



From Squaw Tit to Whorehouse Meadow: How Maps Name, Claim, and Inflame

Mark Monmonier

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Brassiere Hills, Alaska. Mollys Nipple, Utah. Outhouse Draw, Nevada. In the early twentieth century, it was common for towns and geographical features to have salacious, bawdy, and even derogatory names. In the age before political correctness, mapmakers readily accepted any local preference for place names, prizes accurate representation over standards of decorum. Thus, summits such as Squaw Tit—which towered above valleys in Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, and California—found their way into the cartographic annals. Later, when sanctions prohibited local use of racially, ethnically, and scatalogically offensive toponyms, town names like Jap Valley, California, were erased from the national and cultural map forever.

From Squaw Tit to Whorehouse Meadow probes this little-known chapter in American cartographic history by considering the intersecting efforts to computerize mapmaking, standardize geographic names, and respond to public concern over ethnically offensive appellations. Interweaving cartographic history with tales of politics and power, celebrated geographer Mark Monmonier locates his story within the past and present struggles of mapmakers to create an orderly process for naming that avoids confusion, preserves history, and serves different political aims. Anchored by a diverse selection of naming controversies—in the United States, Canada, Cyprus, Israel, Palestine, and Antarctica; on the ocean floor and the surface of the moon; and in other parts of our solar system—*From Squaw Tit to Whorehouse Meadow* richly reveals the map's role as a mediated portrait of the cultural landscape. And unlike other books that consider place names, this is the first to reflect on both the real cartographic and political imbroglios they engender.

From Squaw Tit to Whorehouse Meadow is Mark Monmonier at his finest: a learned analysis of a timely and controversial subject rendered accessible—and even entertaining—to the general reader.



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