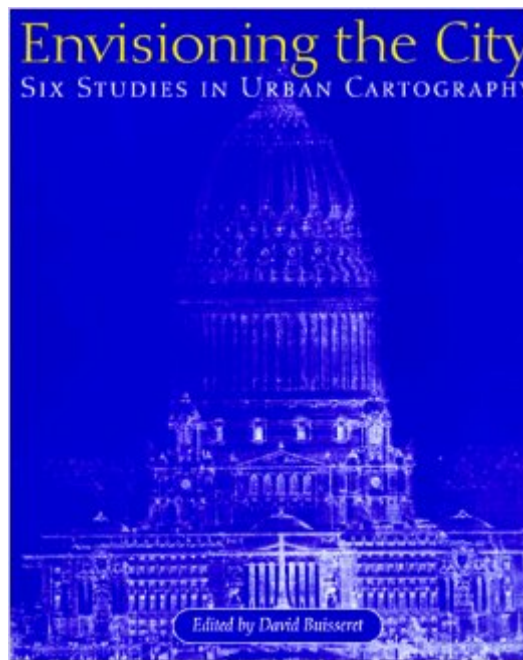


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Envisioning The City: Six Studies In Urban Cartography (The Kenneth Nebenzahl Jr. Lectures In The History Of Cartography)



Synopsis

Churchman or merchant, soldier or sanitary engineer, everyone who lives in a city sees it differently. Envisioning the City explores how these points of urban view have been expressed in city plans. Ranging from vertical plans to bird's-eye views, profiles, and three-dimensional models, these diverse maps all show cities "the way people want to see them." Whether a Chinese vertical city plan from the first millennium B.C. or a bird's-eye view appended to a fifteenth-century edition of Ptolemy's Geography, the type of plan chosen and its focus reflected the aspects of a city that the map's creators wished to highlight. For instance, maps of seventeenth-century cities emphasized impregnable fortifications as a deterrent to potential attackers. And Daniel Burnham's famous 1909 Plan of Chicago used a distinct representational style to "sell" his version of the new Chicago. Although city plans are among the oldest maps known, few books have been devoted to them. Historians of cartography and geography, architects, and urban planners will all enjoy this profusely illustrated volume.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If you are, as I am, fascinated by maps of cities (from the imaginary ones in fantasy novels to modern street directories), then Envisioning the City should appeal. The six studies it contains are academic papers, but accessible to those without a background in cartography or urban planning. While they go into the details of individual maps, they also provide the background needed to put

them in context. Four of the studies are of early modern Europe. Naomi Miller describes a collection of maps (of leading Italian and Islamic cities) added in the Renaissance to manuscripts of Ptolemy's Geography. She gives a general introduction to Renaissance city plans and their antecedents, followed by descriptions of the nine or ten maps in the collection. In a study of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, Richard Kagan distinguishes depictions of the city as *urbs* (a physical city) and *civitas* (a community). The latter vision predominated, often associated with religious symbolism and civic pride, while more accurate chorographic representations were mostly produced by outsiders or for military purposes. Martha Pollak writes on the importance of military architecture and cartography in early modern Europe, concluding that "historic urban cartography is indelibly linked with military strategy and planning". And David Buisseret's own "Modelling Cities in Early Modern Europe" surveys the history of relief plans (such as those in the collection in the Musée des Invalides in Paris). The opening and closing papers in *Envisioning the City* extend its temporal and geographical reach considerably.

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