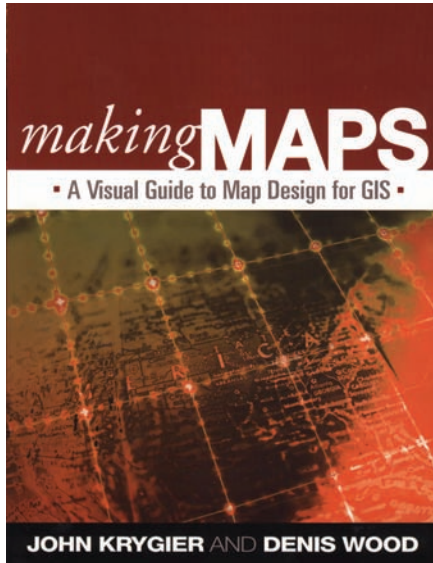


Book Review



Making Maps: A Visual Guide to Map Design for GIS

John Krygier and Denis Wood

The Guilford Press: New York, NY. 2005. xi and 303 pp., diagrams, maps, index. ISBN 1-59385-200-2.

Hardcover. \$99.95

Reviewed by

Karen M. Trifonoff, Professor, Department of Geography and Geosciences, Bloomsburg University

In this volume John Krygier and Denis Wood provide cartographers and geographic information systems (GIS) professionals with a primer on the basics of maps and map design. The purpose of this book is to get readers excited about making maps and to show the importance of good map design and the role of creativity in the cartographic process. This book is a compact, readable volume, and would appeal to several different groups. First, it would be of interest to those teaching introductory cartography or GIS courses where map design issues are introduced. Second, since many GIS courses taught outside of geography departments, or by people with a limited background in cartographic techniques, this volume would be useful as both a guide for instructors and as a textbook for the students. And lastly for people working in GIS settings, it would serve as an indispensable office reference to consult on a daily basis for assistance with mapping dilemmas.

The book is divided into twelve chapters. The first five chapters deal with the preliminary steps in the map making process (i.e., establishing the purpose of the map, locating mappable data, understanding map projections), and the remaining chapters explore the topics of map layout and design (i.e., symbolization, layout, critique and evaluation). Each chapter includes a list of sources and informative map notes.

Making Maps is a visual adventure, with numerous maps and diagrams taking the place of text. It begins, not with words, but with a series of maps and map-like images designed to provide a visual text instead of a verbal one. Chapter 1, "It's a Map," entices readers to reflect on their definition of a map and why maps are such powerful images. Through the images the reader is visually encouraged to think about what exactly maps are and how they relate to culture, time, and place. Each page contains a brief paragraph of text and one or more maps that illustrate the point of the page. For example, page four introduces the topic of geographic information systems (GIS) with a brief explanatory paragraph and the typical diagram of map layers. The following page provides a specific example of a GIS application (forest change in Tennessee), again with a brief paragraph and map, but it is the intriguing map layout that is really the focus of the page and that demands the reader's attention.

The illustrations are the focal point of each chapter, with the text relegated to a supporting role. By replacing pages of text with clear, concise visual examples, the authors manage to provide a wealth of material on the map making process in an economy of pages. Topics

such as generalization, classification, symbolization, type, and color are all covered in a set of comprehensive chapters that keep words to a minimum and examples to a maximum. By minimizing the text, the reader can focus on the maps and on visual thinking.

At first glance, the lack of an introduction and statement of purpose, and the quirky nature of the page layout might put off some readers. But I encourage you to stick with the volume, because I believe that this book succeeds on many levels. First, it works as a cartographic primer or reference. If you need help making a map, simply follow the steps in each chapter. It is also well indexed, so you can also look up topics as needed. Second, it works as a textbook for cartography or GIS classes. Each chapter involves a step in the cartographic process and is concise and nicely annotated. The "More Information" section at the end of each chapter will lead students to the classic cartography sources as well as sources that are less well known. For example, chapter six on map layout cites the well known works by Edward Tufte, and also mentions lesser known volumes, such as Jaroslave Andel's *Avant-Garde Page Design*. Instructors will also appreciate the great examples of both good and poor maps. Instead of searching for "before and after" examples, they are provided for you.

Finally, *Making Maps* works as a philosophical volume on the cartographic process to be returned to again and again. The layout (all done by Krygier, not the publisher) has a large margin at the top of the page and hierarchical indentations for the various levels of text. At first I thought this large white space would be a good place to jot notes, but as I grew into the book I found it a place of stillness, and a place to organize my thoughts before going on to the next idea. Toward the end of the book, I found myself looking forward to the minimalist style, and started to shun cluttered and crowded pages.

The authors encourage readers to have fun with maps. The end of each chapter has a series of quotes from a variety of literary (and other) sources that involve maps in some way. They range from a brief quote from the television program *Home Improvement*, "Who died and made you the map police," to lengthy citations from the literary works of Lewis Carroll and Charles Dickens. Although your initial urge might be to focus most of your attention on chapters six through twelve, which deal with the steps involved in making a map, I urge you to go back and revisit the early chapters, as I did, and think about what maps are, and how they work. Myself, I will be anxiously waiting for *Making Maps II*.

