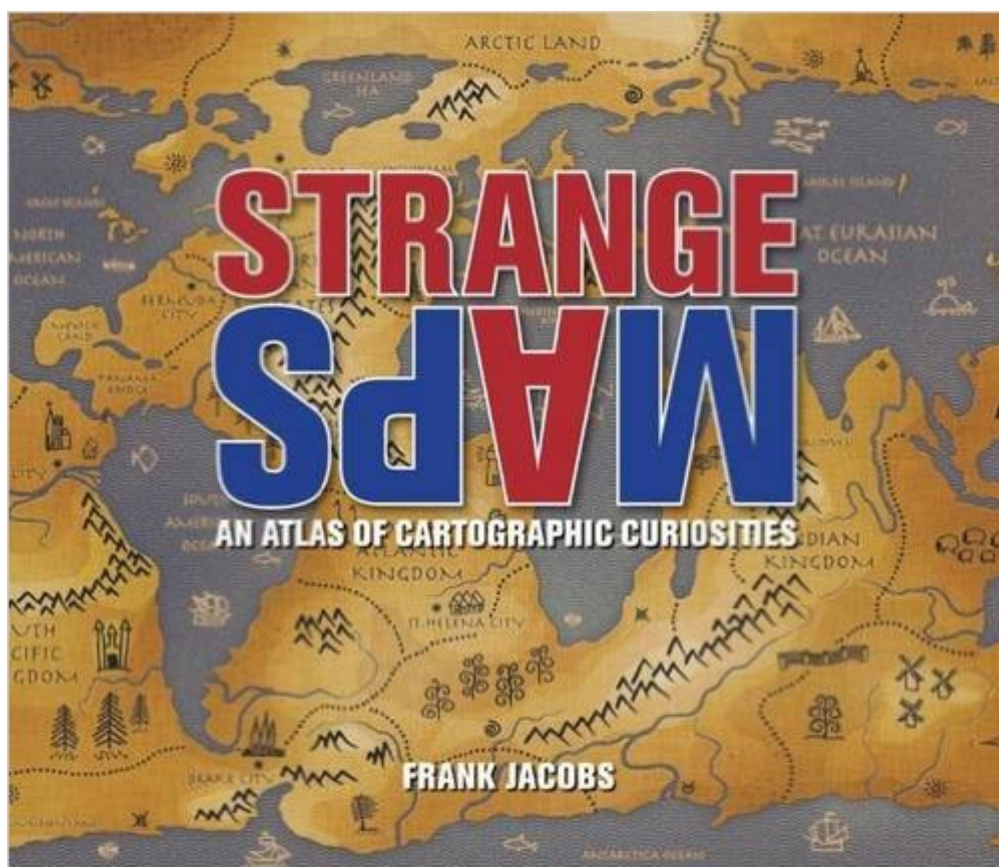


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Strange Maps: An Atlas Of Cartographic Curiosities



Synopsis

An intriguing collection of more than one hundred out-of-the-ordinary maps, blending art, history, and pop culture for a unique atlas of humanity. Spanning many centuries, all continents, and the realms of outer space and the imagination, this collection of 138 unique graphics combines beautiful full-color illustrations with quirky statistics and smart social commentary. The result is a distinctive illustrated guide to the world. Categories of cartographic curiosities include: ? Literary Creations, featuring a map of Thomas More's Utopia and the world of George Orwell's 1984 ? Cartographic Misconceptions, such as a lavish seventeenth-century map depicting California as an island ? Political Parody, containing the ?Jesusland map? and other humorous takes on voter profiles ? Whatchamacallit, including a map of the area codes for regions where the rapper Ludacris sings about having ?hoes? ? Obscure Proposals, capturing Thomas Jefferson's vision for dividing the Northwest Territory into ten states with names such as Polypotamia and Assenisipia ? Fantastic Maps, with a depiction of what the globe might look like if the sea and land were inverted. The Strange Maps blog has been named by GeekDad Blog on Wired.com ?one of the more unusual and unique sites seen on the Web that doesn't sell anything or promote an agenda? and it's currently ranked #423 on Technorati's Top 500 Blogs. Brimming with trivia, deadpan humor, and idiosyncratic lore, Strange Maps is a fascinating tour of all things weird and wonderful in the world of cartography.

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Viking Studio (October 29, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0142005258

ISBN-13: 978-0142005255

Product Dimensions: 11 x 0.6 x 9.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (36 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #242,359 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #31 inÂ Books > Science & Math > Earth Sciences > Cartography #90 inÂ Books > Reference > Atlases & Maps > World #616 inÂ Books > Reference > Atlases & Maps > Travel Maps

Customer Reviews

Like the author, I like maps, but unlike me, he got bored with the standard variety. He began a web

site with the most unusual maps he could find -- from which web site came this book. It is a remarkable collection. There are maps showing California as an island, of what Africa might have looked like if Germany had won its wars, of countries that never were, of countries that wanted to be bigger than they were, of a proposed reorganization of the U.S. into 38 states, and many more. Some are scary, some funny, some puzzling, some enlightening. Each map has enough background to make it comprehensible. In the process of enjoying the maps, one learns things. There are islands of Germany surrounded by Belgium. Before the introduction of standard time zones, railroad timetables were much more complicated than they are today. And did you ever wonder why part of Delaware's border is a curve? This is one of those books that is a pleasure to browse through. One can read it bit by bit, learning something every time. If you like maps, you'll love this book.

If you regularly read the Strange Maps blog and want to support Frank Jacobs with a few bucks, then this is the way to go. The book compiles the blog entries with nice large photos and un-cluttered text. However, if you're like I am, and like to look things up on the internet as you read about them, the experience of reading one of Frank's stories on the web is vastly different than reading it in a book. The book doesn't add anything to the content already on the web, and you miss out on the links to original sources and cross-references to other Strange Maps stories. If you or someone you know likes well-researched and engaging anecdotes about maps combined with the experience of reading such things in a book, then this one's for you. But if you just want to see some cartographic curiosities and pick up a factoid or two along the way, then perhaps the Strange Maps blog should be your first destination. Then you can decide whether it's worth it to shell out some money to have print copies of all the wonderful maps Frank has collected.

I am a graphic designer and cartographer, so I guess I expected too much. Yeah, negative space is hip right now, but it seems to me that the images are more important than trendy white-space - I'd like to actually see the maps - I am looking at them with a magnifying glass - no, really, I'm serious. Why would someone use a 12pt font that uses up all the real estate on the page, then squeeze the map on like it's an afterthought - people who buy this book purchased it because they are interested in the MAPS. Some of the images are just plain blurry - and the maps with very little detail fill the 9.25x11" format, yet the maps with the most detail are less than 5x3" - no wonder the preview of this book only shows the front and back. I could never get away with a finished product like this at work.

The maps are both historical, fantasy based and several "what if" maps. There is a map of the Land of Oz which is pretty cool. Several early American and colonial era maps have their conversation points. The photographs of some maps are small, and reading the details can be tedious at times. My favourite map is one showing what Europe would like had Nazi Germany won WWII. Scary, yet very intriguing. The future is also shown. There are two maps showing the moon walks of Apollo 11 and 12. A fold out map of Mars's moon Deimos reminds us that we are now mapping extra terrestrial locations. A map of Titan's (as of yet) unnamed liquid methane lake is just beyond amazing. Daniel Padovano

The book is about 80% text, and the book is formatted in such a way that 40% of every page is blank space. The book is neither particularly informative nor interesting. As a lover of cartography or as someone who is just curious to learn more about the world from a map-makers perspective, you'll not be impressed.

I can't recommend this book because the maps are not that strange and are crudely drawn. Some of the maps are drawn more like something that you would draw on a napkin to give someone directions. The stories have some interest but not enough to pay the price I paid. I bought this as a gift for my husband who enjoys maps and it is still in the closet. I'm not giving it to him or anyone else.

I was very disappointed with this book. Actually hard for me to admit in that I usually love all things cartographic. The first deducted star is because even though using a 9.5 X 11 inch format, some of the maps are as small as 3 X 4 inch. And most of these having writing on them which I would LIKE to know what it says. Add a stout magnifying glass to your order. Come on, modern printing technology can easily enlarge almost anything without it turning into pixels and dots. Eliminating some of the HUGE margins could have easily allowed for 1 page of words and the other page a map. Second star deducted because I was expecting more actual historical mappage, real stuff even if it was wrong. But there's significant amount of pages dedicated to fairy tale maps and art paintings which bear the word "map" in their name, but are actually nothing of the sort. Third star deducted because some things aren't even maps, i.e., a smear of jam near a butter knife which resembles vaguely a continent and an omelet or something similar which is said to look like a country. A more accurate title for some of the book would be, "Random Objects Which Look Like A

Map." That said, between the many uninteresting and/or unrelated entries, there are several good maps and bits of interesting info. So the book IS worth 2 stars for a used copy only.

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