

Fabiana Alvarez
SS- Map theft
7/22/13

Essay #2

The stolen treasures of history

Maps were and will forever be treasures to one's nation because of their deep meaning that goes beyond just a piece of paper. Since the first map was ever made, some people feel the desire of owning one or more of them. Like Gilbert Bland, there were people that were willing to do what it took in order to have one of these on their own hands. The motivations of Gilbert Bland and of every other thief, for committing this kind of crime, are known to be really broad. They can go from either the need of an economic resource to just a casual theft.¹ Of course, there are many more reasons, but these are the most common. In this paper the motivations will be explained as well as the reasons why maps are so important to both the collectors and thieves. Aside from the obvious motivations such as: low sentences, lower chances of getting caught and the simplicity of selling them², the two of the most compelling motivations in Bland's case can be the act of stealing for himself and also, stealing for profit. The first reason is in view of the fact that we know he cared more than usual for these antiquities and then; the second one, is because he was a great dealer of those maps he stole. In other words, he sold them in the black market.

¹ Miles Harvey, *The island of lost maps*, (New York: Random house, 2001), chap. 7.

² Miles Harvey, *The island of lost maps*, (New York: Random house, 2001), chap. 7.