

Dorling, D. (2012) What's the point of Cartography, The Times Magazine, Eureka Column, April 5th.

Cartography

WHAT IS IT

The science, and art, of making maps. Cartography is older than writing: some of the earliest maps drawn on cave walls, appear to show people dancing in fields.

Today, good music festival maps are designed by a cartographer, as are those of the Sat Nav that gets you there.

WHAT IS IT USED FOR

Working out where you are, and how to get to where you want to go. Maps can give a range of information, from the schematic London tube cartogram to those showing accurate coordinates and land topography.

AND THE BENEFITS

Well-designed maps minimize confusion and maximize understanding. Treating cartography as a science encourages innovation, creating entirely new projections of the planet. The future may see personalised maps for mobile devices, showing the locations and statuses of our friends, as well as customized geographical information.

(Danny Dorling, Honorary President of the Society of Cartographers)