. Regarding the legends, those that have map keys provide absurd categories, for instance, a seven-class map key for the U.S. is concerned with television viewing. The projections and scales used in this atlas are all unidentified and can only be guessed since no graticules are used, much less ones displaying "curvier latitude lines."

The northeastern region features New York, a state that's clearly an afterthought to New York City since Albany is "constantly nervous that [its] capital status will be revoked" (13). The South includes a variety of references to racism, country hicks, cigarettes, booze, and a reminder not to confuse the state of Georgia with the country of the same name. The Midwest, a.k.a. "America's Pit Stop," exists for folks on their way to and from places. The West region spotlights such states as Nevada, where everyone is a loser; Colorado, where altitude sickness prevails; and Montana, which serves as a national Wildman refuge. The Pacific

Coast states prevented America from expanding farther, while the extra states of Alaska, Hawaii, and Minnesota seem to exist to be exploited, viewed from a hotel room, and for no particular reason, respectively.

Other countries are treated equally well. Within Canada is identified the location in Quebec where a "French Canadian is ignoring a woman screaming for help in English" (24). Two important places to visit/avoid in Mexico include the strategic guacamole reserve in the south and a huge diarrhea slick off the west coast. As a banana republic, Guatemala's map key is divided into Dole, Del Monte, and Chiquita regions. Jamaica's tourist spots feature a national monument to the roach clip along with an archeological site where prehistoric traces of THC can be found.

South America presents such countries as Argentina, which boasts no fewer than six sites associated with elderly Nazis. The archipelago in southern Chile has an island-making factory. Venezuela's map key is coded to five different types of coup, while Peru has a mountain named after former president Fujimori where \$57,483,221 was embezzled. Suriname, we are told, is a country not worth bothering with.

African countries are treated to up-beat comments on colonialism, wars, racial and ethnic violence, corruption, AIDS, poverty, and starvation. These topics don't always work as subjects of humor. Nonetheless, the reader is presented with countries like Madagascar, a country supposedly ruled by lemurs, and Equatorial Guinea, which has to compete with Ecuador for equatorial tourism. Toponyms are addressed with the historical citation that "[In] 1964, Zanzibar joins Tanganyika to form the United Republic of Tanzania, a name created by a team of Madison Avenue advertising consultants to capture both the 'jungle exotica' and 'spicy zing' of the region" (77). This is contrasted with the Central African Republic, a nation so generically named to avoid the expense of branding.

The Middle East brings the reader such countries as Saudi Arabia, where "All Is Forbidden" (117); Yemen, which conducts terrorism's grunt work; United Arab Emirates, literally mapped so that its covered in gold; Iraq, which has been going downhill since ancient Mesopotamia; and Israel, "The Empty Promised Land" (129) with a map key indicating nothing but sacred sites. The bright spot of this region is Jordan, if only because its people are lucky enough to be ruled by the beautiful, charming, and awesome Queen Rania. Given that the Middle East is rarely geographically defined the same in any two atlases, Turkey plans to get "Totally Out of This Atlas Section as Soon as The EU Accepts Them" (133).

The Europe section, composed of countries large and small, has plenty of facts, anecdotes, and made-up information to keep the reader entertained for hours. For instance, Wales is noted as "the birthplace of the

Welsh language – the oldest, longest, and least-pronounceable language in the world” (139); Andorra is known as “The outlet mall of Europe” (147); Germany has “People you can set your watch to” (156); and Ukraine is identified as “The Bridebasket of Europe” (181). Subregions within the European countries include the Argyle Region of Scotland, a Rouge Light District of France, a Deneutralized Zone of Switzerland, and an Avant-Garde Region in the Czech Republic.

Asia contains such outsourcing powerhouses as China and India. China’s noted sites encompass locations where “employees [are] working 146 hour shift[s],” and a “city [is] reducing environmental problems by eliminating [the] environment” (190). Speaking of China, Tibet is dealt with separately in this volume, which will probably cause an official Chinese boycott of the atlas, thus increasing sales. In India, “Seeking answers to life’s most difficult questions, Westerners pray to Khandarohi, the Hindu God of Tech Support” (199). The nearby country of Myanmar’s borders are surrounded by countries looking the other way or pretending not to notice any human rights violations. Other countries in Asia are treated with disdain, i.e., Afghanistan as “Allah’s Cat Box” (203) and Cambodia, “Where the Streets are Paved with Skulls” (218).

The last few pages of the atlas cover what’s left of the planet, outside of the oceans. Oceania is depicted as essentially Australia, New Zealand, and just a bunch of other islands. Another reason that this book is not advisable for young children is that the authors ruin things for kids by pointing out that Santa is not at the North Pole. A map of the South Pole makes fun of the bogus claims by various countries over its territory. The book ends with a cartographic joke about Greenland as “The Largest Land Mass on Earth” (239). I suppose someone had to eventually poke fun at our profession regarding the old carto-controversy/conspiracy surrounding the Mercator projection.

Final criticisms include: Five countries are condemned to maps that fall across the crease of the book: US, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Italy, and Russia. Projections and scales are obviously variable but unknown. Allegedly, some countries may have paid the atlas producers to make them look bigger than their neighbors. Granted, some of the humor is adolescent, the language and graphics are often rougher than many readers would like, and the topics for some countries tend to be somewhat one-dimensional; but, overall, the atlas succeeds in making a hilarious presentation of our planet, forcing us to laugh at ourselves.