On: 14 March 2015, At: 07:43
Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954
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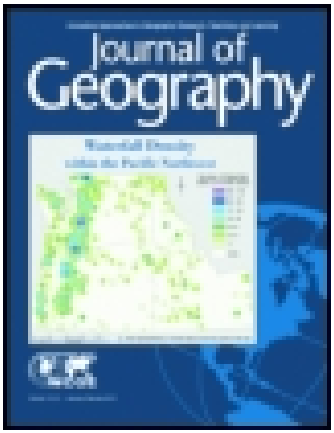

Journal of Geography
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjog20

Geographic Orientation—A Rejoinder

M. Aurousseau

Published online: 13 Feb 2008.

To cite this article: M. Aurousseau (1922) Geographic Orientation—A Rejoinder, Journal of Geography, 21:8, 320-320, DOI: 10.1080/00221342208984171

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00221342208984171

GEOGRAPHIC ORIENTATION—A REJOINDER

The Editor,
The *Journal of Geography.*
Dear Sir:

The article on "Geographic Orientation," by Professor W. M. Davis, being a penetrating criticism of my article on "The Method of Orientation in Teaching Geography," which appeared in the April issue of the *Journal of Geography*, necessitates comment on several points.

My paper was written because I believed I had several ideas to communicate on a neglected and important branch of geography. Never having taught geography in an American school I had no intention of outlining "a gradually progressive, inductive sequence," or, in other words, a course of geography based upon orientation. In so far as I have elicited such careful comment from Professor Davis, I seem to have succeeded in my primary intention, while he has himself supplied a large amount of the filling-in, which is obviously necessary for the outlining of a course of the kind. No particular stage of instruction was in my mind, and, as well as endeavouring to appeal to intelligence, I have also relied on intelligence, apparently to the verge of obscurity in several sections.

As regards the use of a second globe (p. 143 of my article), the danger of introducing "a perilous change in the attitude of the earth's axis" is an unavoidable one, if orientation is to be used in teaching at all. My direction of reference being the upright posture of the observer, it is possible to advance arguments which would invalidate the whole principle of setting the globe. The point to be brought home is really the change of the observer's relation to the earth's axis, as he moves from place to place. The regularity of these relations for a given place, and their variation for different places, is the critical point in the method.

The card model, used to express orientation with respect to the solar system, is of course, mathematically incorrect. The plane of our lines of sight to the sun passes thru our point of observation. The deviation from the truth is, however, legitimate and accurate enough to impart the correct idea, in dealing with the relatively enormous solar system. On page 144 of my paper I have stated that the sun-line on the card "represents the direction of the sun from the observer at noon." Let the model be set at noon, on twelve occasions, one month apart, during the year, and the inclination of the card be recorded on each occasion. The nature of the observer's relation to the *fixed* sun will then be quite clear. It is impossible to convey any idea of an infinite number of changes, extended over any infinite number of points of time. A series of observations on the sun, regarded as a fixed body, will, to my mind, express the year better than teaching the "spiral northing and southing of the sun," which is only an apparent thing.

The second paragraph on p. 145 is obscure owing to its brevity. For a given place, the relation of an observer to the sun is constant in that it is regularly rhythmical. The rhythm is perfectly definite for that place. For any other place not on the same parallel, or on the corresponding parallel in the other hemisphere, the "amplitude of the rhythm" will be different.

M. AUROUSSEAU

Washington, D. C.,
May 27th., 1922

TO COMPLETE THE TOPOGRAPHIC MAPPING OF THE UNITED STATES

Teachers who use topographic maps should read the following excerpts taken from a circular which is being distributed by the Federated American Engineering Societies.

"Only a little more than one-third of our country is covered by accurate topographic surveys."