

Call for papers 2009 RGS-IBG Annual International Conference, 26-28th August 2009, Manchester, UK

## Mapping Stories: Why Do Geographers Make Maps?

*Session organisers:*

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*Context:*

Research in the history of science and technology increasingly accepts the need for ethnographic approaches to the construction of knowledge, which follow key actors in the process, and also trace the inscriptions they leave behind (Latour 1987).

Geographers have only recently begun to explore their own knowledge communities in this way (see for example Barnes 2004; Livingstone and Withers 2005), reflecting critically on the contextual significance of place, and the political significance of historical processes in our making and imagining of spaces. But the discursive power of narrative in the construction of particular geographical imaginations has long been recognised (see Gregory 1993). This session seeks to bring these two approaches together to deepen our understanding of the processes underpinning spatial knowledge claims, by marrying storytelling to a critical and contextual emphasis on why geographers make, and have made maps. And equally why some geographers don't make maps anymore.

Last year's conference included well-attended methodological sessions focusing on maps that matter to geographers but little is known about *why* mapping might be deployed across different areas of the discipline, or about the *reasons* for changing relations between cartographic practices and geography. We invite papers that focus in a critical way on this relation, and tell particular and positioned stories about the strongly contested, ambiguous and fluid links between representational practice, image use, technologies of production and learning with mapping in the academy. We are interested in new insights into what geographers do and how geographical knowledge emerges. Tell us your local mapping story!

*Suggested themes:*

1. Changing pedagogic uses of mapping
2. Institutional influences on mapping practice
3. Technologies and changing research emphases
4. Aesthetics and the politics of design
5. Changing roles of the maps and other illustrations in published research
6. The materiality of mapping in the neo-liberal academy
7. Mapping spaces and academic identities
8. The public image of geographers and mapping stereotypes

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Proposed papers with a title and short abstract (250 words maximum) should be submitted to Chris Perkins (c.perkins@manchester.ac.uk) by 5<sup>th</sup> February 2009. Further details on conference are at [www.rgs.org/AC2009](http://www.rgs.org/AC2009)