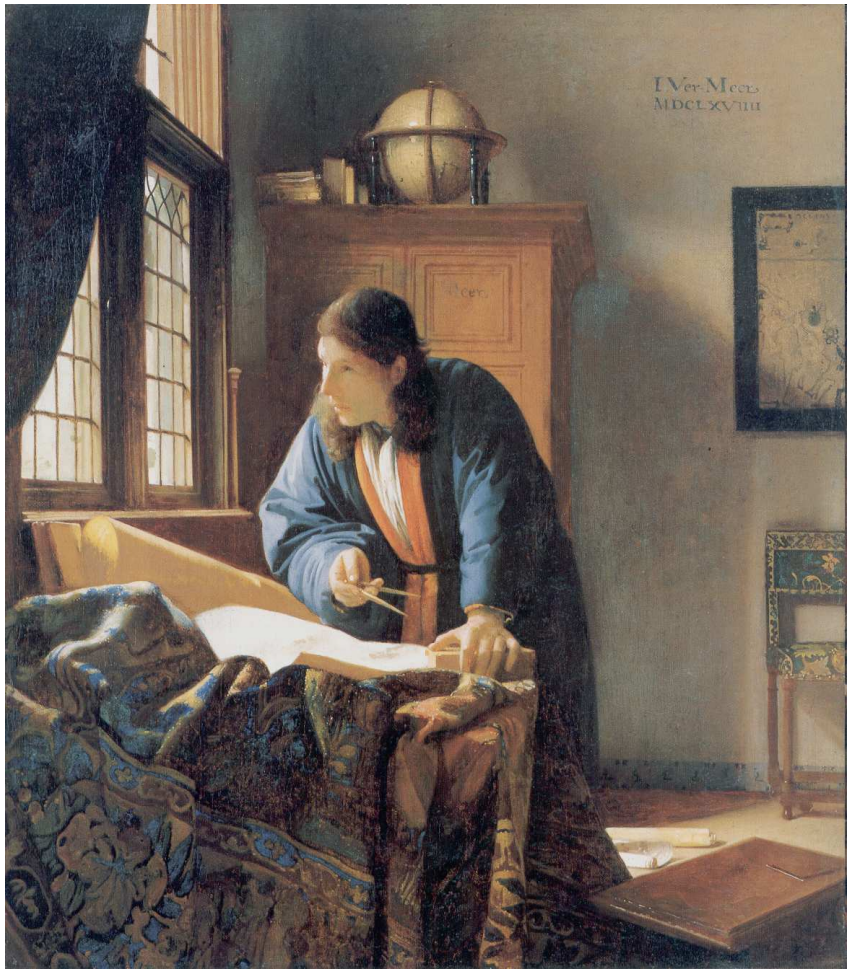
# Do We Need User-Generated Mapping (UGM)?

**Martin Dodge**

University of Manchester

Wednesday 12th November 2008

# Who is the We?



(http://globalthinktech.wordpress.com/2008/06/14/sharing-the-cognitive-load-with-educators/)

# So, do academic human geographer's need UGM?

- Thinking about whether human geographers really need UGM to further their current research and teaching

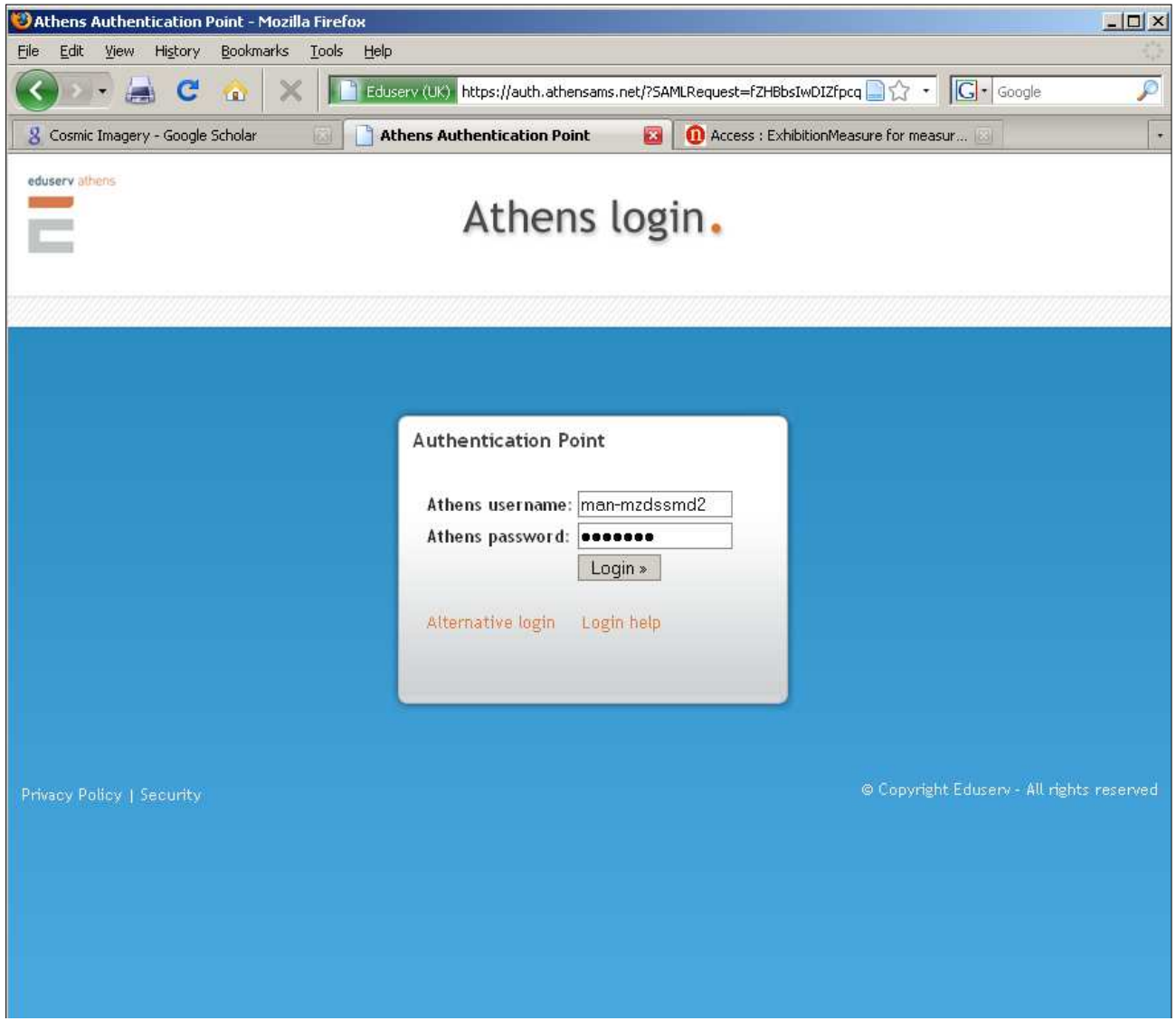
- Speculate on what human geographers could actually gain by exploiting UGM in creative ways to do new types research and different kinds of teaching.

# No, We Don't Need UGM

# Firstly We are already **Über** User Generators of Content

- So perhaps we have little to learn conceptual from UGM
- We already well used to making all that we need to progress our research, facilitate teaching, and (crucially) advance our careers
- We are archetypal ‘prosumers’ in that we write our textbooks, monographs, we edit our journals, we set our exam papers, we mark our courses, we organise our meetings and seminars, etc
- Could argue a good deal of this content is product of ‘volunteer’ labour – given away free (although heavily subsidised by universities and, hence, student fees and tax payers)

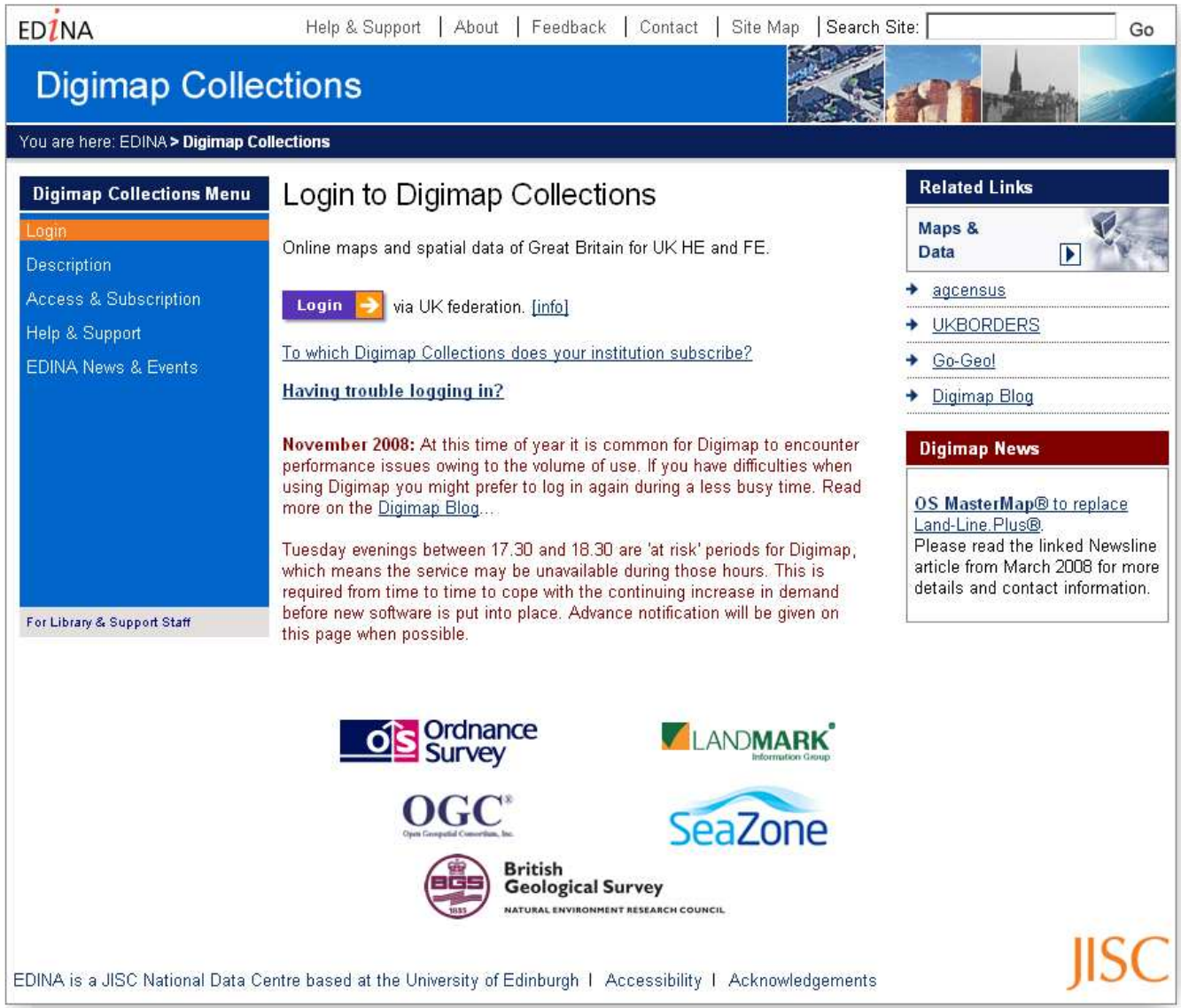
# Academia also blessed with ‘Athenian magic’



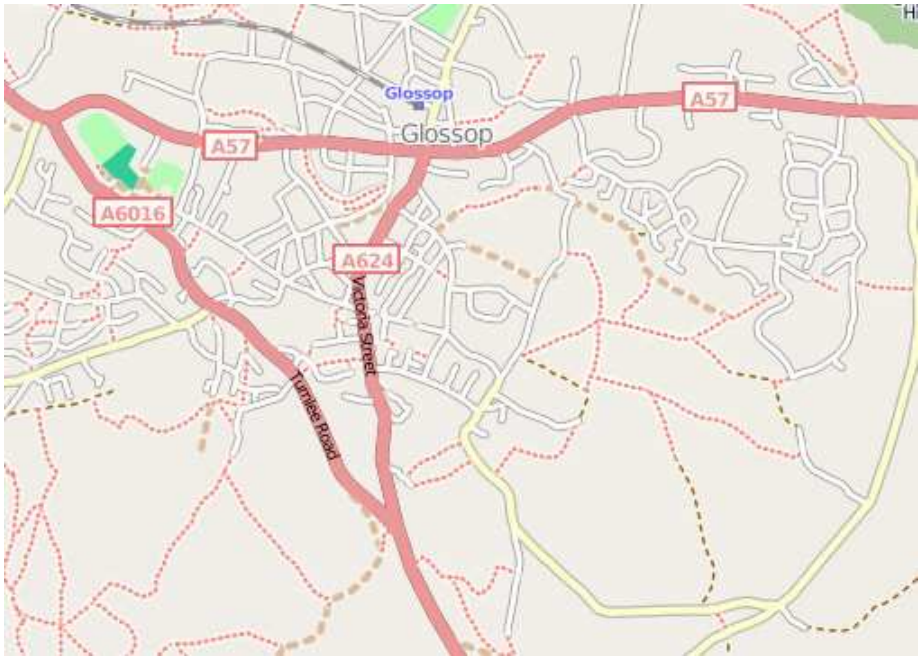
# What is the value of an Athens account??

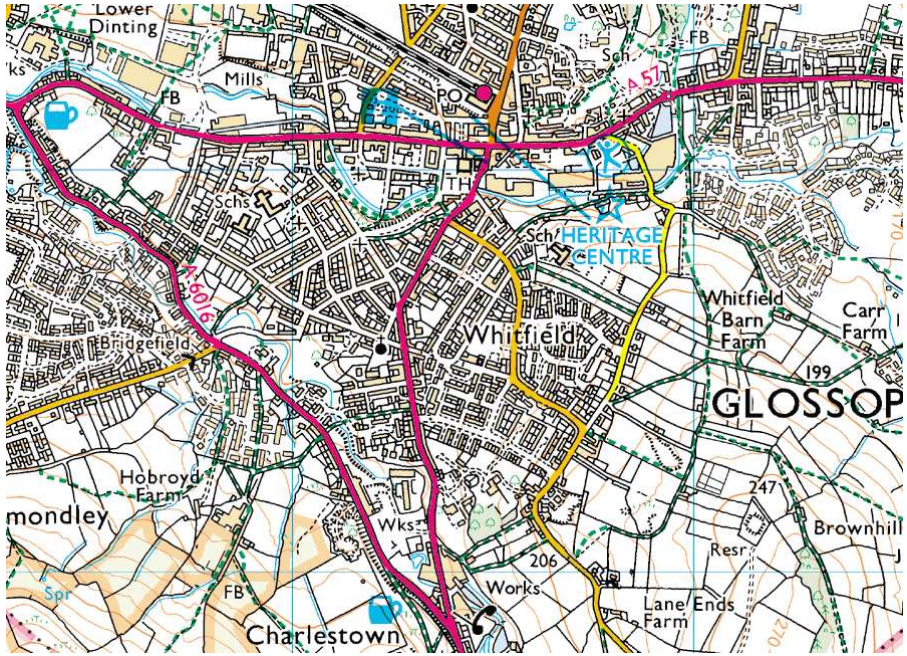
- Depth of information resources: MIMAS, JSTOR, EDINA, …
- To me these ‘goodies’ are available free and on-demand (who pays? your taxes, I don’t see or care…)
- Light years from a few years ago in terms of accessibility as well (download at a click)
- Lucky as Manchester University is a (relatively) ‘elite’ institution
- Quality library service, hardcopy map library

# Edina has it all…



# Plus UGM is ‘a bit rubbish’




- UGM are impoverished maps. Why would we use them when we can get better for ‘free’?
- OSM has all the problems of wiki data, partial coverage, inconsistent quality, etc
- ‘Doesn’t map South Bumfeck, Ohio’ (Stevec), will it ever?
- (Will I ever ‘finish’ mapping Glossop in OSM ….)

# But, But, there are ‘Issues’: its in all the small print

- Edina license > underlying Ordnance Survey sub license
- Publishing problems (could I use the thumbnail image of OS explorer map?)
- Engaging with those beyond the ‘ivory towers’ when you can’t share data
- Will costly resources like Edina be available to me tomorrow? Next year? In 10 years? Sustainable model in rapidly changing university contexts

Yes, I think We do need UGM

# Real value in the seeing the world through UGM eyes?

- UGM projects, like OSM, offer some new potential to academic map studies
- They expose the how the processes of knowledge production really happen
- Shifts focus onto processes not products
- Revealing authorship, partiality of representations and contested ownership of maps
- These are rich areas for social science research - open up links to emerging themes across geography and STS, in terms of material culture, embodied performance, memories and surveillance, temporal rhythms and mobilities, …

# Window into knowledge production

October 2008 - 954 messages

# UGM reveal how agreed map ontologies emerge and evolve

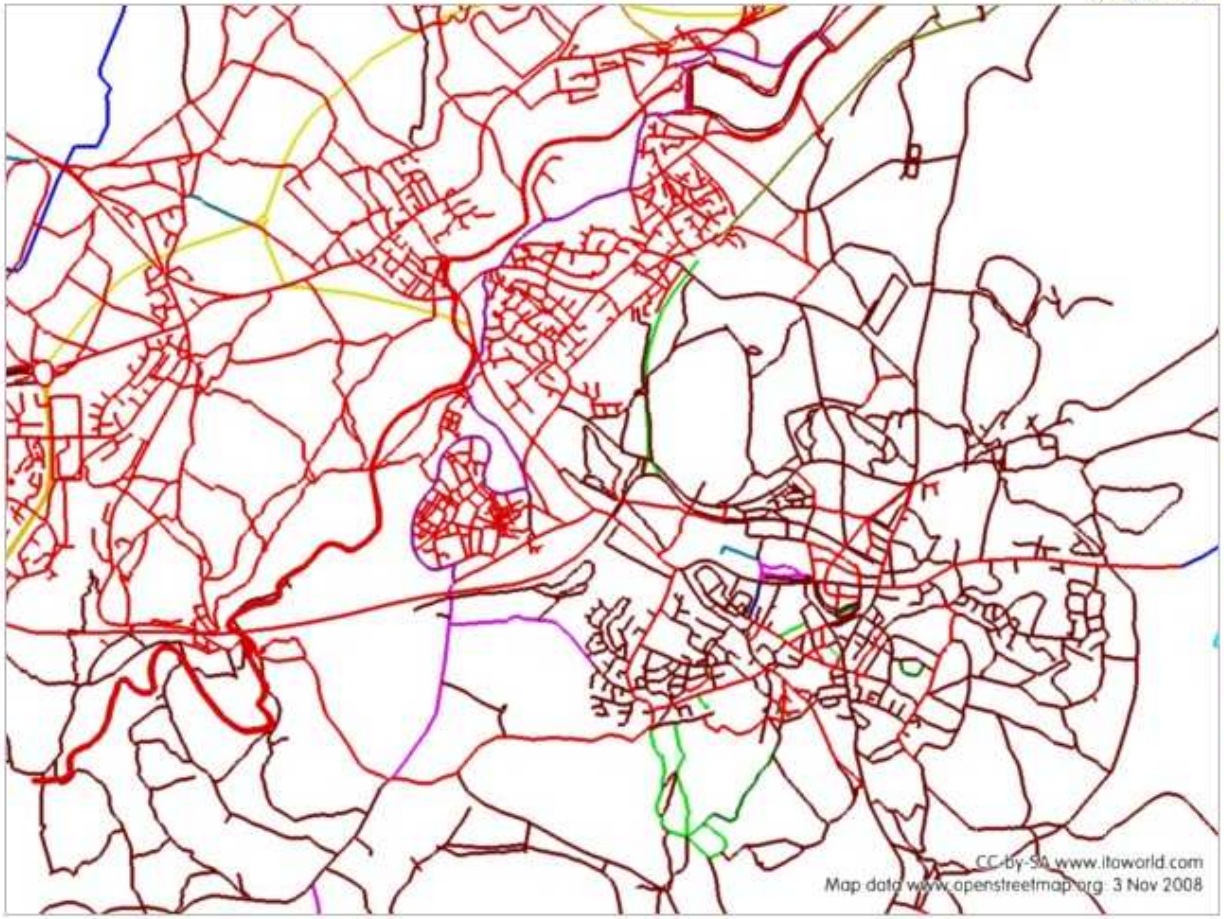
- UGM is novel application; reinventing and fresh rethinking, new ‘rules’ for mapping being made
- Typically these kinds of practices are closed, undocumented and hard to observe
- Explaining what gets mapped and not mapped is at core of critical understanding of representation
- ontological politics, multiple voices, conflicting voice; how is agreement reached? Democratic?
- Naming conventions, aesthetic judgements
- Fascinating stories of cross cultural difference
- Tensions in accepting local difference, and cartographic rationality of imposing universal order

Generated with www.wordle.net

# Authorship of mapping:
## fractures anonymous authority?

map

Export image




users

All

| Colour | User | Way | Node | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | RichardB | 882 | 0 | 882 |
| | cyberbadger | 528 | 0 | 528 |
| | Richard | 21 | 0 | 21 |
| | rvpilot | 13 | 0 | 13 |
| | <no name> | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| | peter_james | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| | FranBoon | 7 | 0 | 7 |
| | PeterIto | 6 | 0 | 6 |
| | Simon Ward | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| | ulfl | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | Warofdreams | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | Matthew Newton | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | njd27 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | davidearl | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | deluded | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | slaughteredlamb | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Richard H | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | xybot | 1 | 0 | 1 |

Download CSV

Created with ITO!'s OSM Mapper service,
www.itoworld.com/static/osmmapper

Data Close

Manually select a different area

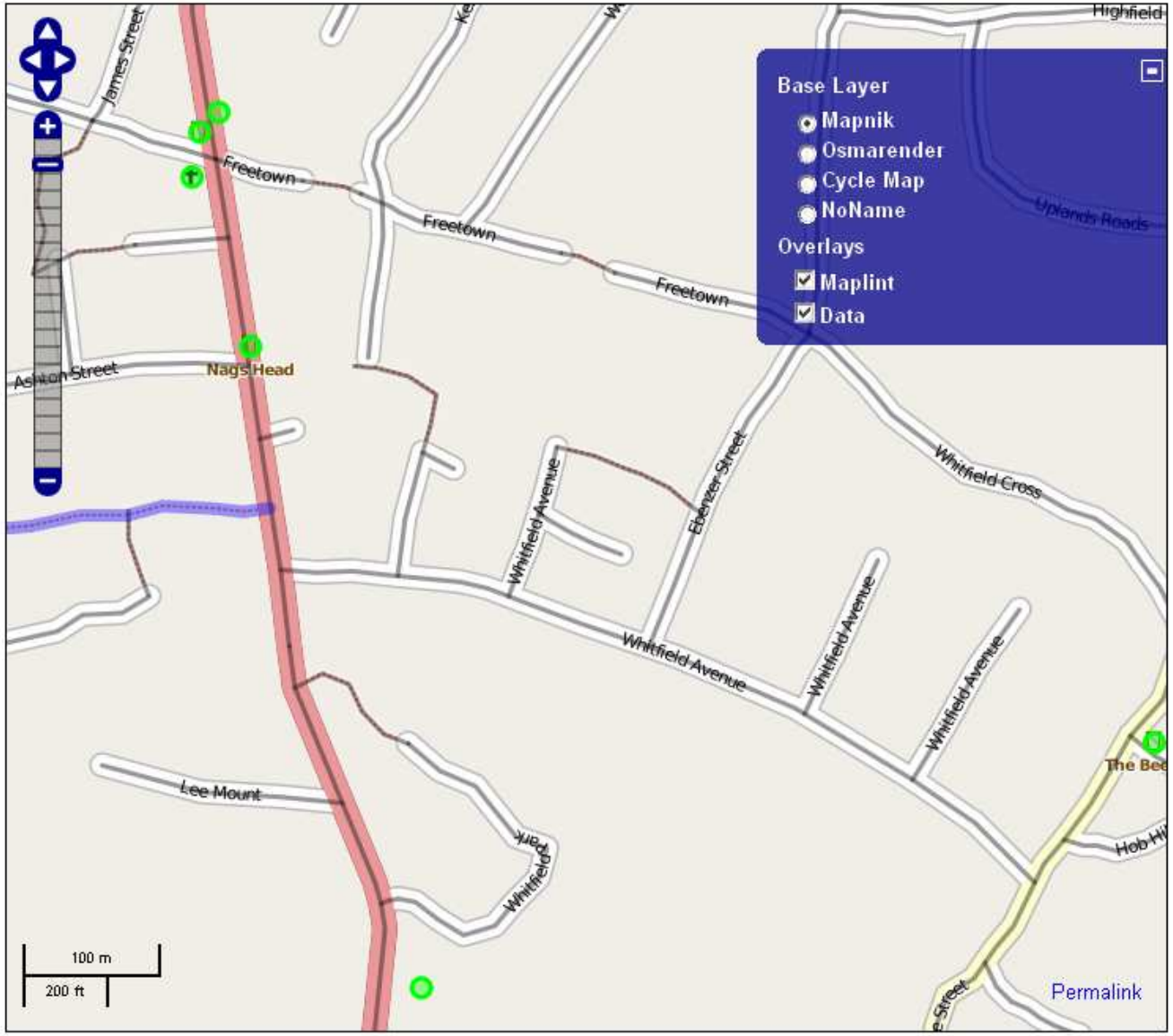
Display object list

Way 10275784 Details

- **highway**: footway
- **created_by**: JOSM

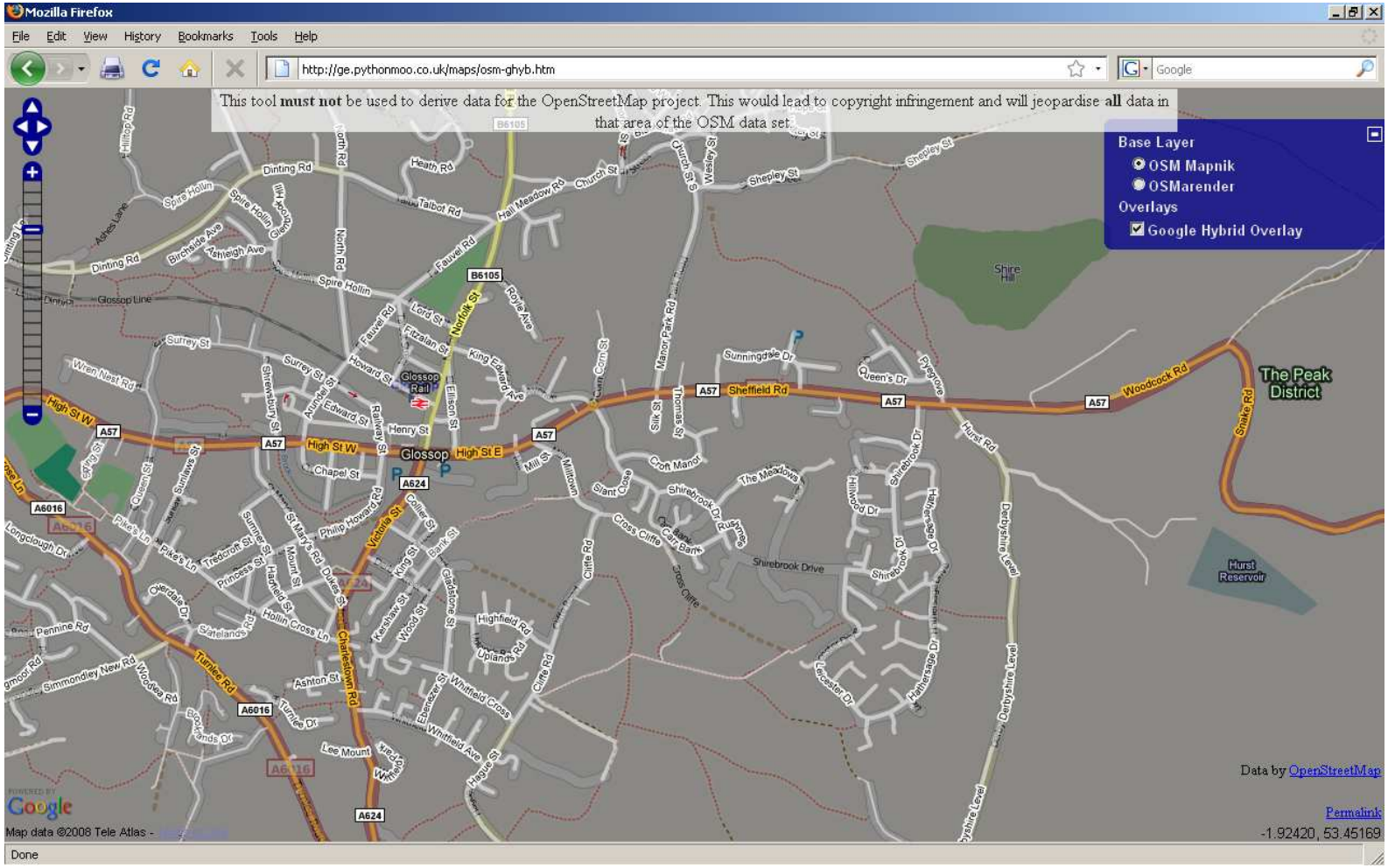
History for Way 10275784 Details

- Edited by cyberbadger at 2007-12-12T13:47:56+00:00
- Edited by cyberbadger at 2007-10-24T21:08:39+01:00



# Partiality of representation

## explodes myth of map as ‘mirror’?




From a pedagogic point of view is great that OSM is ‘incomplete’

# How maps emerge

## explodes myth of temporal fixity?

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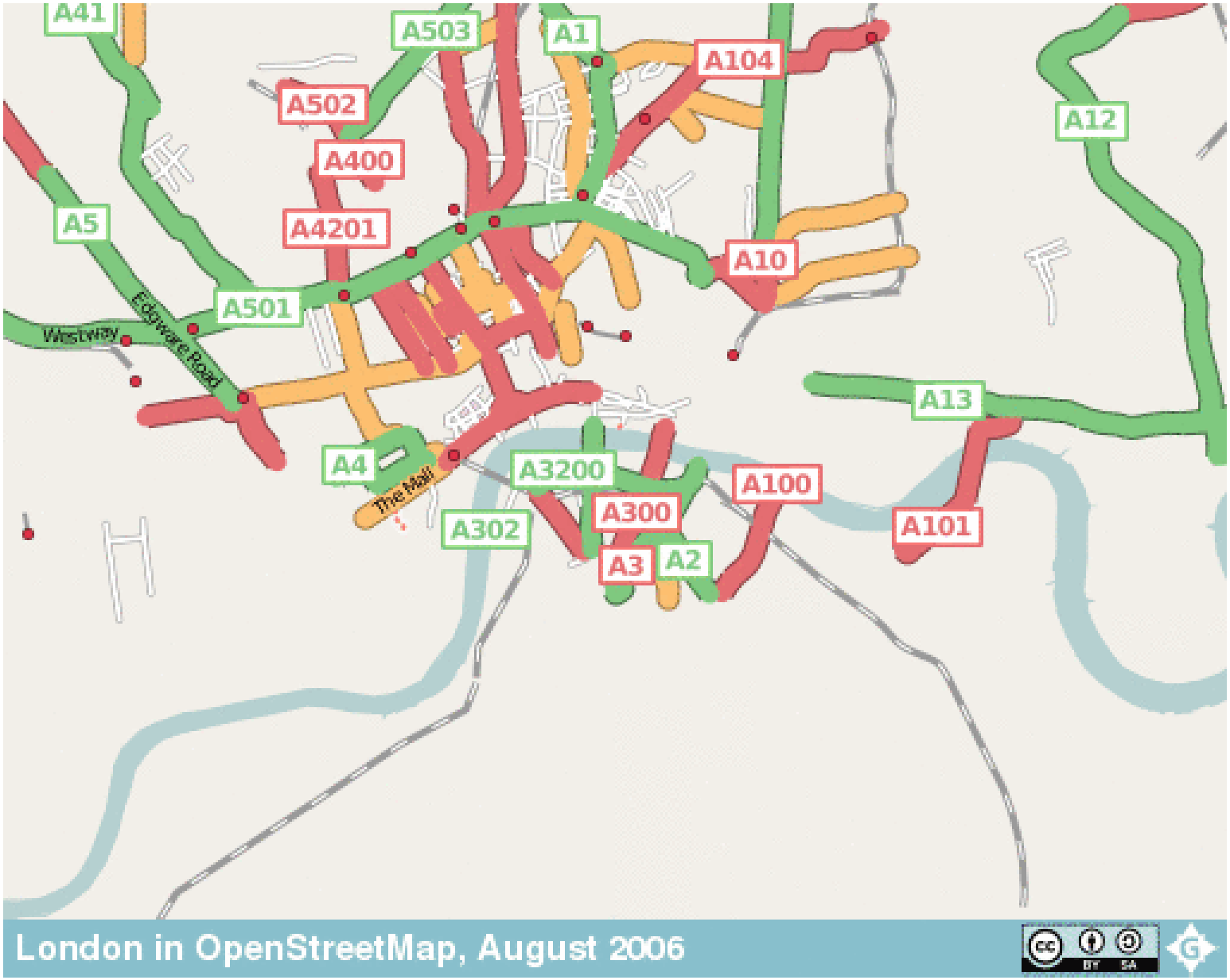
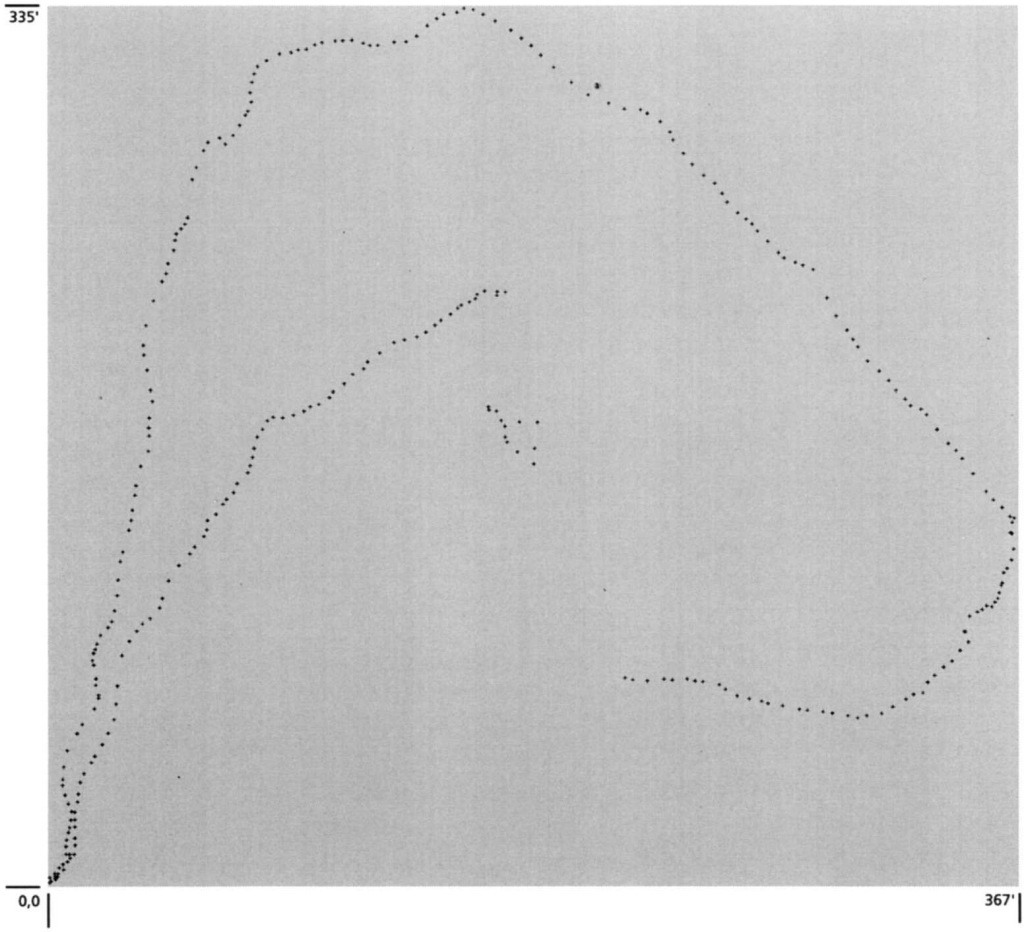
www.itoworld.com/static/osmmapper



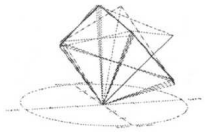

(http://www.geofabrik.de/gallery/history/index.html)

# Measuring properly with GPS….




**Scatter: 10 minutes, standing still (StoreFront)**

Receiver location: StoreFront for Art and Architecture.
NAVSTAR Satellite constellation: 21, 25, 01, 20, 23.
303 position records, acquired 25 Jan 1994, 16:56:13 – 17:05:53 (GPS time).

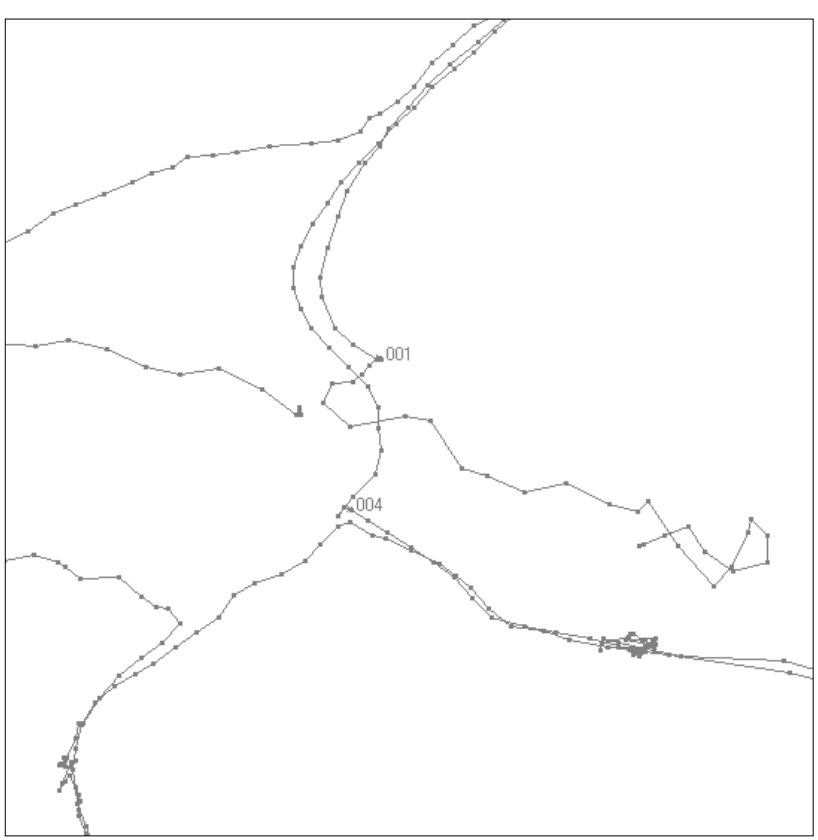


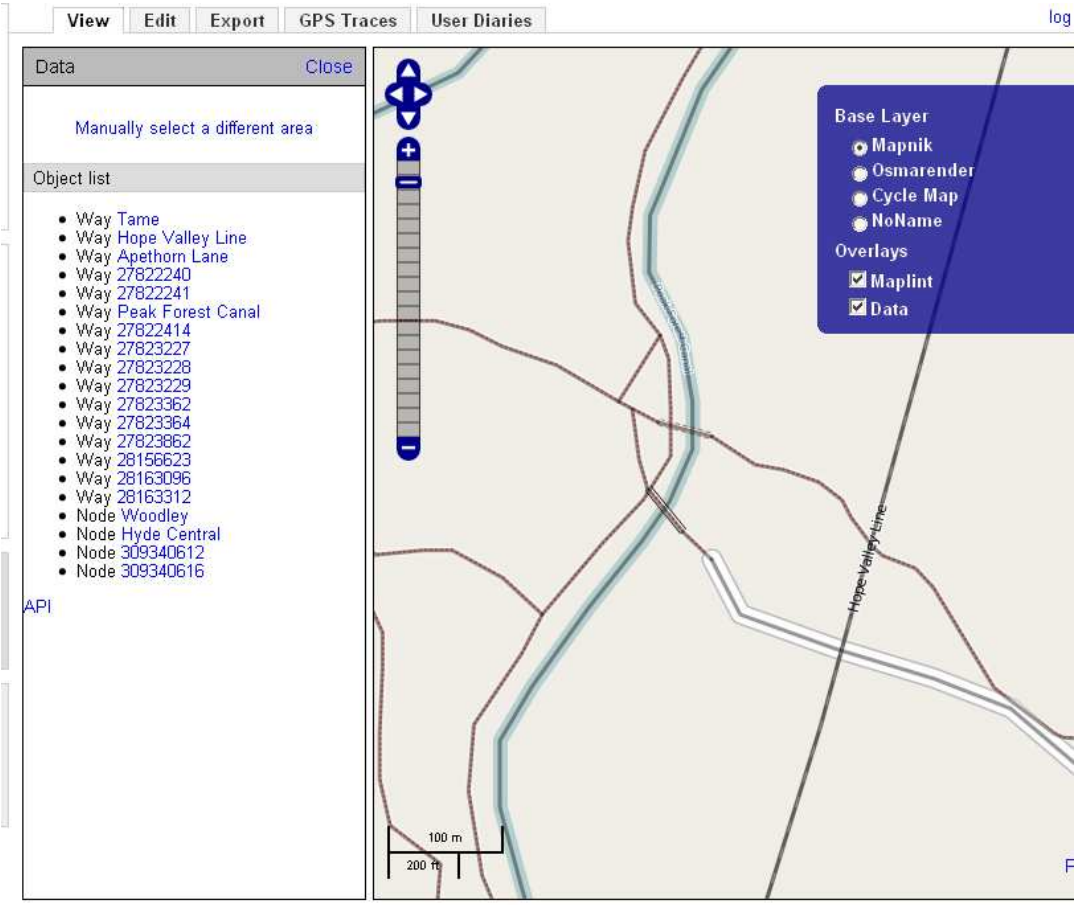
(Kurgan 1994: 19)

# Infrastructures of mapping

- Laura Kurgan (1994: 17) ‘[b]ut the space or the architecture of the information system that wants to locate and fix us in space has its own complexity, its own invisible relays and delays. The difficulty of charting the spaces that chart the spaces, of mapping the scaleless networks of the very system that promises to end our disorientation, demands redefining the points and lines and planes that build the map, and lingering in their strange spaces and times.’

# Politics of instruments, inscriptions, translations



OpenStreetMap | Public GPS traces - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.openstreetmap.org/traces

Google

OpenStreetMap

The Free Wiki World Map

View | Edit | Export | GPS Traces | User Diaries

log in | sign up

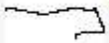
# Public GPS traces

| See just your traces, or upload a trace

Showing page 1 (1-20 of 149994) | 1 2 3 ... 7500

OstenfWesterdiek.gpx ... (232 points) ... 8 minutes ago more / map / edit PUBLIC
Ostenfeld
by gwak in Ostenfeld+Umgebung

OstenfOsterende.gpx ... (195 points) ... 9 minutes ago more / map / edit PUBLIC
Ostenfeld
by gwak in Ostenfeld+Umgebung

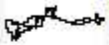


OstenfJanhau2.gpx ... (402 points) ... 10 minutes ago more / map / edit PUBLIC
Ostenfeld
by gwak in Ostenfeld+Umgebung

OstenfMagnussen.gpx ... (384 points) ... 10 minutes ago more / map / edit PUBLIC
Ostenfeld
by gwak in Ostenfeld+Umgebung

Karow_Wiesen.gpx ... (428 points) ... 24 minutes ago more / map / edit PUBLIC
Neue Wiesen Berlin Karow
by kpankow

20081112_120948.gpx ... (327 points) ... 35 minutes ago more / map / edit PUBLIC
Mittagspause
by foxy_hl



20081112_082249_Westend_Matinkyl__Tapiola.gpx ... (8,292 points) ... about 1 hour ago more / map / edit PUBLIC
searching for parts of national cycle route 1 (Finland)
by alv in Finland Helsinki Espoo car

OpenStreetMap is a free editable map of the whole world. It is made by people like you.

OpenStreetMap allows you to view, edit and use geographical data in a collaborative way from anywhere on Earth.

OpenStreetMap's hosting is kindly supported by the UCL VR Centre and bytemark.

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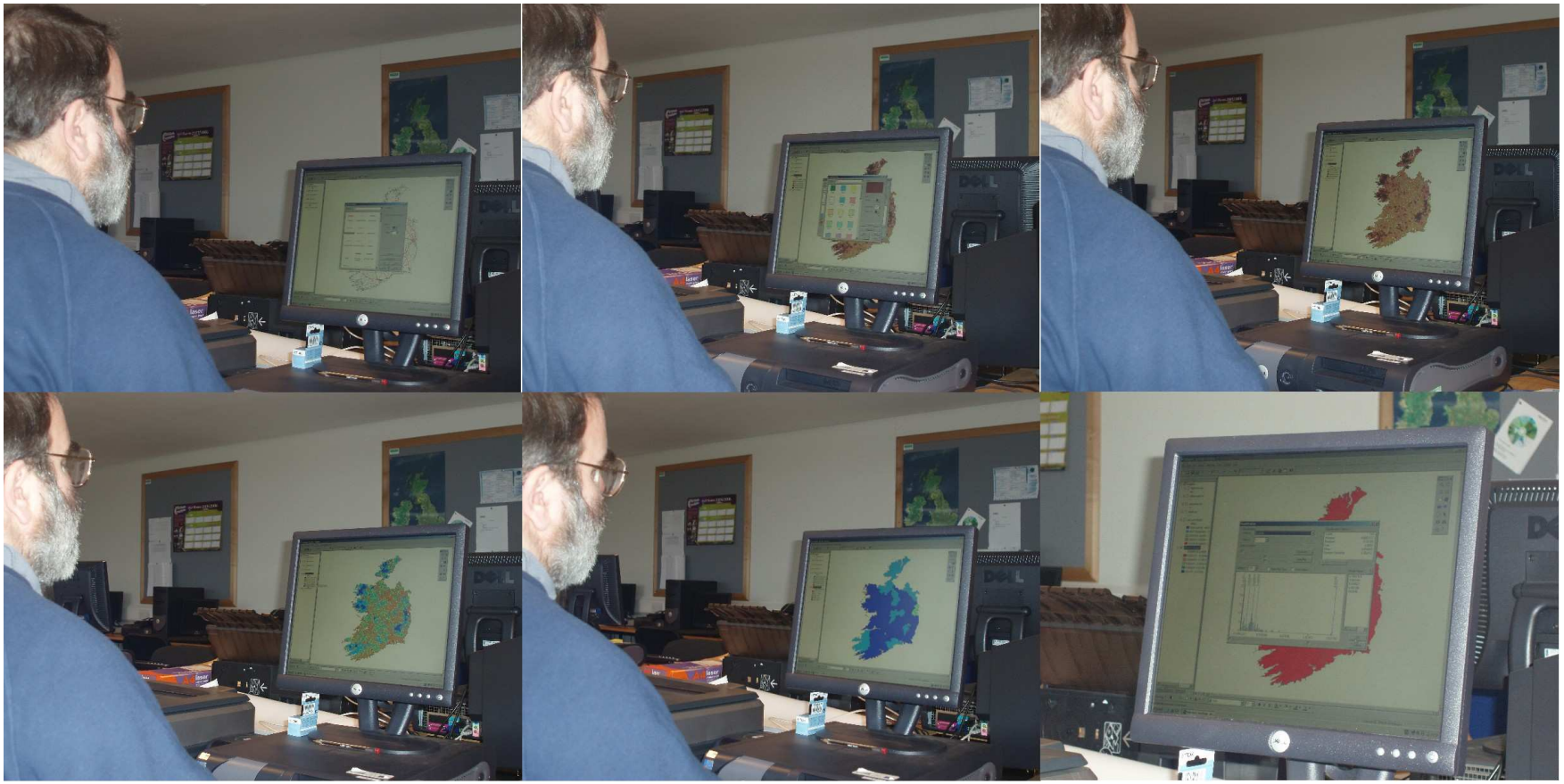
Bois
South
-
Espoo

# Algorithms of mapping

Opens up a space for dialogue with Software Studies



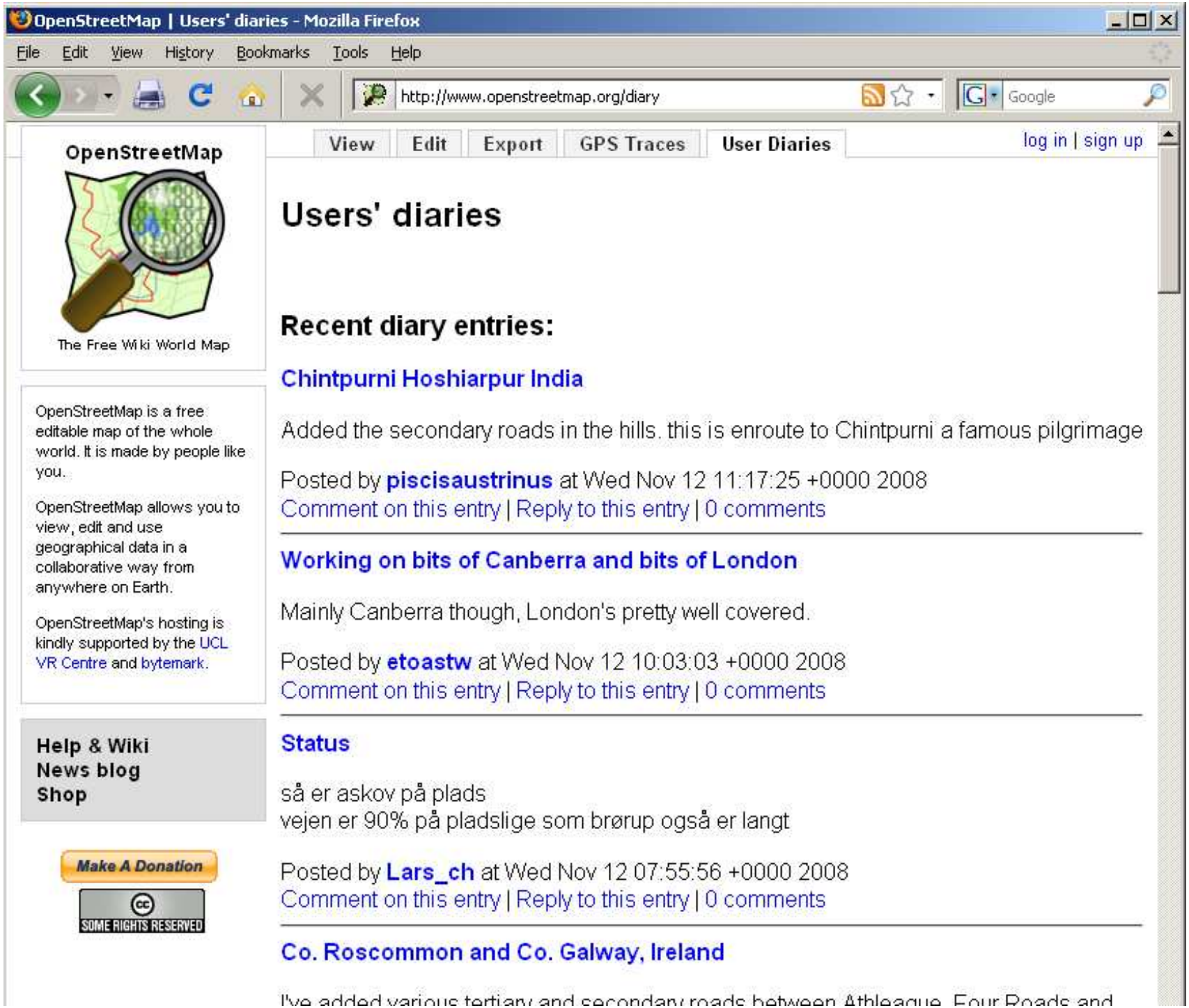
(Photographs of Martin Charlton taken by Rob Kitchin)

What do people do with maps?
And why?

Study embodied practices mapping

researching ‘doing’

(Photographs by Stephen Gill, source Ronson 2004)


OpenStreetMap | Users' diaries - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help
http://www.openstreetmap.org/diary
Google
OpenStreetMap
The Free Wiki World Map
View Edit Export GPS Traces User Diaries
log in | sign up
Users' diaries
Recent diary entries:
Chintpurni Hoshiarpur India
Added the secondary roads in the hills. this is enroute to Chintpurni a famous pilgrimage
Posted by piscisaustrinus at Wed Nov 12 11:17:25 +0000 2008
Comment on this entry | Reply to this entry | 0 comments
Working on bits of Canberra and bits of London
Mainly Canberra though, London's pretty well covered.
Posted by etoastw at Wed Nov 12 10:03:03 +0000 2008
Comment on this entry | Reply to this entry | 0 comments
Status
så er askov på plads
vejen er 90% på pladslige som brørup også er langt
Posted by Lars_ch at Wed Nov 12 07:55:56 +0000 2008
Comment on this entry | Reply to this entry | 0 comments
Co. Roscommon and Co. Galway, Ireland
OpenStreetMap is a free editable map of the whole world. It is made by people like you.
OpenStreetMap allows you to view, edit and use geographical data in a collaborative way from anywhere on Earth.
OpenStreetMap's hosting is kindly supported by the UCL VR Centre and bytemark.
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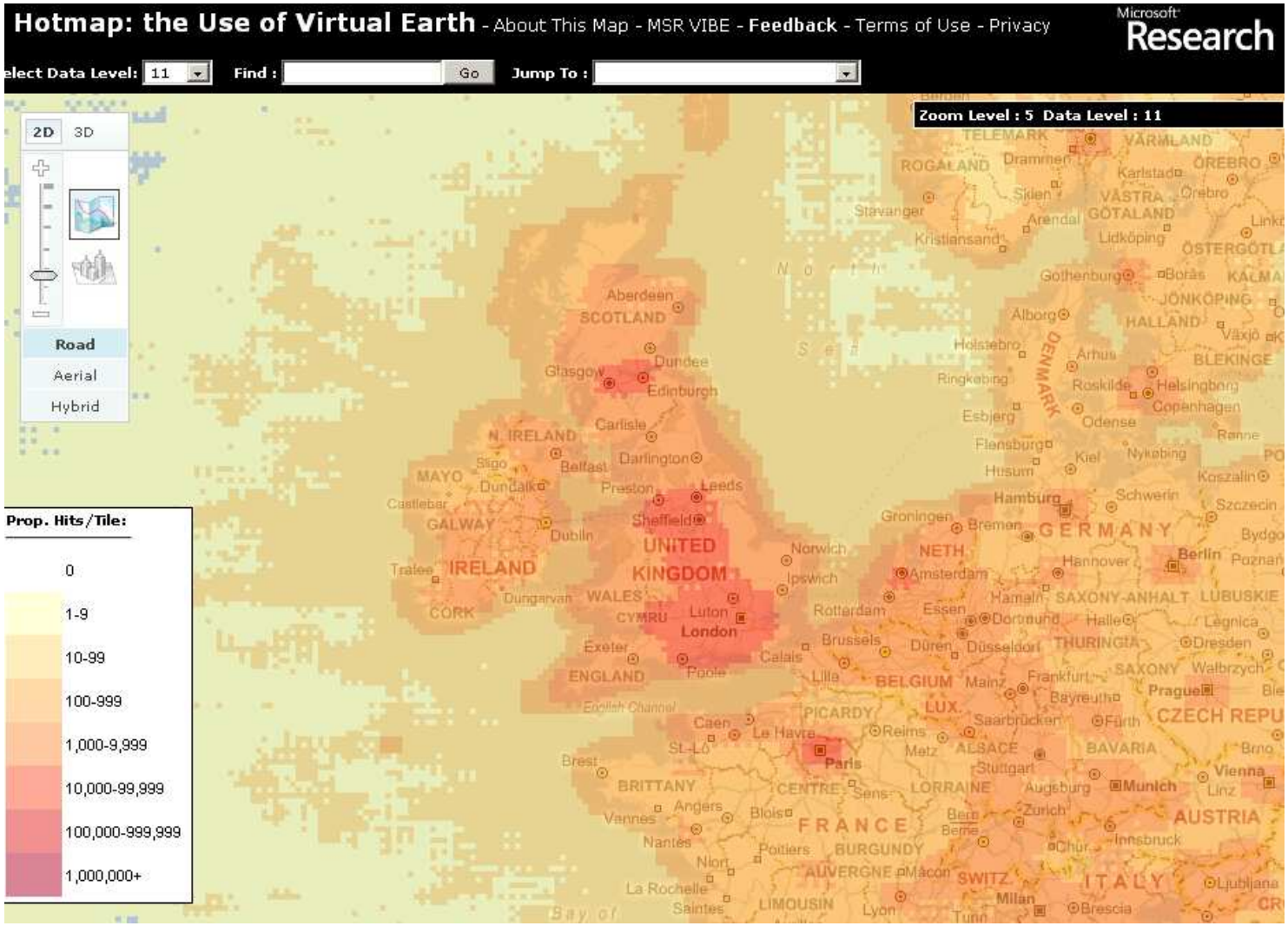
# Memories of mapping




Generated with http://hotmap.msresearch.us/

# Watching the Web

BBC NEWS UK EDITION

News Front Page
World
UK
England
Northern Ireland
Scotland
Wales
Business
Politics
Health
Education
Science/Nature
Technology
Entertainment

Have Your Say
Magazine
In Pictures
Week at a Glance
Country Profiles
In Depth
Programmes

Last Updated: Thursday, 29 April, 2004, 10:36 GMT 11:36 UK

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## Spying software watches you work

**Spyware has infected almost all companies polled for a survey about web-using habits at work.**

Spyware watches you from a distance

Nine out of 10 of the technology managers questioned said machines at their firm had programs that spied on the browsing habits of staff.

The computer staff estimated that, on average, 29% of work PCs had spyware surreptitiously installed on them.

By contrast only 6% of users questioned believed that the machine they use had been infected by such software.

**Browsing risk**

BBC NEWS UK EDITION

News Front Page
World
UK
England
Northern Ireland
Scotland
Wales
Business
Market Data
Your Money
E-Commerce
Economy
Companies
Fact Files
Politics
Health
Education

Last Updated: Monday, 5 April, 2004, 22:27 GMT 23:27 UK

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## Google's Gmail sparks privacy row

**Internet search engine Google's plans for a free email service have come under fire from privacy campaigners.**

Google is devising Gmail as a rival to Microsoft's Hotmail and to Yahoo!

Gmail by Google BETA

Privacy campaigners have objected to plans to send users adverts linked to the content of messages, and to the permanent storage of email.

CNN.com  International Edition | Netscape

MEMBER SERVICES  MAKE CNN.com YOUR HOME PAGE

SEARCH  The Web  CNN.com  Search  Powered by YAHOO! search

Home Page
World
U.S.
Weather
Business at CNNMONEY
Sports at SI.com
Politics
Law
Technology
Science & Space
Health
Entertainment
Travel
Education
Special Reports

SERVICES
Video
E-mail Newsletters
Your E-mail Alerts
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Contact Us

SEARCH
Web  CNN.com
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# TECHNOLOGY

## Google bows to Chinese censorship

Monday, September 27, 2004 Posted: 9:54 AM EDT (1354 GMT)

**SAN FRANCISCO, California (AP) -- Google Inc.'s recently launched news service in China doesn't display results from Web sites blocked by that country's authorities, raising prickly questions for an online search engine that has famously promised to "do no evil."**

Dynamic Internet Technology Inc., a research firm striving to defeat online censorship, conducted tests that found Google omits results from the government-banned sites if search requests are made through computers connecting to the Internet in China.

Steered by an identical search request, computers with a United States connection retrieved results from the sites blocked by China.

"That's a problem because the Chinese people need to know there are alternative opinions from the Chinese government and there are many things being covered up by the government," said Bill Xia, Dynamic's chief executive. "Users expect

Google

Search Jobs  MORE OPTIONS
Enter Keywords
Enter City  ALL
careerbuilder.com  SEARCH

advertiser links  what's this?

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OBSTACLES TO THE FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION ONLINE

# THE INTERNET UNDER SURVEILLANCE

REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS
2003 REPORT

# UGM as both an example of subtle surveillance practice and way to expose it?

- Thinking about the mundane, yet intimate, scope of tracking of social lives from our moments of mapping is part of a wider concern that the world of code does not forget
- Opens up a space for dialogue with Surveillance Studies perhaps

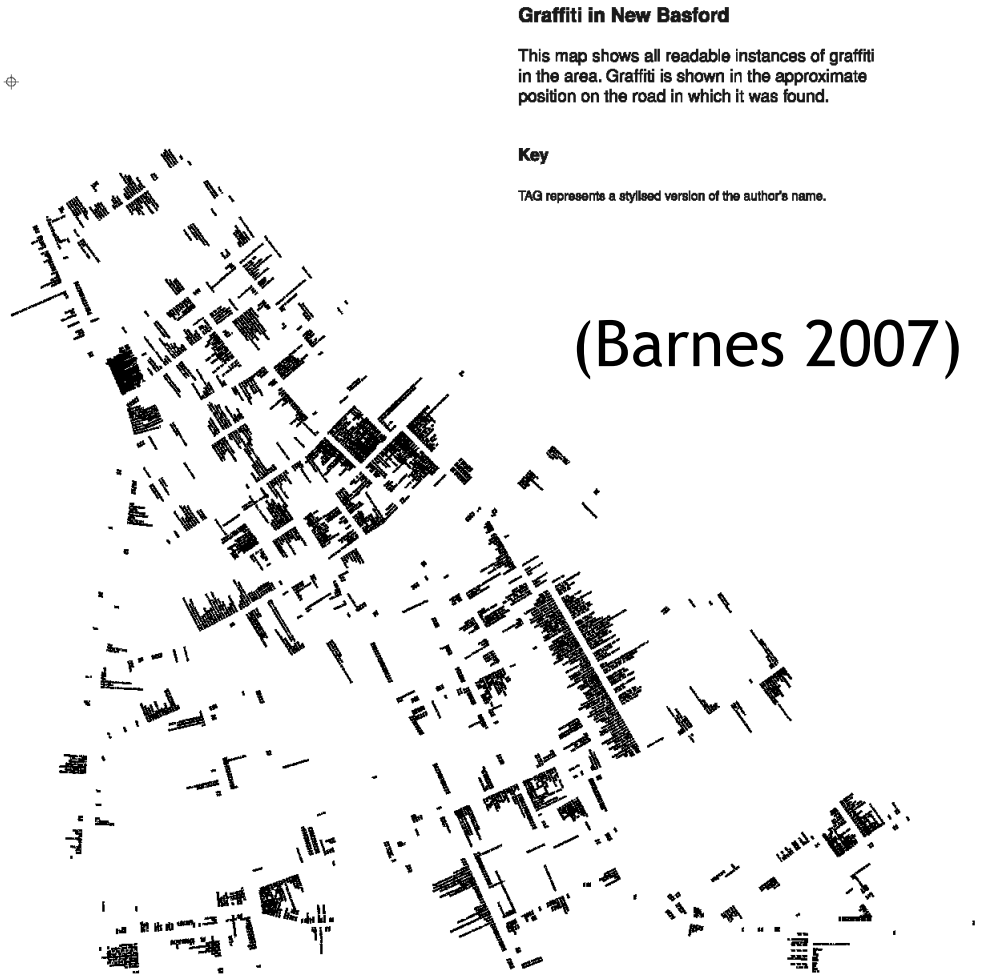
SMILEY
LFC
I love Simon
Stacey is BYSEXUAL Definitly
TAG TAG
I love U TA
Kitty + Jubee 4 ever
Dont Hate us Cong
Wilkinson
Holmes
Alison loves Mark
JEANINE
SMILEY
James M is FIT
Gareth is the best
sex
slag
sex
Yvette + Jade
Kitty keep it on known 2002 4 life idst
KEEP IT ON KNOWN
Kitty
Now we are here
but now were gone
Rachel G
Frex 96
Tain
SMILEY 2K2
RE BC FMT
Kim loves Russ
James is a Bastard
Suzanne is a Bitch
Suzanne is a Slag
SMILEY
MR SPICY
SJD
DM
JS IS DAFT
Stacey and Kim and Sarah
are friends 4eva 1dst + O.d.B.K.S.B
Kim and Sarah are friends
4eva n d.s.t. O.d.B.K.S.
Sarah
Sally woz ere with Kim
Shane Daniel 4eva l.d.s.t
Flipper n Kimberley are friends l.d.s.t
EC is mandy this is true
JP
hello
FAYE
I LOVE JAY
fuck off
J.W. X.L.F.
B.B. A.M.
JUBEE
MARY ANN
KITTY + JUBEE
WARREN
SHAZ KERI
Fuck you all
DAVE W
LEE + JANE STEVE LISA
DAVID IS THE BEST
I love Simon
Lisa 4 Simon
I love Simon
T DT DW
PM HW LW JT TT DW
DT YOU ARE DAFT
TH
VIC
KEN
I love ?
AMANDA
SHAUN S
DRAGON
BMc
MN + LF
Natalie 4 Gareth
GEMMA + TINA + RACHEL Y2K+1
RACHEL IS A LESBO
WAYNE IS A SHINER
KILL DISLEXIC WAYNE
I BET YOU CANT READ THIS U
DYSLEXIC TWAT WAYNE
TAG
I love Mark so do I by T + K
I LOVES D
PORGIE
MARK
DM
Weed for life
HOE
SMILEY
SMILE
I'M GOING TO
BDM YOU
RACHEL
Wayne is a muff licker
Wayne is a cunt
Stab u
Go fuck your Mum
up her arsehole Wayne
Wayne is a cunt
SMILEY
Kitty
Shona
Jubee
ustist afraid of da dark
HELLO
CAMERON
SAM
SAM
SAM
SAM
SAM
HELLO
YVETTE
ABOUT TIME
BEZ
YOUR SO SEXY
Aaron sucks dick
Hi
DRAGON
Fuck off Samie
Shithead bitch shame
James LOVES LUCY BY CAMERON
IH APRIL 1981
TINA
IG WALTON 1/5/29
AH CLAY AUG 5 1931
HC TYRONE
BAZ NIC WAZ ERE
CHERYL LOVES CR OM LOVES
IS LOVES CR OM LOVES PAUL
IAN PAUL P SMITH
JANE WOZ ERE 977 SHIT
DUDE ISHERE
IN THE WORLD
CHRISTOPHER KIEP
LAUREN CHRISTO
MK
DB 4 EB
AT
JC 4 C
I love Mark
SEXY
Marissa
Dwayne loves Lisa
Dan + Jemma + James
+ Emma + Kim + Mark + Chris
+ Terry + Tyler + Emma 2001
Larissa n Louise
woz ere Y2K+1
Dean = FIT!
Michelle 4 ?
Josephine 4 Guy
Karytown M 4 Nathan
Wayne Karen + Mick woz ere Y2K+1
Hi Kirsty from MC
Kirsty and Manuela woz ere 2001
M and R woz ere
Sex
MC lover?
Amy 4 Jamie David Andrew
Zoeena 4 Jag
Joanne 4 nobody!
Porgie
Karytown 4 Jamie!
Kelly Meashawn 4 ?
Karytown 4 ?
Kelly 4 Robbie
Karytown 4 Robbie
Karytown 4 Nathan
Laura woz ere Y2K3
Sharon sucks
Shirley
Nick + Trish woz ere 95
Hello
Glenn
AMIR
Amir
Amir
mol
cheeky chubs
sake sue
killer k
Cameron
Emma + Tina + Rachel
Hello!
KDRW + TSLM woz ere 2001
grutsum grandma
TAG
CAMERON
FUCK YOU
GEMMA + TINA + RACHEL
I WAS ERE BUT NOT FOR
LONG I LEFT MY NAME
TO TURN YOU ON = CARL
JUNAYO WAZ ERE 93
JACKASS
Fuck you bitch by YO
YUGION RULES
BOOOOOOOOO
MC FLEX
MC RIZLA
Cameron
RACHEL G
Gemma + Tina + Rachel Y2K+1
IVAN
MJ 4 LJ
LEE
DMC DW LOVE NANE
DANIEL 4 KANE
KANE IS GOOD
DK LOVES JB
MICK 4 CAROL
RVE 2002
SVE 2002
MH 1969
DD LOVES JH
MW 1969
GREG JT HT
Kane is bad
FUCK
Tamara sucks cock
Hayley
Ryan
ET 4 EM
Kathryn LW 4 SM
Alison I V
You are
Joe
Daniel is gay and so is his brother
BW Aug 25
JD
WAINE R
Gary is a
just like his
Compo
SPARKS
BIG B
JANN
Fuck off you fuckers
because Curry is ere
MANDA
Steven
SHIT
Joanna + Scott
Tracy + Lesley
Yvette
SCOT IS THE
WAINE R WOZ ERE
SO DON'T FLE
GOOD Church Easter
TLM + TLM woz ere 2002

(Barnes 2007)

# Mapping differently, mapping difference

- human geography does not map any more
- creatively explore the opportunities of UGM to map new stories, emotions & feelings, patterns of power and change….

e.g. new insights from mapping the authorship of mapping




(Barnes 2007)

# Concluding thoughts

- UGM is an exciting opportunity to gain some genuinely new insights
  - into the nature of map representations,
  - embodied mapping practices
  - and to reveal some of deeper social and political implication of geospatial gadgetry in everyday life (which in turn I see this as merely the tip of pervasive computing iceberg that is about to metaphorically crash into the social science research.)
- Ethical research that will exploit but not being parasitic
- Researching by ‘doing’ UGM but how do we make it count in terms of research output, teaching and careers…

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