

to his identity so they could continue telling Buffalo Bill stories. It seemed that no one grew tired of him.

Today, anyone interested in revisiting Cody's life has access to new editions of his books, and the Buffalo Bill Center of the West has made his papers and films available through its digital archive. With *Buffalo Bill on the Silver Screen*, the first volume in the William F. Cody Series on the History and Culture of the American West, independent researcher and historian Sandra K. Sagala contributes to our understanding of this iconic American by clarifying the final stage of his lengthy career. She includes a list of movies and television shows that feature Buffalo Bill, but the focus of her narrative is the early films. By explaining Cody's interest in the burgeoning industry, she reinforces his image as a self-promoting showman as well as a storyteller forever trying to inform and please the public.

*Mapping the Nation: History and Cartography in Nineteenth-Century America*, by Susan Schulten. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013. xii, 246 pp. Maps, illustrations, notes, index. \$30.00 paperback.

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History, so dependent on chronology and change over time, has more recently begun to turn its attention to geography. Propelled in part by new digital visualization tools, this "spatial turn" has become the most coherent unifying theme of historical investigation since the cultural turn of the 1980s. Yet, as Susan Schulten argues in *Mapping the Nation*, long before GIS and Google maps seemingly revolutionized the questions historians could ask, people understood that *how* knowledge was organized and displayed shaped the *substance* of that knowledge. In words that could easily be applied to a twenty-first-century digital spatial history project, a reviewer of Francis Amasa Walker's *Statistical Atlas of the United States* (1875) articulated this understanding: without maps "many interesting questions would scarcely be solved, and many others would never have been raised at all" (178). That realization, according to Schulten, prompted nineteenth-century educators, scientists, social scientists, and federal administrators to use thematic mapping as a potent discursive tool. In so doing, they ushered in the graphic and map-saturated world we live in today.

In the first of two sections, Schulten explores how maps shaped national identity in the nineteenth century. That process was exemplified

by the work of educator Emma Willard, whose *History of the United States, or the Republic of America* (1828) used successive maps of the same region to tell a visual story of settlement as national progress. By emphasizing the backstory of the contemporary nation, Willard was the “first to depict American history through maps” (27). This analysis alone helps us understand the development of American nationalism, but it is Schulten’s focus on Willard’s *intent* that reveals the importance of nineteenth-century cartographic thought. By tracing her pedagogical vision through a series of innovative graphics (which can be viewed, along with a number of high-resolution maps, on the companion website, [www.mappingthenation.com](http://www.mappingthenation.com)), Schulten successfully demonstrates how Willard made the American nation a “tangible entity, much as Webster codified an American language” (39).

If maps could help construct progressive narratives of American history, they could also stimulate anxious ones. The frontier, as Schulten argues, is a cartographic idea: it cannot exist without a map. That is no coincidence. Frederick Jackson Turner wrote his seminal essay “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” only after immersing himself in contemporary statistical atlases and thematic maps. After completing his essay, Turner then sent a copy directly to Francis Amasa Walker, whose *Statistical Atlas* had proved so useful. Not only had Walker coined the phrase “frontier line” but he had depicted that invisible boundary on the 35 maps he created for the atlas. Thus, according to Schulten, Walker “enabled Turner and others to visualize the frontier as a continuous line worthy of careful consideration” (186).

Yet maps could do more than create historical narratives. The second section of *Mapping the Nation*, explores how government agencies, exemplified by Walker’s Bureau of Statistics, used thematic mapping as a form of analysis rather than simply to illustrate data. Using historian Brian Balogh’s model of a nineteenth-century government that was most powerful when it was “out of sight,” Schulten argues that the seemingly disparate maps created by the Coast Survey, Geological Survey, the Smithsonian, the Census Bureau, and the army need to be viewed together to understand cartography’s role in the creation of the modern bureaucratic state.

*Mapping the Nation* is an excellent historical inquiry. Perhaps more importantly, it reminds us that even as the volume of graphic information circulated pushes our ability to absorb it, maps are still valuable analytical tools that can raise new questions, uncover unseen patterns, and generate new solutions to modern problems.