



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

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San Diego Public Library

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Mapping a Nation in Motion: A Brief History of American Travel Cartography

SAN DIEGO -Nationally recognized expert on the popular use of maps by Americans, Dr. James Akerman of the Newberry Library in Chicago, will talk on the use of travel maps by Americans from the 18th through the 20th centuries. The title of his talk, co-sponsored by National University's Center for Cultural and Ethnic Studies and the San Diego Public Library, is *Mapping a Nation in Motion: A Brief History of American Travel Cartography*. The event will be held on Thursday, May 29, 2008, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the auditorium at the San Diego Public Library, 820 E Street, San Diego, CA 92101. Thanks to a generous donation by Paul Chacon of 5-Star Parking, parking is free at the 5-Star lot on the southeast corner of Broadway and 8th Street .

Finding one's way with a map is a relatively recent phenomenon. In pre-modern times, maps were used, if at all, mainly for planning journeys in advance, not for guiding travelers on the road. With the exception of navigational sea charts, the use of maps by travelers only became common in the modern era; indeed, in the last two hundred years, maps have become the most ubiquitous and familiar genre of modern cartography.

Examining the historical relationship between travelers, navigation, and maps, Dr. Akerman considers the cartographic response to the new modalities of modern travel brought about by modern technological and institutional developments in the United States. Highlighting the ways in which the travelers, operators, and planners of modern transportation systems valued maps as both navigation tools and as representatives of a radical new mobility, Dr. Akerman places maps at the center of the history of travel and movement.

Dr. Akerman is the Director of the Hermon Dunlop Smith Center for the History of Cartography at the Newberry Library in Chicago. His most recent books include the edited volumes *Maps: Finding Our Place in the World* (2007) and *Cartographies of Travel and Navigation* (2006), both published by the University of Chicago Press.

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