

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Out of these changes emerged two final avatars of the map (both instituted by the late colonial state) which directly prefigure the official nationalisms of twentieth century Southeast Asia. Fully aware of their interloper status in the distant tropics, but arriving from a civilization in which the legal inheritance and the legal transferability of geographic space had long been established,¹⁹ the Europeans frequently attempted to legitimize the spread of their power by quasi-legal methods. Among the more popular of these was their 'inheritance' of the putative sovereignties of native rulers whom the Europeans had eliminated or subjected. Either way, the usurpers were in the business, especially vis-à-vis other Europeans, of reconstructing the property-history of their new possessions. Hence the appearance, late in the nineteenth century especially, of 'historical maps,' designed to demonstrate, in the new cartographic discourse, the antiquity of specific, tightly bounded territorial units. Through chronologically arranged sequences of such maps, a sort of political-biographical narrative of the realm came into being, sometimes with vast historical depth.²⁰ In turn, this narrative was adopted, if often adapted, by the nation-states which, in the twentieth century, became the colonial states' legacies.²¹

← CENSUS, MAP, MUSEUM

Maps attempt to represent reality through the lens of those who created them. Most maps do not show that this reality is a snapshot in a much longer timeline of events and disputes, during which time only specific groups held the power to map.

There are at least three dimensions where one can challenge the map. First, those maps try to represent territory and borders built over time and show the point of view of one of many groups involved in this historical process. Next, one should analyse how the history is presented today and what has been left out, altered, and/or put out of context. Finally, what are the biases and intentions of the authorities today? What are they trying to legitimise, and what is their future projection?

I am interested in strategies that reveal the biases behind cartography and other official documents, like creating alternatives or interjecting existing ones. Even if they are precise in showing an abstraction of a region's territorial divisions, they will never be more than that—an abstraction—one of the many possible by one of the many institutions or communities capable of mapping.

KEYWORDS map

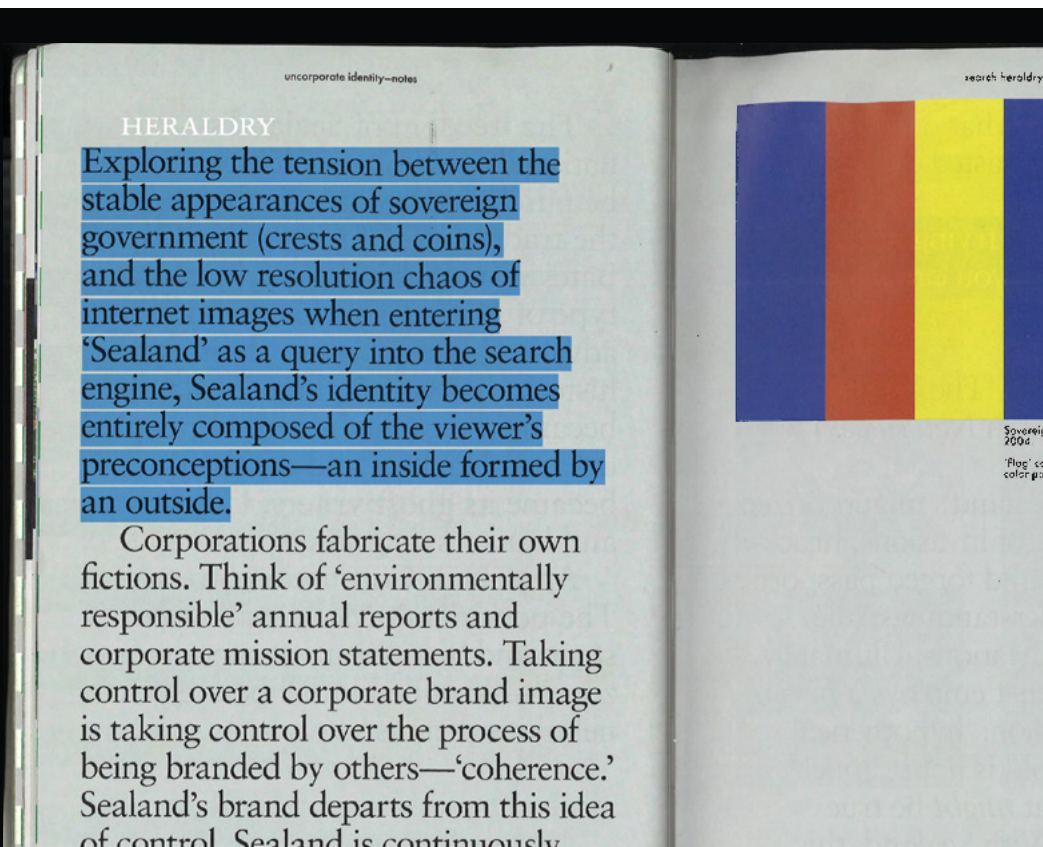
← SEALAND

Maps are just one of the many strategies employed in building a nation. Crests, coins and flags, among others, act as metaphors for states and have come to justify them. Furthermore, maps embed another national symbol, the country's shape.

I am interested in investigating how these symbols relate to each other and how they contribute to shaping the image of nations. This intertwined symbology offers rich possibilities for visual explorations, and alongside methods like deconstruction, distortion, and resampling, it can be used to subvert the structural processes behind the creation of nation-states, evidencing the power of semiotics as a tool of graphic communication design.

KEYWORDS identity, nation, symbol

003



κ Anderson, B. (2006) *Imagined Communities*. 2nd edn. London: Verso.

← Metahaven (2010) *Uncorporate Identity*. 1st edn. Zurich: Lars Müller Publishers.

THE EVROS/MERİÇ RIVER: A CENTURY OF BORDER DESIGN →

This project has reassured me of the relevance of showing disputes over borders as a way to challenge the map's neutrality. By putting the map in a historical context, I aim to reveal that what we see on a map wasn't always there but artificially created.

It also introduced me to counter-cartography, which I had previously thought of loosely as unmapping, that is, deconstructing the map and using form to reveal the nuances behind neatly defined borders.

Due to time and resource limitations, I displayed mostly widely known conflicts, but possible next steps for this project could involve uncovering lesser-known histories. Approaching this topic through the perspective of vulnerable populations, like asylum seekers, would enrich this project and contribute to shifting the power relation typically embedded in mapping.

KEYWORDS border, counter-cartography, map, migration

MEASUREMENT & STANDARDIZATION ↘

Standards improve efficiency and ease of communication and exchange in and between societies. However, because different societal groups have unique cultures and conventions, the choice of standards can be violent. They are forced upon the dominated groups, reduce plurality, and erase knowledge.

Historical research has been part of my practice and is one way to try to reveal forgotten practices, but using research through making allows me to explore the multiple forms knowledge can take.

I want to combine different research methodologies and use graphic communication design in a very different way than during the acculturation process, one that champions plurality.

KEYWORDS colonisation

004



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Conflict and negotiation around exchange are endemic to the development of the state. To manage this, the state mobilizes graphic design in its attempts to objectify—that is, displace from the illegibility (illegitimacy) of the subjective—the guaranteed foundations of meaning and value upon which exchange might be rationally and peaceably conducted. Where the assurances of substrates like clay and metal fail to secure the validity of an inscription, policy steps in to repel the breach.

Seeking to secure a standard's validity, the progenitors of these standards strive to win for their way of measuring (and knowing) the status of universality and inevitability. Efforts at standardization, undertaken to rationalize administration, aim to obliterate an outside—alternative units for counting, other techniques for measuring, charting/mapping, vernacular ways of knowing and managing—that elude or are simply incommensurable with those that are amenable to an administration's capacity to know, and to command what they know.

➤ Forensic Architecture (2025) The Evros/meriç River: A Century Of Border Design. Available at: <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-evros-meric-river-a-century-of-border-design> (Accessed: 29 Apr 2025).

➤ Lee, C. (2022) *Immutable: Designing History*. Available at: <https://www.librarystack.org/immutable-designing-history> (Accessed: 29 Apr 2025).

GLOBALISATION →

Maps are ubiquitous and normalised as truthful and objective representations of reality. Cartography is an area of knowledge that has existed since ancient times. Because cartography is a scientific field, map users usually do not question it or consider its biases.

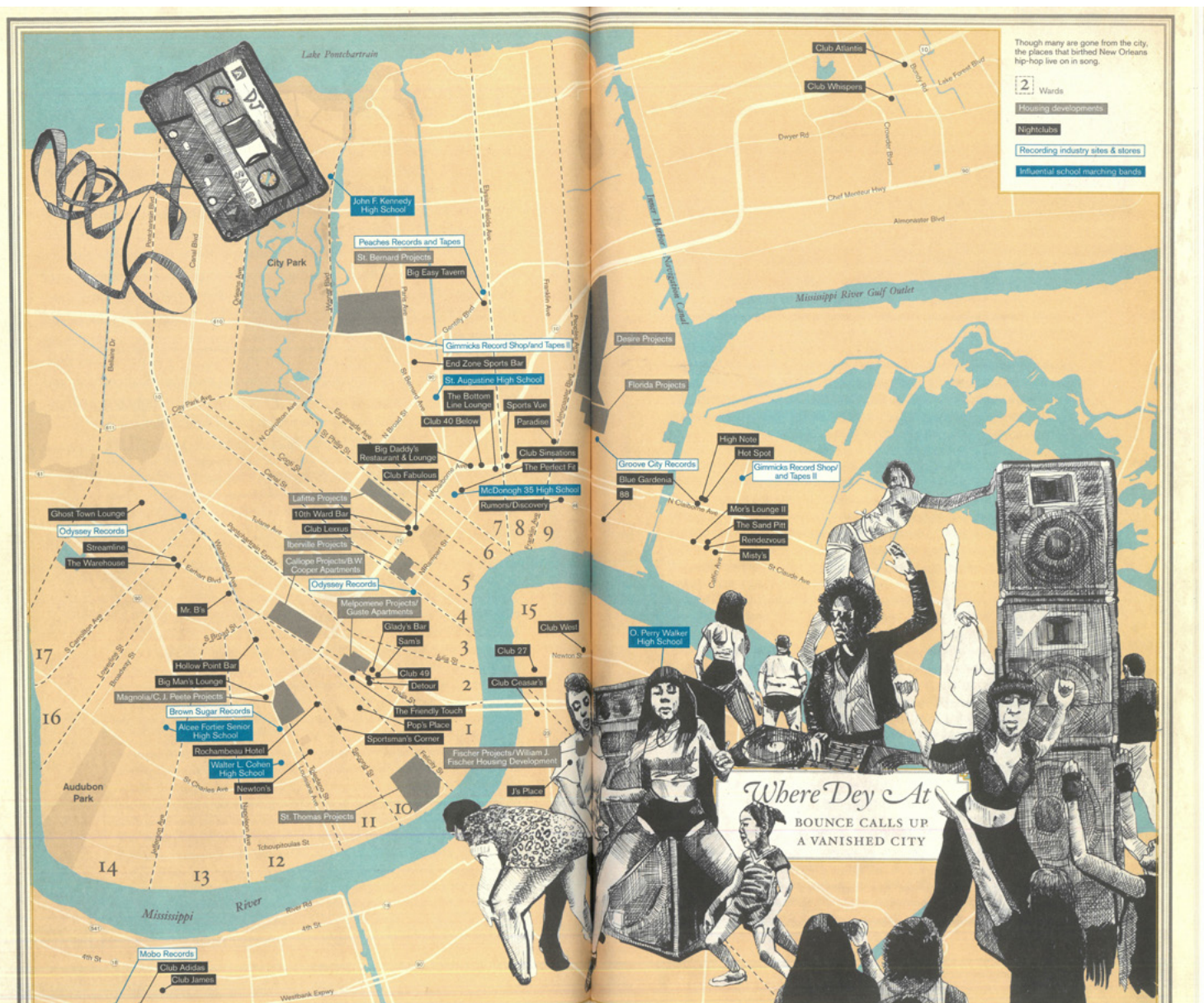
Subverting maps can be a radical approach to revealing hidden information, an important part of my practice. It can take many forms, and this specific approach of replacing the names of places defies the concept of nation as something given, unquestionable. It relates to an earlier line of enquiry, when I aimed to use mapping, unmapping or counter-cartography to expose imperialism and propose alternative futures that claim back territories and economies.

KEYWORDS counter-cartography, map, nation

005

→ Michael Craig-Martin (2012) Globalisation [Digital inkjet print on two sheets]. Available at: <https://www.michaelcraigmartin.co.uk/artworks/6-prints-and-editions/a123-globalisation-2012/> (Accessed: 1 May 2025). First discovered in Ulrich Obrist, H. (ed.) (2014) *Mapping it Out: An Alternative Atlas of Contemporary Cartographies*. 1st edn. New York: Thames & Hudson.





← WHERE THEY AT

Mapping can maintain the status quo and reinforce positions of power, but it can also be an act of resistance. By mapping bounce, New Orleans's signature music version of hip-hop, the author elevates the voices of the city's marginalised communities.

My practice uses graphic communication design to reverse power (im)balances. The following steps in the studio work for this brief involve reflecting on my relation to communities that can benefit from having their voices amplified. In a shift from the continental focus of the previous iterations, I am drawn to the idea of telling lesser-known stories in a more local context.

KEYWORDS community, identity, map, race

006

↓ INEFFICIENT MAPPING: A PROTOCOL FOR ATTUNING TO PHENOMENA

Linda Knight presents methodologies that refute western normative knowledge as the only valid way to produce scientific truth. The author presents mapping as a sensorial activity capable of capturing specific states of complex and mutable environments from one's perspective. Distributed as both paperback and free PDF, the work makes use of open access publishing, which is a form of questioning dominant commercial modes of distribution.

The protocols discussed in the book record that which is not usually present or presented in traditional research findings, like sensations. The resulting maps can be abstract in their visual representation, that is, their form may not be easily associated with a concrete aspect of what it represents.

Although inspired by this philosophy, I did also use the conventional tracing method of representing a path, but by doing it by hand, by shifting my gaze

between my subject and my medium, and sometimes operating simultaneously in observation and drawing modes, I implemented imprecision and subjectivity to the process. Furthermore, layering the maps and the printed picture of Granary Square brings the chaos and temporal dimension present in inefficient mapping methods.

This form of presentation expands the single-path map and allows for multiple meanings and interpretations, like the square being a transitory place for delivery workers, in contrast to the recreational function enjoyed by tourists and other privileged people. When coupled with stories from delivery riders who suffer from extenuating working hours, the maps offer a way into the complexities of labour, class and social relations.

Inefficiency is an honest label that recognises from the start the limitations of research. My mapping method during this brief has been extremely limited and subjective. By sitting in different spots at Granary Square, I had to constantly make choices about which direction to look and where to sit. As Knight (2021, p. 75) put it, "Researchers become political once they see themselves as a modest witness to the world, and that they can only partially record what can be seen, and that what is seen is only ever a partial account of the whole thing." My vision was also limited by obstacles and the busy crowd of sunny afternoons.

Besides the limitations of collecting data, I am also faced with my own limitations as a design student barely familiar with ethnographic research methods. My goal was not to register and present the presence of every single rider that passed by Granary Square during the hours I was there. That would be the case, or the claim, for other systems based on supposedly neutral traditional western cartography. In contrast, I have embraced the inefficiency of my method and used it to convey sensations and, hopefully immersive feelings, always considering my perspective as the starting point.

When I first saw Knight's work, I put it aside. At first glance, it seemed too abstract and distant from my practice, but after more thoughtful consideration, and knowing that abstraction is a key factor in any form of mapping, I realised I was too tied to a representational view of mapping. While reading *Inefficient Mapping*, I realised I should not attempt to create work that is easily and immediately understood by everyone, which is impossible to achieve. Accepting that is part of the process of defining my audience and dismissing the assumption that Graphic Communication Design can be universal.

KEYWORDS abstract, audience, labour, map, universal

007



Fig. 5.3 Materials -1. Image by the author.

JEAN PIERRE CONSUEGRA ↵

He describes himself as a multidisciplinary designer, and started his career doing the designs for his record label, since he couldn't afford to hire a professional designer. Being self-taught is evident in his colourful low-fi and playful mix of visual languages. Among the myriad of styles present in his body of work there are aspects of materiality and metalanguage, like exposing graphic user interface elements as an integral part of the pieces or using circuit boards present inside DJ controllers for party posters. Consuegra's explorations don't start at the composition stage. He also makes inventive use of image capture devices such as x-ray machines, webcams and trail cams as part of his design process.

I'm inspired by the iterative, experimental, hands-on approach Consuegra brings to his projects and the use of contextually relevant visual elements. And like in Knight's (2021) work, his pieces often engage first for their beauty, but require effort to be understood. In Knight's maps, it was the abstraction and subjectivity that required the viewer to make this extra effort. In Consuegra's work, it is the deliberate noisy aesthetics or unconventional information hierarchy that makes the reader hunt for key information that is presented with the same level of importance as a piece of found text in a collage.

The behind the scenes ethos lives in his pieces through the choice of materials and user interface elements, and in the way he communicates them alongside his creative process. Furthermore, he shows not only finished designs, but also experiments while openly admitting not knowing what they mean. That poses a relevant question to graphic communication designers: should a body of work be composed only of key projects? Or also include everything in between that has led to them?

The project I responded to in this brief was "Community Riders". The wandering around Google Street View in New York has similarities to the *dérive* described by Guy Debord in Knabb (2006, p. 62) as it is subject to the cities "psychogeographical contours, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes that strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones." But the deliberate search for delivery riders, as opposed to "let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there" moves this exercise further away from the original theory.

The method employed by Consuegra is a virtual equivalent of photography, with the distinct grainy texture of low resolution digital cameras, whether the source images came from old cell phone cameras or using more recent technology that later got compressed by Google and edited in Photoshop. Either way, the quality of the images are part of the story the designer is telling not only in this piece but across his entire body of work, which can be placed, according to Steyerl (2012, p. 43), in the wider discourse "of carbon-copied pamphlets, cine-train agit-prop films, underground video magazines and other nonconformist materials, which aesthetically often used poor materials."

When I found "Community Riders", I was drawn in by the subject, due to my interest in the broader thematics of labour, and by the method, so I experimented with the same virtual photography on my early iterations. Even bringing in more information like cost of gear and hourly pay, it still felt too distant of an approach to study delivery riders, with whom most customers' interactions are already mediated by the mini computer that is the smartphone.

KEYWORDS body of work, labour, metalanguage, photography, poor image, psychogeography

008

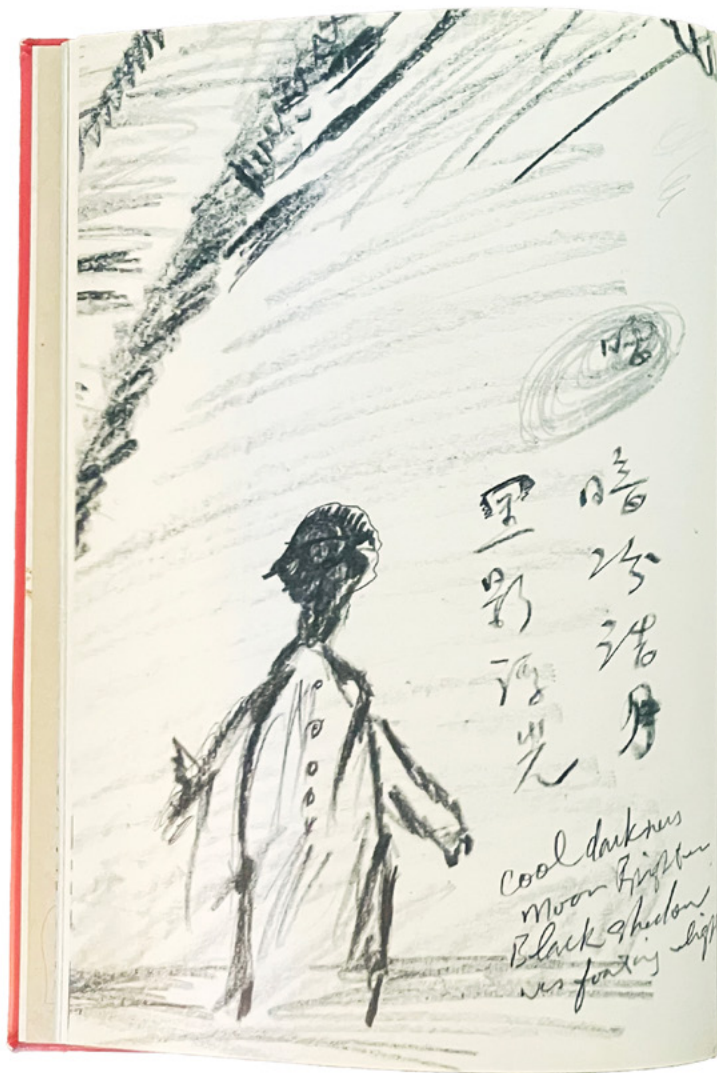


→ Consuegra, J. (2025) 'Community riders' [Instagram]. 22 February. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DGYoUHmRTzO/> (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

□ Knabb, K. (ed.) (2006) Situationist International Anthology. 4th edn. Bureau of Public Secrets: Berkeley.

□ Knight, L. (2021) Inefficient Mapping: A Protocol for Attuning to Phenomena. 1st edn. California: Punctum Books.

□ Steyerl, H. (2012) The Wretched of the Screen. 1st edn. Sternberg Press: Berlin.



Habitable rooms per hectare (hr/h)

A formula used to calculate residential density. Habitable rooms include all living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens, if the latter include dining space and are more than 12.6 sq m (140 sq ft). Bathrooms, toilets, landings and lobbies are excluded. The site area is calculated by including half the width of the adjoining road(s) to a maximum of 6 m (20 ft).

Hipsterization strategies

These are urban-renewal strategies that encourage people – especially young people – to be more interested in living, working and shopping in cities. The idea is to create more attractive urban environments to lure 'bohemians' and the 'creative class'.

Homelessness

A commonly used, contemporary definition for people who lack permanent or fixed housing; the reason is generally thought to be the inability to afford regular, safe accommodation. However, reasons are hugely varied and can include mental illness, an unstable home life (possibly involving domestic abuse) and problems adjusting from other forms of life, such as people who have left the armed forces or prison. The term may also be used to cover people whose primary residence is a homeless shelter or public or private space not intended to be used as regular housing. Some estimates put the figure of worldwide homelessness at 100 million.

Hostel

A building providing residential accommodation, often for a particular group of people, with either board or facilities for the preparation of food. Unlike hotels, they often have no self-contained facilities. Hostels normally provide temporary or short-term accommodation and occupants have no rights of tenure.

Key-worker affordable housing

In the context of London, housing provided for people with skills in an employment sector deemed important to the functioning of Central London with severe difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. These sectors are currently considered to be health care, policing and education, but this is regularly reviewed.

Local distinctiveness

The positive features of a place and its communities that contribute to its special character and sense of place.

← CHARING CROSS

By incorporating art from homeless people, Norman's book presents a rich and plural narrative about and by this marginalised societal group that motivates me to include more voices from delivery riders in my work.

The glossary that structures the book offers a selection of ideas, and it is a way to frame the subject and articulate the author's position. This collection makes me imagine concepts or symbols that could be relevant to my research, and how to communicate them. Perhaps reveal to a larger audience something that every rider has to go through in order to work, like creating an account or hiring insurance. This could take the form of a user guide or an instructional video, and use a serious or humorous tone.

KEYWORDS glossary, housing, social practice

009

MICHAEL WOLF →

So far I've used photography in a mere functional way, as a backdrop for my maps or to illustrate my geographical point of view when I was drawing them.

My critique during this brief lies in social issues like the precarious conditions faced by workers under platform capitalism, the over dependence on digital services and the impact they have on local business and communities.

Wolf (2010) used Google Street View as source material, and was possibly an inspiration for Consuegra (2025), but photography offers many more possibilities to investigate these themes. Wolf's (2009) *Life in Cities* series exposes the harsh conditions endured by everyday people in urban life. They are reminders of what can be achieved through this medium and, in my case, in combination with personal narrative and counter-mapping methods.

KEYWORDS capitalism, photography



✎ Wolf, M. (2009) *Life in Cities*. Available at: <https://photomichaelwolf.com/#100x100-2/1> (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

❑ Wolf, M. (2010) *Street View*. Available at: <https://photomichaelwolf.com/#asoue/1> (Accessed: 23 May 2025).

❑ Consuegra, J. (2025) 'Community riders' [Instagram]. 22 February. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DGYoUHmRTzO/> (Accessed: 22 May 2025).

In every case the spatial field depends first of all on the point of departure—the residence of the solo *dérive* or the meeting place selected by a group. The maximum area of this spatial field does not extend beyond the entirety of a large city and its suburbs. At its minimum it can be limited to a small self-contained ambience: a single neighborhood or even a single block of houses if it's interesting enough (the extreme case being a static-*dérive* of an entire day within the Saint-Lazare train station).

The exploration of a fixed spatial field entails establishing bases and calculating directions of penetration. It is here that the study of maps comes in—ordinary ones as well as ecological and psycho-geographical ones—along with their correction and improvement. It should go without saying that we are not at all interested in any mere exoticism that may arise from the fact that one is exploring a neighborhood for the first time. Besides its unimportance, this aspect of the problem is completely subjective and soon fades away.

The street: try to describe the street, what it's made of, what it's used for. The people in the street. The cars. What sort of cars? The buildings: note that they're on the comfortable, well-heeled side. Distinguish residential from official buildings.

The shops. What do they sell in the shops? There are no food shops. Oh yes, there's a baker's. Ask yourself where the locals do their shopping.

The cafés. How many cafés are there? One, two, three, four. Why did you choose this one? Because you know it, because it's in the sun, because it sells cigarettes. The other shops: antique shops, clothes, hi-fi, etc. Don't say, don't write 'etc.'. Make an effort to exhaust the subject, even if that seems grotesque, or pointless, or stupid. You still haven't looked at anything, you've merely picked out what you've long ago picked out.

← THEORY OF THE DÉRIVE

After seeing Consuegra's (2025) work, I decided to investigate how mapping could reveal information about the work of delivery riders. The Theory of the *Dérive* could offer some insight on ways to explore this topic in the real world, as opposed to the virtual environment used in my reference. After reading the text, I became much more aware of the presence of these workers, as if I was in a constant state of an informal-*dérive*. One day cycling to campus, I caught myself behind one delivery rider and took photos and filmed him. This event gave me the idea to cycle around, covering a specific area or more freely, in search of them and capture more footage.

I didn't test this method out, since sitting on Granary Square and registering the routes on tracing paper seemed more promising. This approach is similar to what Guy Debord describes in Knabb (2006, p. 65) as "being a static-*dérive*."

KEYWORDS *dérive*, psychogeography

011

◀ THE STREET

Like Debord's *dérive* in Knabb (2006), Perec's method of investigating is based on discovering new information by comprehensive observation of space, architecture and behaviour, but in a more static way, much like my own exploration during this brief.

Unlike noted in both theories, I had a predetermined subject. I would notice details other than their routes, like the brand stamped on their large backpacks, if they were on a cycle or a motorbike and some behavioural traits. Are they in a hurry? Or lost? I always noticed the direction they were going, but only started putting it on paper midway into the exercise.

I see two ways of expanding my work through Perec's lens. I could reflect in retrospect on the material I have, including some pictures. Or I can go back, observe and annotate other aspects of each worker, like what they are wearing or if they changed gears. Or I could sit outside Granary Square and closer to where the majority of drivers were going in order to see where they might ride next.

Another way to expand on my work is perhaps to more thoroughly observe the surroundings. Can they reveal new information relevant to my theme? For instance, how many restaurants are there at Granary Square and why didn't I see any delivery riders coming from any of them?

KEYWORDS architecture, behaviour, investigation

↩ Knabb, K. (ed.) (2006) *Situationist International Anthology*. 4th edn. Bureau of Public Secrets: Berkeley.

← Perec, G. (1997) *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*. 1st edn. Penguin Books: London.

□ Consuegra, J. (2025) 'Community riders' [Instagram]. 22 February. Available at: <https://www.instagram.com/p/DGYoUHmRTzO/> (Accessed: 22 May 2025).