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A History of America in 100 Maps, Susan Schulten, University of Chicago Press, Chicago (2018), 256 pages, US\$35.00 hardcover

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Several years ago, browsing in the British Museum's gift shop, I noticed *A History of the World in 100 Objects* (2010). The idea of capturing history using material culture is an appealing one, offering readers opportunities to learn about fascinating artifacts in short, easy-to-digest essays. It often sparks similar projects [see perhaps *The Smithsonian's History of America in 101 Objects* (2016)?]. Susan Schulten's *A History of America in 100 Maps* appears to be such a popular, coffee table book, pairing map images with explanatory vignettes, but do not be taken in: this is a very skillfully constructed narrative of American history using maps, constructed by a master in the field. Schulten, professor of history at University of Denver, specializes in the development of American geographical imaginations and cartographic cultures in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Here Schulten employs maps to create a 'virtual tour' of American history, offering to 'both illuminate and complicate our understanding of history' and serving, as an '... unrivaled windows into the past' (p. 9).

Schulten sets the stage with a brief introduction then breaks American history into nine time periods, beginning with European contact and concluding with the early 21st century. For each period, she provides a contextual overview before discussing the period's maps and historic episodes each map highlights. The maps are beautifully reproduced and accompanied by thoughtful essays delineating the histories tied to the maps. Large maps with fine details are reproduced on two pages for better visibility. The essays are not entirely free-standing: Schulten references other maps in the volume where appropriate, building a cohesive narrative about the power of the geographical imagination in constructing 'America.' Readers can dip in and out if they wish, only reading about the images that catch their eye, but a much more interesting story is told by reading the volume as a complete narrative.

Schulten's history of America captures America's highs and lows: from discovery, independence, expansion to the Civil War, segregation and the Cold War. But Schulten is particularly interested in concepts that captured geographical imaginations and shaped how Americans and the world came to view 'America': such as the tantalizing dream of reaching Asia by sailing west; the possibility of a Northwest Passage; and the drive for Manifest Destiny. There are the expected superstar maps – Waldseemüller's 'Universalis Cosmographia' (1507, often called America's birth certificate, pp. 16-19); John Mitchell's 'A Map of the British Colonies in North America . . .' (1775, pp. 94-97) – but there are many welcome surprises that span the breadth of American history and cartographic expression. The annotated map of Georgia used by General William Tecumseh Sherman during his march to Atlanta in the Civil War was a revelation (pp. 146-7). The base map was an 1839 postal map marking roads and rivers annotated by Census Office clerks for Sherman with census data on populations and resources. Using this map, Sherman was able to 'see what was possible as he prepared a march that shattered Confederate resolve.' Between image and text, new light is shed on readers' understandings of American history.

Though many of the early maps were created and circulated by imperial powers, Schulten illuminates the histories and situations surrounding them, breaking the smooth façade of the images to reveal their secrets, such as the Native American geographical knowledge used on John Smith's map of 'Virginia' (1612). Not all the maps were created by geographers or cartographers for rulers and governments; maps by schoolgirls and suffragists, Black American scholars and publishers, contribute to a more nuanced 'Story of America.' Catherine Cook's map of the United States from 1818 demonstrates a schoolgirl's mastery of several subjects – geography, history, calligraphy. Education was expanding: geography and maps were viewed as

appropriate for all and important subjects for the new nation, a way for young Americans to ‘make the nation real . . . rendering the nation as a coherent and stable entity’ (p. 118). An ‘Afro American Travel Map’ from 1942, by the Afro Travel Bureau, lists ‘. . . places where weary motorists would not be refused service because of their race’ as well as ‘spots of special interest to the black community, such as the Tuskegee Institute and Fisk University’ (p. 199). The automobile might have teased the ‘freedom of the open road’ but segregation complicated that road for minority Americans: this travel map, created by a black publisher for a black audience, offers a glimpse out a very different ‘window’ on America. Through such maps, Schulten brings to light the practices of American public geography/cartography and cartographic/geographic culture, the ways in which every day Americans both created and used geography and maps in their daily lives.

Through Schulten’s thoughtfully curated images and text, we have her perspective on America, ‘A History’ not ‘The History’ of America, focused on the role of maps in crafting ‘America.’ As Schulten writes, ‘maps are simultaneously reflections of reality and instruments of persuasion’ (p. 72). Waldseemüller’s map is important, but a schoolgirl’s map can be equally telling in communicating to a modern audience how Americans came to identify as Americans. America is, after all, a place. It has a location, a spatial extent, but it is also a figment of our geographical imaginations. By telling America’s story through maps, Schulten is capturing its history in the most logical way: through the images that captures (or sought to capture) its evolving form, both real and imaginary, by its observers and citizens.

The text is excellent and production value is very good, but there is a slight design flaw that makes it difficult to locate maps. The maps are not identified in the table of contents. At the back of the book is a ‘List of Maps’ that lists the maps by their cartographer and/or title as they

appear in order in the book, but without page numbers and without the period headings. Maps are listed in the index by cartographer, but maps without a cartographer or a clear title are harder to find. For example, the map often termed 'The Catawba Map' (pp. 72-3) does not have a cartographer nor a title, so it is not easily locatable in the index. To find it in the List of Maps, I had to search for the maps listed before and after it to find it. Nevertheless, the book is an absolute pleasure to explore and read.

Some in the academic world might frown on producing a volume that seems to be following a trend ('_____ History in 100 _____'), but I think this is a very smart move. Periodically, there are calls from academic leadership to make good scholarship accessible to a wider audience: Schulten has done exactly that. As the leading historian working in geographic and cartographic American history, she has made her work accessible to a much greater audience with her gorgeous images and accessible essays. It certainly may lead inquisitive readers to follow up on the works listed in her 'Endnotes and Additional Sources' and perhaps consider reading her earlier works. For geographers and historians, it is an excellent example of writing for a wider audience.

Researchers and teachers/instructors will also find it valuable. This would be a very interesting book to use in a course on American history, historical geography or history of cartography. Students could utilize her examples in the course, debate the maps included, and then for an assignment, make the case for a map of their choice, complete with a supporting essay. It is, after all, an intriguing question: if you were tell the story of your country in one hundred maps . . . which would you chose?

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