

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 21, 2006

**CONTACT:** Boston Public Library  
Communications Office: 617-859-2212

**NEW MAP CENTER EXHIBITION SHOWCASES EVOLUTION &  
IMPACT OF WORLD MAPS THROUGH THE CENTURIES**

***“Journeys of the Imagination” opens March 21 through August 18, 2006  
at The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library***

**--Special Press Tour Slated for April 10<sup>th</sup>, 4:30 to 5:30pm--**

**BOSTON, MASS.**—A new exhibition of world maps from the Cartographic Collections of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library opens Wednesday, March 21 through August 18, 2006. Titled “*Journeys of the Imagination*,” the exhibition features 47 World maps, atlases, and globes demonstrating the changing, and sometimes controversial, perception of the world through the centuries.

Beginning with the Medieval European world view of three continents (Europe, Africa, and Asia) the display will illustrate how Europeans integrated the concept of a new continent (America) during the 16th and 17th centuries, and slowly adopted the concept of Australia and Antarctica in the 18th and 19th centuries. *Journeys of the Imagination* will also explore how many of the techniques used in map making—from data collection methods to the transfer of geographic dimensions from spheres to flat pieces of paper—often produced unusual compilations and distortions that supported strongly held biases or differing world views.

“Historical maps are not only geographic records of the world at a particular time, but they are also documents that have a story to tell, both about how and why the map was created, and what the map has to say about a particular culture’s world view,” notes Map Center Director, Roni Pick. “With *Journeys of the Imagination* we provide numerous examples of this dynamic and explore the compelling ways in which maps have reflected cultural, political, and religious thought.”

In conjunction with *Journeys of the Imagination* the Map Center will feature two public lectures given by Ronald E. Grim, Curator of the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library, and Wesley A. Brown of Denver, Colorado.

The educational outreach program for this exhibition will include tours that are geared towards middle school aged children. Transportation underwriting will be offered to classes who request it. Beginning in May 2006 a virtual tour of the exhibition will be available on the Map Center’s website ([www.leventhalmapcenter.org](http://www.leventhalmapcenter.org)).

The Map Center will also publish a comprehensive, full-color exhibition catalog to include essays by noted cartographic scholars, along with the exhibition images and narrative.

**For more information on *Journeys of the Imagination*, or to RSVP for an exclusive press tour of the exhibition on April 10, contact the Boston Public Library at 617-859-2212.**

***About the Norman B. Leventhal Map Center:***

Launched in July 2004, The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library is a public-private partnership, created to preserve and provide free public access to the Boston Public Library’s collection of 200,000 maps and 5,000 atlases. Its goal is to maximize the educational potential of these historical and contemporary maps of the World, the United States, and the New England region. For more information on the Map Center, email us at [maps@bpl.org](mailto:maps@bpl.org).

###