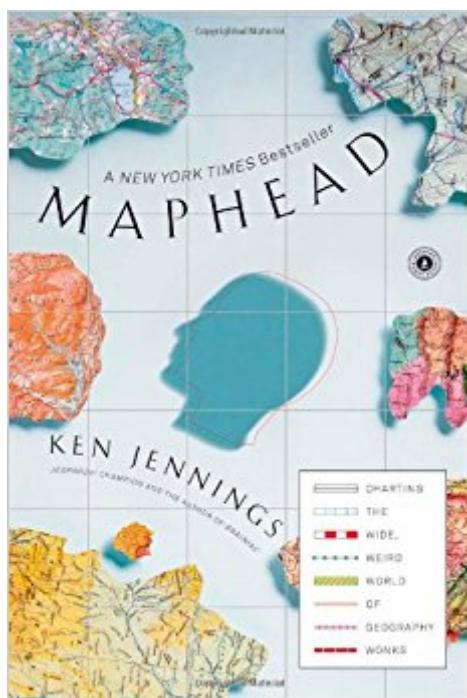


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# Maphead: Charting The Wide, Weird World Of Geography Wonks



## Synopsis

Record-setting Jeopardy! champion and New York Times bestselling author Ken Jennings explores the world of maps and map obsessives, "a literary gem" (The Atlantic) now available in paperback. Ken Jennings takes readers on a world tour of geogeeks from the London Map Fair to the bowels of the Library of Congress, from the prepubescent geniuses at the National Geographic Bee to the computer programmers at Google Earth. Each chapter delves into a different aspect of map culture: highpointing, geocaching, road atlas rallying, even the "unreal estate" charted on the maps of fiction and fantasy. Jennings also considers the ways in which cartography has shaped our history, suggesting that the impulse to make and read maps is as relevant today as it has ever been. From the "Here be dragons" parchment maps of the Age of Discovery to the spinning globes of grade school to the postmodern revolution of digital maps and GPS, *Maphead* is filled with intriguing details, engaging anecdotes, and enlightening analysis. If you're an inveterate map lover yourself—or even if you're among the cartographically clueless who can get lost in a supermarket—let Ken Jennings be your guide to the strange world of mapheads.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Best Books of the Month, September 2011 Ken Jennings, best known for his epic winning streak on Jeopardy! in 2004, returns to the writing world with *Maphead*, a charming, funny, and of course, informational book about the world of maps and the people who love them. Even if maps are not your thing, Jennings writes about them with such affection and humor that the topic becomes

fascinating; the clever captions for the maps in the book alone are worth the read (the first map in the book compares shapes of places that were “separated at birth” and are therefore soul mates. Included: Lake Michigan and Sweden). From the politics of geocaching to the ups and downs of the contestants participating in the National Geographic Bee (which, according to Alex Trebek, should have its own prime-time show like the spelling bee), Jennings captures the excitement and wonder of places. --Caley Anderson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Jennings is a very witty, insightful writer and has written an entertaining and educational book about maps and the geeks who obsess over them. •Pauline Frommer, travel writer and founding editor of Frommers.com “It’s a fun read that’s not just for wonks.” •The Salt Lake Tribune “[A] spirited layman’s history of cartography.” •A. A. •Harpers

The information provided in this book is interesting, but it’s ruined by Ken Jennings constantly trying to make terrible puns throughout the book. I found myself sighing or rolling my eyes more often than I should have for a book like this

Great Book. Easy read and enjoyable.

Interesting subject matter, but could have used some heavy editing. It was a bit rambling and self-indulgent, with frequent anecdotes about the author instead of the subject matter at hand. However, there’s plenty of map info to satisfy map heads.

Like me, the author was a map nut in childhood. But the book was disappointing. Instead of concentrating on maps and geography, it wanders far afield into things like geocaching (learned far more than I really wanted to know about it), geography bees, and other peripherals. One point of praise: he puts his footnotes at the bottoms of the pages, where they belong, rather than resorting to endnotes.

I was really excited to find a book specifically written for weirdos like me who “read” maps and atlases like a book, love to navigate, and have a strange fascination with globes. Sadly though I couldn’t make it past a few chapters of this book. Frankly, Ken Jennings, although a wiz at knowing

every obscure worldly fact, is not a writer. The worst part is the hokey jokes inserted as a lame attempt to make this a lighthearted and fun read. The topics seem directionless and mostly sensational than insightful. I'm really disappointed I couldn't enjoy this read more. Maybe I'll skip ahead a few chapters and see if it can still maintain my attention. If so, I'll come back and update this review. Also, the paperback cover design has a hole in the shape of a cutout head, which makes it really uncomfortable to hold because it's right in the center where your fingers grip. Sounds silly but I actually think this matters a lot since you're going to be holding this book for hours.

Bought this for my Kindle, and that was a mistake, I think. It would probably work better as a genuine book. I will think more carefully next time about a book about maps.

I loved this book. I'm a geography geek, maphead, and all around pop culture nerd. If you like references to the 80's show Airwolf, The Mountain Goats, Magnetic Fields, this is the one for you.

Never imagined a book about maps could be so fascinating. A very good and educational read.

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