

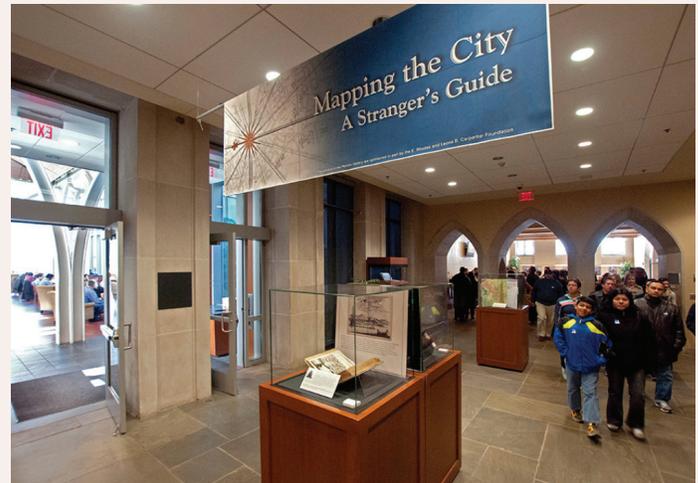
# Cartographic Collaborations at the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

Will Hansen  
Newberry Library  
hansenw@newberry.org

THE CARTOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS at Duke University's David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library stretch from atlases of the Age of Exploration to twentieth-century fire insurance maps. Historically, they have been built in conjunction with, and to support, holdings of rare books and manuscript collections in particular subject areas and geographic regions. These have included the American Southeast, the American Civil War, the British Empire, and Africa and African exploration. However, Library collecting staff has remained open to faculty input on desirable collections and individual maps outside of these areas. That has led to a collection with broad geographic range, containing true highlights and unique holdings, primarily used in teaching and instruction. The Library holds around 2000 flat maps, over 100 atlases, and thousands of maps and city views in books related to travel and exploration.

The Library's cartographic collections have seen increased use and visibility in the last three years. This is thanks in large part to collaborations with the faculty and students of the BorderWork(s) Lab, one of the Humanities Labs hosted by Duke University's Franklin Humanities Institute. The Lab, which was active from 2012 until May 2014, explored (per its website) "acts of division and demarcation" from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, but with a focus on "the human consequences of cartographic divisions." The cartographic collections were the basis of two large exhibitions curated by BorderWork(s) undergraduate students, which have led to a number of additional uses of the collections.

Philip Stern, co-director of the BorderWork(s) Lab and Associate Professor of History, has been a strong supporter of undergraduate students gaining hands-on experience with using primary sources, frequently bringing classes on the history of exploration and the British Empire to study



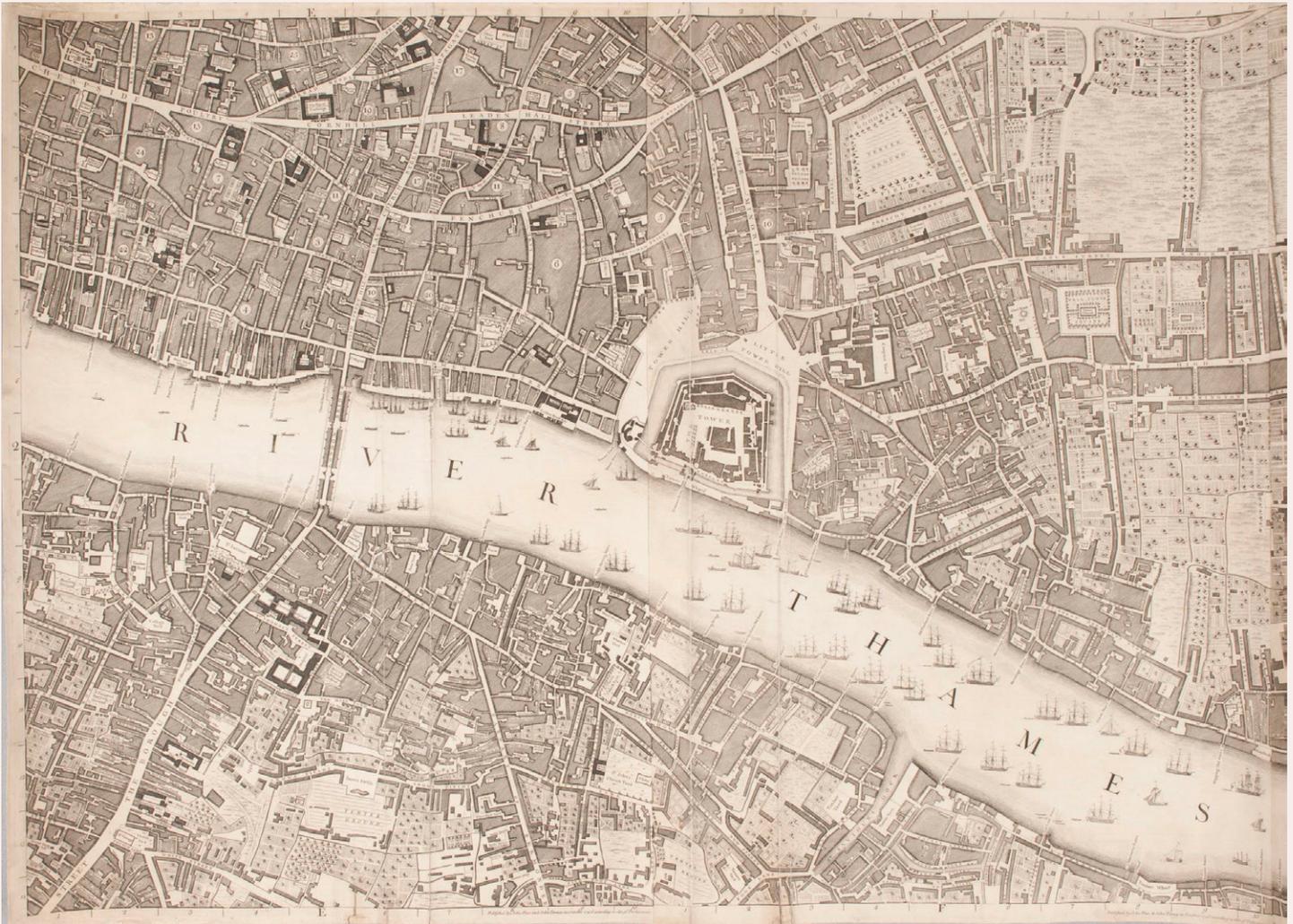
**Figure 1.** Exhibition space for "Mapping the City: A Stranger's Guide."

original maps, rare books, and archival resources. Building on this existing relationship, Dr. Stern approached Libraries staff, including myself and Meg Brown—E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation Exhibits Coordinator at Duke University Libraries—about facilitating an exhibition in the Library, as well as another at Duke's Nasher Museum of Art. A team of undergraduates worked with Dr. Stern and other faculty advisors, as well as Libraries staff, to identify potential topics and pertinent materials for the exhibits. The first exhibition, "Mapping the City: A Stranger's Guide," was on display from December 2012–March 2013.

"Mapping the City" included a range of maps and guide books for New York, London, Durham, NC, and other cities. It also featured a volume from the Library's complete, six-volume set of Willem Janszoon Blau's *Toonneel des Aerdriicx, ofte Nieuwe Atlas* (1648–55) and German festival books with city views of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.



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**Figure 2.** Rocque, John. 1746 [1749?]. A plan of the cities of London and Westminster, and borough of Southwark, with the contiguous buildings. Section Seven. London: John Pine & John Tinney



**Figure 3.** Miller, Frank T. 1929. Index sheet-map of Hope Valley Country Club & University Community. Durham, NC?: Hope Valley, Inc.



**Figure 4.** Blaeu, Willem Janszoon. 1648. Europa. In Tooneel des Aerdrickx, ofte Nieuwe Atlas, vol. 1. Amsterdam: Joan and Willem Blaeu.

The second exhibit, “Defining Lines: Cartography in the Age of Empire,” was on display at the Nasher Museum of Art from September to December 2013. This exhibit included maps of Latin America, Africa, and India, focusing on the roles of cartography in European colonial enterprises. It was a companion exhibition to a large, traveling art exhibition entitled “Lines of Control: Partition as Productive Space.” According to its website, this exhibition featured contemporary art about “the creation and maintenance of borders, both physical as well as psychological.”

Based on available maps as well as the exhibition space, “Defining Lines” had a greater emphasis on large sheet maps, though some atlases and bound volumes were also included. Highlights included two eighteenth- or early-nineteenth-century manuscript maps of areas of modern-day Bolivia by Spanish official Manuel Pantosa y Moreno, and *Neueste Karte von Hindostan...* by Franz Anton Schrämbl, a rare 1788 Austrian map based on James Rennell’s famous 1782 *Map of Hindoostan*.

The Library also digitized its copy of Abraham Ortelius’s *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1574) for the exhibition. The digital images of the atlas were able for browsing via an iPad display in the physical exhibition space.

Students also collaborated on digital versions of both exhibitions, creating a website for each with interpretive text and images of items. This allowed students to expand on their research findings beyond the limitations of explanatory labels in the physical exhibitions. For “Mapping the City,” the students included essays on “Types of Maps,” “How to Read a Map,” and “Maps and Art.” For “Defining Lines,” students wrote research essays on each item in the exhibition, and the site also provided background information on the process by which the exhibition was created. An essay on the website entitled “The Maps of Defining Lines” also reflects on the conjunction of cartography and colonialism, and includes a reference map that positions each map in the exhibition on a present-day world map, with a color-coded timeline for the dates of the maps.

The investment of time to assist students with finding, selecting, and exhibiting these maps has proven worthwhile for the Library. The students certainly received valuable experience in the history of geography and cartography, but also in curation, writing for a large and diverse public audience, and library and museum studies. The Library, in turn, has received increased exposure for its cartographic



**Figure 5.** Student curators (left to right) Rachel Fleder, Lauren Jackson, Elizabeth Blackwood, and Jordan Noyes discuss Hermann Habenicht’s *Spezial-Karte von Afrika* (1887) in the exhibition space for “Defining Lines: Cartography in the Age of Empire.”



**Figure 6.** Pantosa y Moreno, Manuel. ca. 1797–1817. Untitled manuscript map. From folio entitled *Alto Perù Cartas Topograficas*, In *Manuel Pantosa y Moreno Manuscript Maps*.



**Figure 7.** Schrämbl, Franz Anton. 1788. *Neueste Karte von Hindostan....* Wien.

collections, leading to further integration of the collections into the Duke curriculum in coming semesters, as well as other pedagogical opportunities. Visiting scholars hosted by BorderWork(s) have also been frequent users of the collections, thanks in no small part to their increased awareness of materials in the collections thanks to these exhibitions.

## REFERENCES

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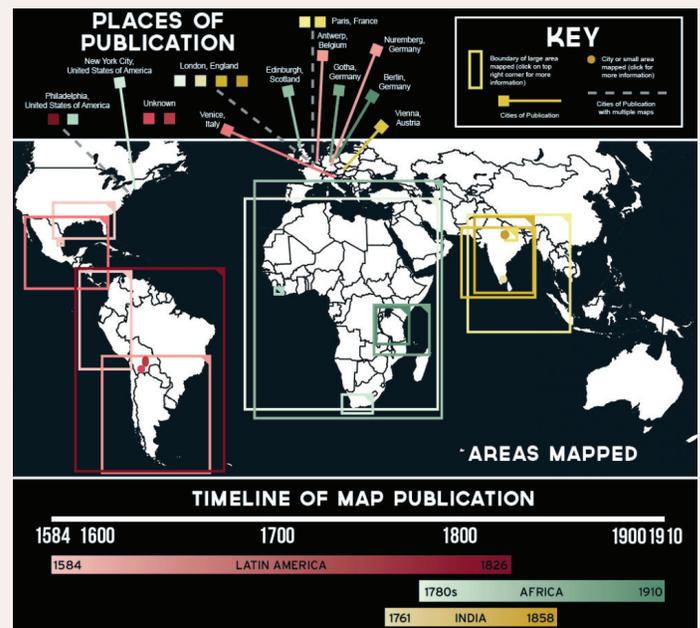
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**Figure 8.** Ortelius, Abraham. 1574. *Americae sive Novi Orbis Nova Descriptio*. In *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*. Antwerp: Ant. Coppenius Diesth.



**Figure 9.** The Maps of Defining Lines. Reference map and timeline for "Defining Lines: Cartography in the Age of Empire." Accessed May 1, 2014. <http://sites.fhi.duke.edu/defininglines/about-2/untitled/>.