



# Seeing Underground: Maps, Models, and Mining Engineering in America

*Eric C. Nystrom*

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The digging of mineral wealth from the ground dates to prehistoric times, and Europeans pursued mining in the Americas from the earliest colonial days. Prior to the Civil War, very little mining went deep enough to require maps. However, the major finds of the mid-nineteenth century, such as the Comstock Lode, were vastly larger and deeper than any previous finds in America. Nystrom argues that, as industrial mining came of age in the United States, the development of maps and models gave power to a new visual culture. These maps and models became necessary tools in creating and controlling the mines' pitch-dark, three-dimensional space. Nystrom demonstrates that these neglected artifacts of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have much to teach us today.

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