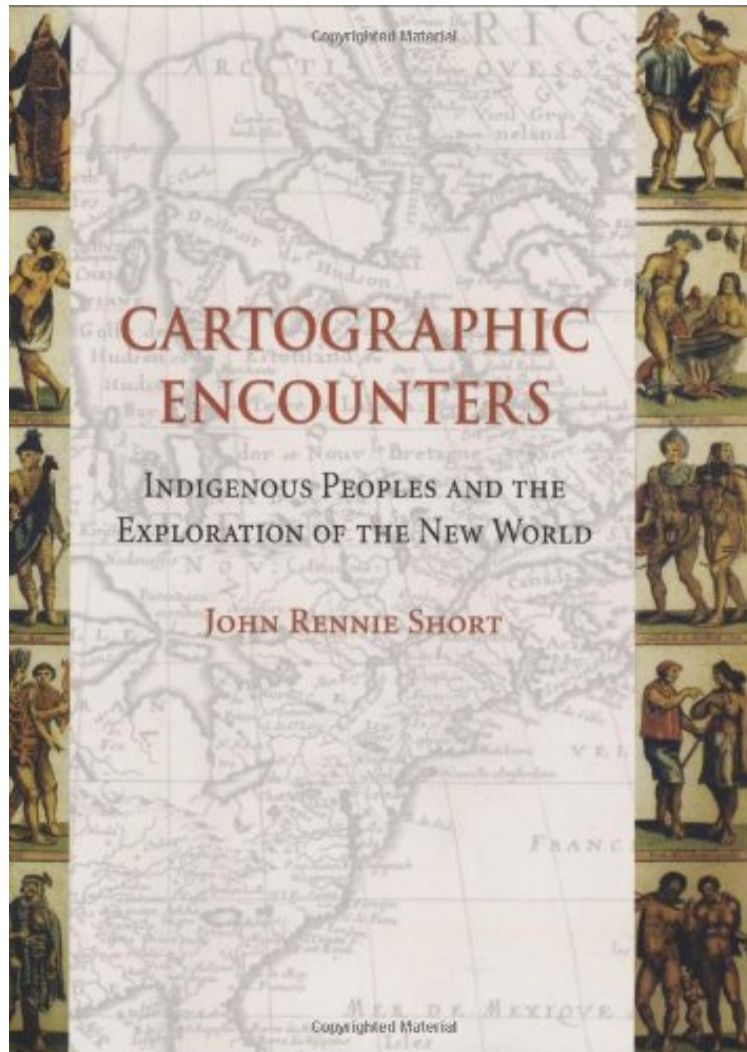


(Library ebook) Cartographic Encounters: Indigenous Peoples and the Exploration of the New World

Cartographic Encounters: Indigenous Peoples and the Exploration of the New World

John Rennie Short

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John Rennie Short : Cartographic Encounters: Indigenous Peoples and the Exploration of the New World before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cartographic Encounters: Indigenous Peoples and the Exploration of the New World:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Lewis and Clark (and others) did not go into a wilderness. They had maps and lots of help from Native peoples who lived there. By lyndonbrecht This short book adequately makes the point that words such as "exploration" and "discover" are not fully adequate to describe how the New World was explored and mapped. The focus and most of the examples are on what is now the USA, and include a sizable number

of federal government financed explorations of the Louisiana Purchase and the West generally (there is a small section about explorers in Australia that shows a similar situation). There was never a wilderness; it was all populated country, and the residents were guides for the "explorers." The book uses several terms, but something like "resident Natives" might work better. Explorers everywhere consulted natives for geographic help, and these folks sometimes made maps using explorers' pen and paper or may have described the lay of the land by using a stick and sand. The point of the book is that initially understanding the new lands was a collaboration. It was only after time passed and settlement intensified that the native presence vanished from maps. Short uses early maps and journals to establish the presence of native peoples, and how important they were to "discovery." He makes a convincing case. The selection of maps and map portions used as illustrations is interesting, and a section at the very end has short excerpts from a number of journals and reports that emphasize native assistance and guidance. Lewis and Clark, the Long expedition, Fremont's expeditions, the Railroad Surveys, they all used natives' reports and maps. Lewis and Clark, for example, did not venture into the wilderness--they had maps, which were based on French and Spanish materials, themselves based partly on natives' information.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Finding Indian information in "white exploration" By Gene Rhea Tucker A good book doing a good service. Short portrays the white exploration of North America (primarily) not as a tale of rugged, individualistic white men braving the wilderness, but explorers gathering information from the native peoples in a series of "cartographic encounters." Short skims expedition reports and maps for evidence (sometimes reading between the lines) of native informants. Short ably demonstrates this. He also has another parallel thesis: that Indians gave whites information for their own benefit, but that doing so sowed the seeds of their own destruction. When whites had the knowledge, they no longer needed indigenous information. This schemata works well with North America, but would fall down if he applied it to Latin America, thus the focus. That and the book is quite short and is a tad bit repetitive in places. It makes up for these drawbacks in its brevity and its ability to make you think. Recommended for all historians/enthusiasts of exploration, cartography, and Indian-white relations.

There's no excuse for getting lost these days satellite maps on our computers can chart our journey in detail and electronics on our car dashboards instruct us which way to turn. But there was a time when the varied landscape of North America was largely undocumented, and expeditions like that of Lewis and Clark set out to map its expanse. As John Rennie Short argues in *Cartographic Encounters*, that mapping of the New World was only possible due to a unique relationship between the indigenous inhabitants and the explorers. In this vital reinterpretation of American history, Short describes how previous accounts of the mapping of the new world have largely ignored the fundamental role played by local, indigenous guides. The exchange of information that resulted from this cartographic encounter allowed the native Americans to draw upon their wide knowledge of the land in the hope of gaining a better position among the settlers. This account offers a radical new understanding of Western expansion and the mapping of the land and will be essential to scholars in cartography and American history.

"John Rennie Short has trawled through many dusty travel journals and pored over his share of early maps in order to reconstruct this fascinating cultural collision. His book ranges widely, from the cartographic artefacts of pre-Columbian civilisation (maps inscribed on birch bark or carved into walrus tusks) to the 19th century exploration of Australia's interior . . . consistently entertaining and even-handed." *Geographical Magazine*