

that the methods provide to conduct serious *comparative* research across blocks, neighbourhoods, cities, regions and countries. This would tackle one of the other challenges repeatedly discussed by Whitehand in the editorials of this journal. The methods proposed in this book can definitely contribute here.

References

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Meta Berghauser Pont, Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, Chalmers University of Technology, SE-412 96 Gothenburg, Sweden. E-mail: meta.berghauserpont@chalmers.se

Mapping society: the spatial dimensions of social cartography by *Laura Vaughan*, UCL Press, London, UK, 2019, 300 pp. ISBN 978-1-78735-306-0.

Mapping society uses maps to present a history of ethnic, racial, and religious differences and conflicts, and health disparities, in cities. It considers nineteenth-century urban England and the then fast-growing US cities, two areas where social inequalities seem to have been frequently and systematically recorded in texts and graphics earlier than anywhere else. The book expands the documentation of Charles Booth's work on urban poverty and that of the early New York housing reformers. Author Vaughan also takes the study beyond the Anglo-Saxon world to consider other cultures and geographies, including in France and Eritrea.

Vaughan's approach is within the confines of contemporary social cartography, which concentrates less on recording the general human environmental condition than on capturing places of deprivation. She shows how, almost 2 centuries ago, social scientists used maps both to describe elements of deprivation and to advocate the remediation of social inequalities. As the book subtitle indicates, Vaughan's theoretical outlook is the

spatial dimension of deprivation, addressing the need for what she terms 'rethinking urban social problems spatially' (p. 208). Some of the historical cases presented in the book are re-analysed using contemporary methods based on space syntax theories of movement, land use and activities, accessibility, and social class. These analyses show that deprivation can be detected in the spatial configuration of streets and neighbourhoods.

The material presented leads Vaughan to muse about the intrinsic value of maps and cartography to describe a phenomenon critically. She reviews the different tools and means that cartographers have at their disposal to describe a phenomenon. She introduces and discusses mapping as a form of 'visual rhetoric', where such techniques as 'linguistic colour' are used. It is interesting to read that early social cartographers collected the data in the field themselves, acting as participant observers (as in the case of W. E. B. Du Bois). Others, like Booth, either directly hired surveyors who 'walked' the streets, or they worked indirectly through existing institutional settings, such as schools, piggy backing on data collected by inspectors who checked on children's school attendance. Today's data collection methods in social cartography seem to have expanded quite radically with disenfranchised people themselves being empowered to map the environmental conditions that negatively impact them.

Vaughan and the publishers have produced an attractive book as they skillfully transformed the rather stern maps made by social scientists (who were not necessarily visually and graphically trained) into appealing images. However, the figure captions remain insufficient to interpret the images – and legends are either missing or difficult to read – forcing the reader to navigate back and forth between the text and the graphics. Given that the maps are a central element of the book, more complete captions and legends would have better supported a reader wanting to focus on the graphics and to scan them for close comparison.

Overall, the topic, scope, and design of the book makes it an excellent 'easy read', especially for those of us who love maps. In addition, the book's contents offer a significant scholarly contribution to documenting the beginnings of modern social cartography. The narrative format mixes traditional approaches and techniques borrowed from the humanities and social sciences. The core technique is the use of case studies, which are largely organized chronologically and by domain (for example, poverty and race). However, considering

and facilitating the work's pedagogic impact and mnemonic strength, one wonders if it might have been worthwhile to refine the structure of the narrative format. Separating historical contexts (including the personal context of the prominent figures in the book as well as the professional context of social cartography) from data type (for example, in tabular form such as statistics, and graphic form such as street segments or plots); from data collection (for example, surveys and field work), mapping techniques (for example, colour codes), and from analytical methods (for

example, space syntax and other modelling techniques) might have helped give more importance to the lessons articulated in the discussion sections of the book. It might have more clearly explained how cartography can serve to capture the spatial dimensions of our social world conceptually and theoretically.

Anne Vernez Moudon, University of Washington, Department of Urban Design and Planning, 410 Gould Hall, Seattle, WA 98195. E-mail: moudon@uw.edu
