come, density of public transport tripends, and public transport accessibility were obtained either from the 1966 By-Census, or the Hong Kong Mass Transport Study, published in 1968 but almost entirely based on field data collected by the Public Passenger Transport Survey Unit between 1965 and 1966. The classification of households with monthly income of $120 (HK$600) or more as a high income group looks absurd today, and public transport and accessibility data are so crude that the results for the block to block analysis of urban land use may mean very little. After lengthy analysis, the author admits at the end of Chapter Five that “conclusions from these investigations were severely restricted by the inadequacy of data.”

So much emphasis has been placed on statistical techniques that the major thrust of the study is often blunted by the huge amount of unnecessary operational details. Better paraphrasing too will gross improve the presentation and facilitate reading.

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Mental Maps.

Peter Gould and Rodney White.

Pelican Books, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England, 1974. 204 pp., maps, diagrs., index. $2.95.

Reviewed by S. Robert Aiken

Only a few social scientist have the ability, and the good fortune, to capture the imagination of the better educated members of the reading public. Galbraith in economics, Myrdal in sociology, Mead in anthropology, Barbara Ward in international relations, and more recently in global ecology, have written scholarly books that are eminently readable.

Geographers have not fared so well, although a few of their books have turned up on the bookshelves of other academicians, and some even in the homes of the layman. The latter has undoubtedly been the case with a few of E. Estyn Evans’s splendid writings on Irish life, at least one or two of the late Sir Dudley Stamp’s large output, and the latter-day writings of Carl Sauer, but examples are far from numerous. This lack of popular literature, along with the fact that we need to write more good books that other social scientists would want to read, is symptomatic of how much we still have to achieve in geography.

Rodney White and Peter Gould have written a fine book for the intelligent layman, a welcome addition to a small body of literature aimed at capturing a wide reading audience. The authors have not written for the professional scholar; instead, they have attempted to introduce a few recent developments in geographic thought to an interested segment of the reading public. What better topic to choose for the geographical novice than “mental maps?” Even the title of the book, and its remarkable cover design, are an invitation to explore further. Because we all have images of places near and far, we can, through this little volume, share with others our current professional interests in environmental perception. The reader who picks up Mental Maps, and who looks at its many illustrations, will be introduced to a new world of experience, perhaps one that includes that realm of the most wonderful of all “mental maps”—those of the imagination.

The book may be divided into three fairly distinct parts: the opening two chapters establish the conceptual and methodological framework within which succeeding chapters are placed; chapters three through five discuss the shared mental images of particular groups about different places; and chapters six and seven attempt to outline some of the practical implications of “mental maps” and how the images that people have of places may affect their behavior.

The book opens with a brief review of recent literature on geographic space perception. This includes reproductions of Wallingford’s famous maps of the New Yorker’s and Bostonian’s views of the United States and a few other less well known, but fascinating, illustrations. It is curious, however, that the considerable contributions of Glacken, Tuan, and Lowenthal to environmental perception studies are not mentioned.
How are the images that people have of places to be measured? This problem is covered in chapter two which introduces, with graphs, diagrams, and maps, some basic ideas about scales, the correlation coefficient, and principal components analysis. With this background information clearly presented, the authors proceed to the core of the book—the middle three chapters. Their strategy is straightforward. Groups of people were asked, If you had a free choice, where would you like to live, and how would you rank your preferences for these areas? From responses to this question, a data matrix of rank-order values can be derived, and a factor score generated for a particular area. “Finally these scores are scaled and plotted on the map to give a contoured mental map or perception surface” (p. 68).

The authors produce a set of striking mental maps, of school leavers at various locations in Great Britain, and of university students at five locations in the United States. Both sets of maps demonstrate that groups of people tend to have consistent images of geographic space and that these appear, at the most general level, to be composed of a shared national viewpoint, convoluted with a dome of local desirability around the home area.

Half of chapter four and all of chapter five are devoted to “probing behind these rather consistent images.” This objective is approached through a discussion of other forms of geographical knowledge (output) which people possess about areas (in the United States), and by an examination of information flows (inputs) which people receive. The writers demonstrate that geographical ignorance may play an important part in accounting for consistent spatial images. Consideration is given to the shape of states, their location, and their distance from home areas. The authors place considerable importance on distance and population size (the gravity model). “Given the . . . Average Perceiver’s location, and the distribution of people, we should be able to predict quite accurately the information they have in their heads about the space around them” (p. 133).

Of what value are mental maps? This question is answered with a wealth of examples from the Third World and Western Europe: problems of allocating people to localities that desperately need them in Ghana and Tanzania is at least in part a result of the poor mental images that people have of rural or backward areas compared with their inflated views of the modern city; in peninsular Malaysia and Singapore residential desirability is further complicated by racial and cultural issues; throughout the world human migration is in some way linked to the images people have of different places; the importance of creating a shared mental image of the countries of the E.E.C.; the need for a larger, more humane mental image of our world and the one the future.

Some minor corrections and additions would improve the quality of the book: a number of maps do not have scales or enough factual information in their legends; a few authorities are quoted in the text but do not appear in the bibliography; chapter six would benefit from a short explanation of the modernization maps of Tanzania and a few paragraphs might be added on how some of the other maps in the book were constructed; and there is some confusion on the use of the words Malaya for Malaysia and seemingly of Malayan for Malay(s). These are small flaws in an otherwise readable and enjoyable book. Indeed, one cannot help picking up a little of the enthusiasm the authors obviously feel for their subject. The geographer will not find much that is new to him in Mental Maps, but other readers will, and they are the ones this book is aimed at.

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Reviewed by Yi-Fu Tuan

To have disciples one must either be a creative philosopher like Carl Sauer, with a special way of looking at man and nature, or one must be the inventor of an elegant analytical technique. We have very few creative philoso-