



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

Narrative Section of a Successful Application

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Research Programs application guidelines at <https://www.neh.gov/grants/research/public-scholar-program> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Research staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

The application format has been changed since this application was submitted. For instance, narratives must now be no more than three pages. You must follow the guidelines in the currently posted Notice of Funding Opportunity (see above link).

Project Title: A History of America through 100 Maps

Institution: University of Denver

Project Director: Susan Schulten

Grant Program: Public Scholars

A History of America through 100 Maps
Susan Schulten

Significance and contribution

In November 1864, General William Sherman began the most audacious military campaign of the Civil War. After subduing the Army of the Tennessee in Atlanta, his men cut loose from supply lines to inflict as much damage as possible on the heart of the Confederacy. Sherman commissioned several maps to prepare for the operation, one of which was particularly innovative. This hand-annotated map made at the General's request by the Census Office identified not just rivers and roads, but *resources*: livestock, crops, and the population. Sherman himself later testified to the importance of this map. It showed him where to look for food to feed his men and starve the enemy. It mapped thousands of slaves that proved to be assets to the Union Army. But, to Sherman, the fundamental importance of the map was that it enabled him to conceive the operation in the first place, a campaign that "seemed a puzzle to the wisest and most experienced soldiers of the world." Simply put, the map *mattered*.¹

Sherman's testimony points to the rich yet often overlooked relationship between cartography and history. The map was a groundbreaking attempt to harness Census data for strategy, thereby reflecting the knowledge of the moment. Yet the map also shaped that strategy by allowing him to visualize a mission that ultimately accelerated the end of the war. This is precisely what makes maps so valuable: whether made for military strategy or urban reform, to encourage settlement or to investigate disease, maps both reflect and mediate change. They record efforts to make sense of the world in physical terms, and remind us that the past was lived in three dimensions. They tell us what people knew, what they thought they knew, what they hoped for, and what they feared. They invest information with meaning by translating it into visual form, and in the process reflect decisions about how the world ought to be seen. Above all, they remind us that the past is not just a chronological story, but also a spatial one. For all these reasons, maps constitute a gold mine for historical inquiry, yet one that remains mostly unexploited.

I apply for a Public Scholar Fellowship to complete a book that recasts five centuries of American history through one hundred maps. More precisely, I focus on the region that became the United States, though I also include maps that underscore the permeability of borders and the place of the nation in the wider world. The book is under contract with the British Library, and will likely be distributed in the U.S. by the publisher of my two previous books, the University of Chicago Press. Most of the maps are drawn from the Library, which is exceptionally strong on American material. Beginning with one of the first maps to identify the New World, the Library houses a wealth of unseen treasures that have tremendous potential to connect with readers. By asking how they were made—and explaining why they mattered—I reframe the history of America in a way that is both imaginative and visually engaging.

This history is not comprehensive. Instead I adopt an eclectic approach to capture the many uses of maps: to master and claim territory, defeat an enemy, advance a cause, investigate a problem, learn geography, advertise a destination, entertain an audience, and navigate terrain. The narrative is driven by visual material that ranges from the iconic to the unfamiliar, the official to the ephemeral; it encompasses maps of exploration, political conflict, and territorial control as well as education, science, and tourism. I address maps that wielded power, but also those made by people who rarely receive attention as mapmakers. These include the first generation of girls to be formally educated, young Hawaiian men under the tutelage of missionaries, African-American sociologists, German immigrants, and indigenous tribal leaders. By designing this project expansively, I guide readers through a visual landscape that speaks to the main currents of history while also inviting us to reconsider assumptions about the past.

For example, I have selected maps that anticipate not only Anglo America but also the contingencies of imperial exploration and indigenous presence. John Mitchell's 1755 map of the colonies is regarded as crucial, for the British Library copy was used to negotiate the boundaries of the United

¹ Susan Schulten, "Mapping Sherman's March," *New York Times/Disunion*, November 11, 2014. All subsequent maps and secondary sources are listed in the bibliography.

States at the Treaty of Paris in 1783. As such it is an incomparable example of a map that changed the course of history by establishing the nation's territorial foundation. Yet readers will be equally captivated by a Cherokee leader's deerskin map from the 1720s. At first glance the map is disorienting, for it represents space pictorially, in terms of tribal relationships rather than physical distance. But once deciphered, the map opens a window onto contemporary trade networks and cross-cultural connections. While the Cherokee, Chickasaw, and Catawba tribes sought to strengthen their ties to local English settlers, South Carolinians hoped to make Charleston the dominant port for Indian trade. In these and other ways this deerskin map tells us as much about eighteenth-century America as the celebrated Mitchell map; both are compelling documents that I use to frame dynamic moments in the nation's past.

I also aim to broaden the definition of American history through these sources. For instance, July 1776 is commonly associated with the signing of the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia. Yet at that very moment, a group of Spanish missionaries set off from Santa Fe to assert control over the region that would become Arizona, Utah, and Colorado. The Dominguez and Escalante expedition was charged with finding an overland route to California, but with limited geographical knowledge it soon became lost. Were it not for Ute guides, the expedition would not have survived the 2000-mile trek, nor would it have produced one of the most influential maps of the region. Drawn by Bernardo Miera y Pacheco, this map remained the most accurate picture of rivers in the southern Rockies for decades, yet it also includes a non-existent portage to the Pacific Ocean. Pacheco used elaborate iconography to claim the Southwest for the Spanish Crown, yet just as revealing is what he omitted. The Utes—whose geographic knowledge ensured the expedition's success—are identified as ethnographic subjects, their contributions to the map left unacknowledged. In these and other ways, the artifact reminds us that while the American Revolution was unfolding in one region of North America, complex ethnic and geopolitical exchanges between settlers and tribes preoccupied another. These relationships of power are inscribed on the map itself.

The place of maps in history extends far beyond exploration and diplomacy. Late nineteenth-century urbanization, for instance, sparked the use of cartography as a tool of reform. W.E.B. DuBois became one of the first to treat segregation as a spatial problem in his landmark sociological study, *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899). Though the city was home to the oldest and largest black population in the north, African Americans benefited little from its prosperity. To make sense of this, DuBois mapped the conditions of black neighborhoods, and in the process discovered that even elites were confined in a way that blocked their social mobility. By adopting a cartographic approach, DuBois joined a much larger conversation about the spatial politics of cities: Charles Booth mapped London's poor, Florence Kelley mapped Chicago's immigrants, New York reformers mapped the density of Manhattan's tenement districts, and—most notoriously—San Francisco's Board of Supervisors mapped vice in Chinatown in a vicious effort to control the Chinese population. Considered together, this frenzy of mapping reveals a great deal not just about race and ethnicity in the Gilded Age, but also the emergence of social science.

Work plan

My research will conclude with a visit to the British Library this June, where the current and former map curators have guided me toward relevant material that is relatively unknown to the public. I will continue to work on this book part time until I am eligible for a sabbatical beginning in April 2017. I then plan to work full time on the manuscript so that it is completed by March 2018, and the publisher expects to release the book that fall. I have organized the book into eight chronological chapters, each introduced with a 1500-word essay to frame major themes of the era, such as the imperial rivalries of the eighteenth century or the epic migrations of the nineteenth. These are followed by focused discussions of the maps that draw out their specific features and their greater significance. Structuring the narrative around these artifacts enables me to expose readers to a constellation of treasures, such as maps urgently drawn to trace the source of yellow fever in the 1850s, or those created by suffragists to advance the vote in the 1910s. Each one of these is an opportunity to tell dynamic, diverse, and consequential stories of history. Below is a description of each chapter with a just a few maps to illustrate their character.

1507-1580 Contact and European discovery: A 1507 printed map of the New World captures the state of

geographical knowledge after Columbus' voyage, while Hernán Cortes' 1524 chart of the Gulf of Mexico conveys contemporary views of geography and savagery toward the population. A succession of sixteenth century maps underscores the welter of claims made about North America by explorers and mapmakers. Central to this chapter is an exploration of Gerhard Mercator's 1569 chart of the world, which forced an entirely new understanding of the New World as well as transforming the look of maps themselves.

1580-1683 Settlement and conflict: We open with the unsolved disappearance of the Roanoke settlement, which can be better understood through newly discovered marks on a 1587 map of the colony. The primary emphasis in this chapter and the next, however, is the effort to *know* the land through maps of exploration and reconnaissance. The glorious maps of Samuel Champlain convey knowledge of the coast, the interior, and native tribes. The first map to be printed in the colonies ominously depicts the violence of King Philip's War, a situation that dramatically contrasts with the ideals found on maps made to advertise William Penn's colonies of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia, the first planned settlement in America.

1680-1783 Imperial and indigenous rivalries: The French and British quest to control the continent was played out not just on the ground, but also in maps that sought to claim the territory. A rare Cherokee deerskin map captures this rivalry on a local scale in South Carolina and Virginia, and also highlights the thick trade networks that integrated native and colonial communities throughout the Southeast. A map of slave trading posts places slavery at the center—rather than the margins—of colonial history. The chapter pivots on an influential Spanish map of the Southwest made at the outset of the Revolutionary War, juxtaposed with a map celebrating General Washington's victory at the Battle of Yorktown. Together these maps frame two distant theaters of ethnic interaction, political power, and military conflict.

1783-1837 A tentative nation: In a fragile new nation, maps held particular power. Charts of the Gulf Stream, climate, and vegetation underscore the preoccupation with science and agricultural growth, while the first postal map reflects the challenge of building a communication network over such a vast territory. Hand-drawn schoolgirl maps capture the ebullient national pride after the War of 1812 but also the drive to educate girls about the territory that constituted their national identity. This reformist impulse surfaces in Samuel Gridley Howe's atlas for the blind as well as a fictitious map designed to advance temperance. The chapter concludes with a unique copperplate map of the Sandwich Islands created by a Hawaiian native under the guidance of American missionaries who sought to "civilize" him through mapmaking.

1835-1860 Movement, mobility, and inequality: The themes of expansion and movement runs throughout this chapter, which begins with a Quaker map that details the removal of Indian tribes from the southeast. The rapid growth of the nation is chronicled in maps that resolved the nation's western frontiers, those that aided migrants on the road to Oregon and Utah, and those that solicited German immigrants from abroad. Though the nation had assumed its modern continental form by 1850, cartography played a crucial role in cultivating a shared national identity and attaching it to that enlarged territory. But such unity was rendered impossible by the growing sectional crisis, embodied by maps issued by the newly founded Republican Party in its quest to stem the growth of slavery into the western territories.

1860-1910 War and reconstruction, south and west: This chapter places the Civil War in a continental context. We begin with maps that convey the depth and character of the crisis, such as a crucial map of slavery in 1861 and an equally influential map of eastern Tennessee in 1863 that shaped Union strategy. The centerpiece is a dual treatment of two unique maps from 1864: a map of Georgia annotated with information for General Sherman as he prepared his march, and the first map of the Colorado Territory, annotated by a local justice to record the tensions that led to the devastating massacre of the Arapahoe and Cheyenne at Sand Creek. Discussed together, these maps help us reconsider the geography of the Civil War, slavery, the Indian Wars, and the effort to reconstruct the south and west at late century.

1875-1945 Stewardship at home and abroad: The nation became impossible to imagine, much less

govern, *without* maps after the Civil War. This widespread use of maps to control both people and land culminated in President Wilson's effort to redraw European borders at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference. The growth of American ambitions abroad is balanced by colossal engineering feats at home, manifest in maps advocating the Tennessee Valley Authority and flood control on the Mississippi. Communication and transportation technology radically shifted the experience of space, captured not just by road maps and aeronautical charts, but by the first animated map: Walt Disney's 1943 "Victory through Air Power." This world of heightened proximity prompted the adoption of distortion to convey the way that distance had collapsed, which oddly echoes the relational concepts of space presented in many indigenous maps.

1950-2000 *Maps for a mass society*: This chapter opens with the least familiar map in the volume, that of the North Atlantic Ocean floor, imaginatively drawn by Marie Tharp in 1957. This artistic impulse continues through the whimsical pictorial, literary, and tourist maps that pervaded mass culture at midcentury, marketed to a public with unprecedented access to leisure and travel. In contrast, a revolution in scientific mapmaking employed remote sensing and the advent of digital tools. I conclude with a humble yet evocative sketch map of the Internet in 1969, as well as a discussion of HTML, which is itself a "map" designed to organize, rationalize, and visualize the explosion of data in the digital realm.

Competencies, skills, and access

My prior work on the relationship of maps to history is grounded in years of research at some of the nation's richest map archives: the Library of Congress, the Newberry Library, the David Rumsey Map Collection, the Osher Map Library, the Huntington Library, the American Antiquarian Society, and the MacLean Map Collection. Through these collections I have come to appreciate the range of material that is available to broaden the audience for historic maps. Yet I do not consider this book to be a history of cartography *per se*; I am less interested in tracing the progress of discovery or the evolution of scientific cartography than in investigating the way that all types of maps influence and record history. In other words, this is a history *through* maps rather than a history *of* maps.

I have a long record of speaking to general audiences. My second book, *Mapping the Nation*, traced the meaning of graphic and cartographic knowledge from the 1780s to the 1930s, and was widely recognized for its original approach to American history, earning the Hundley Prize from Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association for the most distinguished work of history written by a scholar in the American or Canadian west. That award was based in part on a website that I designed to showcase the maps in the book, each of which was catalogued by a map librarian and freely available for download. I also maintain a blog on that site which continues to engage the meaning of historic maps. In this regard I have treated *Mapping the Nation* as a public conversation rather than a static document.

I have written frequently about maps and history for popular outlets, such the *New Republic* and *The Economist*. From 2010 to 2014 I wrote a collection of nineteen articles exploring the politics and geography of the Civil War for the "Disunion" series at the *New York Times*. For the past decade, I have contributed to several exhibits and documentaries, and since 2010 have delivered over fifty public lectures and workshops to the general public. The response to my work reveals a healthy public appetite for original, substantive treatments of history that use maps as both pieces of evidence and works of art.

Final product and dissemination

My scholarly record and experience working with the public prepares me to write a book that both educates and entertains a wide audience about the power of maps to illuminate history. The British Library's editorial and marketing departments have brought strong press to its historical publications. I had equally positive experience with the University of Chicago Press, which earned my books reviews not only in academic journals, but also in *The New Yorker*, *Reviews in American History*, and on public radio. My own website has attracted attention from *Slate*, *Wired*, and *Fast Company*, as well as from teachers, geographers, historians, and map enthusiasts. My active schedule of speaking engagements will enlarge and enhance the audience for this book just as it did for *Mapping the Nation*. Support from the NEH will enable me to complete this project in a timely way. Thank you for your time and consideration.

A History of America through 100 Maps

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Philip D. Burden, *The Mapping of North America* (London, 1996 and 2007)
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Charles Paullin and John Wright, *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the U.S.* (Washington, D.C. 1932)
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Seymour Schwartz and Ralph Ehrenberg, *The Mapping of America* (New York, 1980)
Rodney Shirley, *Maps in the Atlases of the British Library* (London, 2004)
Richard Stephenson and Marianne McKee, *Virginia in Maps* (Richmond, 2000)

Selected maps referenced in the proposal, listed chronologically:

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John Mitchell, “A Map of the British Colonies in North America” (London: Jeffreys and Faden, Geographers to the King, 1755), BL
Don Bernardo de Miera y Pacheco, “Plano geografico de la tierra descubierta,” (1778), BL
Sebastian Bauman, “Map of the investment of Yorktown and Gloucester” (1782), BL
Abraham Bradley, “Map of the United States, exhibiting the post roads” (Philadelphia, 1796), BL
Kalama, “Na Mokupuni O Hawaii Nei” (LahainaLuna, 1837), Library of Congress
D. Burr map of Georgia, annotated by Census Office (c1864), National Archives RG 77 US 266
“Official Map of Chinatown in San Francisco,” in Willard B. Farwell, *The Chinese at Home and Abroad* (San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft, 1885), BL
W.E.B. DuBois, “The Seventh Ward of Philadelphia,” in *The Philadelphia Negro: a social study* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1899), BL
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Marie Tharp, “Physiographic Diagram of the Atlantic” (1957), David Rumsey Map Collection