Finding Geospatial Data A Short Introduction

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Agenda

- About Geospatial Data
- Subject Guides
- Open Data
- GeoIndex
- Mapping Thoughts

Geospatial Data

- Geospatial data is any data that includes a place it could be an address, a postal code, a city, X/Y coordinates, latitude and longitude, or other geographic location within the data
- This includes:
 - Point, line, and polygon data (vector data)
 - Static maps or images (raster data)
 - Tabular data (eg spreadsheets)
- It can include static objects, such as a building; dynamic phenomena, such as travel from A to B or an earthquake; or temporal, such as the change of landscape over time

Geospatial Data

- Most often, geospatial data is used in GIS software
- GIS: Geographic Information System
- GIS is "...a framework for gathering, managing, and analyzing data." (<u>https://www.esri.com/en-us/what-is-gis/overview</u>)
- Making use of a geographic component within data to analyze and visualize the information
- Also an excellent method of analysis and visualization of data

Examples

Vector data points, lines, & polygons on XY coordinates

Raster Data pixels/grid cells, usually square



Example: Tabular data

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 An updated version of one of the first uses of GIS (John Snow's Cholera map, 1854, updated with current software)

SUBJECT GUIDES!

- https://www.mcgill.ca/library/find/maps
- Of particular note, the Geospatial Data Request Form: <u>https://www.mcgill.ca/library/find/maps/datarequest</u>

What is Open Data?

- In short:
- It is "Accessible, understandable, and open to reuse." (Wessels et al, 2014)
- Can be divided into
 - 1. public data or information from the public sector
 - 2. data from research institutions, especially publicly funded
 - 3. private sector data

Where to find Open Data

- Are you looking for governmental data, already-produced research data, or miscellaneous data?
 - Each has different places/modes for searching
- What is the geographic region you're looking at (if any)?
 - Geography will determine where to search, especially for government data
- What is the group you're researching?
 - Partly will determine whether this will exist as open data or not data, especially about people, is often protected

Where to find Open Data

- What time period are you researching?
 - The older the data, the less available it will be (eg data pre-1950 will be more difficult to find, unless it's a heavily-researched subject)
- Who else might be asking your question?
 - Depending on the people researching, they may be more or less committed to open data, and/or knowledgeable about it

Where to find: Government Open Data

- <u>http://bartlettr.github.io/opendatawebsites/</u>
- <u>https://library.carleton.ca/find/gis/geospatial-data/open-data-repositories</u>
- <u>https://www.data.gov/</u>
- https://data.gov.uk/
- <u>https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/</u>
- <u>https://dataportal.opendataforafrica.org/</u>
- You can search for "[Place X] Open Data"
- Remember counties/regions (eg. Niagara Open Data)!

Where to find: Research data

- Federated Research Data Repository (FRDR): <u>https://www.frdr-dfdr.ca/repo/</u>
- To help searching the above, Geodisy: https://geo.frdr-dfdr.ca/
- <Odesi>: <u>https://search1.odesi.ca/#/</u>
- Many institutions have their own research data repositories (McGill's: <u>https://dataverse.scholarsportal.info/dataverse/mcgill</u>)
- To find the above, it's good to know any publications from the data you can then use the institutional affiliation of the researcher to look in that institution's repository.

Where to find: Big data

- Google
 - Various (research?) <u>https://datasetsearch.research.google.com/</u>
 - Public <u>https://www.google.com/publicdata/directory</u>
- Esri's Living Atlas (mainly geospatial data).
- Various companies (eg <u>BIXI</u>).
- Creative Commons.
- Often searching "[Company/Subject X] Open Data" will bring results (maybe, and of varying degrees of trustworthiness).

GéoIndex

- <u>https://geoapp.bibl.ulaval.ca/</u>
- You will need to log in every time
- Can use it in both English and French
- A repository of data for Universities in Québec
- More direct method of searching for data by location
- Primarily Québec data, but some for the rest of Canada as well

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Things to think about when making a map

- Who is your audience?
- What is your map saying to that audience?
- What is your map not saying to that audience?
- What might be getting in the way of understanding?



- Here's a map. From a textbook. A Biology textbook.
- Please take a moment to appreciate everything about this map.

Maps, Terrible (TerribleMaps). "This is actually in a textbook..(Glencoe Science: Biology, Chapter 5, Section 3.) Retweet if you see it. <u>https://t.co/k48MkRws9A</u>". 15 Jul 2018, 17:36 UTC. Tweet







Bear Location Map, North America

• Now check out this. Thoughts?

Thecasualcaribou. "Bear location map North America". Reddit, Inc. 15 Jan 2019, 08:56:35 GMT. Web. Accessed on 16 January 2019 from https://www.reddit.com/r/MapPorn/comments/ag8qc4/bear location map north america



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 An updated version of one of the first uses of GIS (John Snow's Cholera map, 1854, updated with current software)



Math Levels Compared to Student-Teacher Ratios in Nova Scotia, 2012-2016



Borneman, Elizabeth. "Types of Map Projections". GeoLounge. 5 Jan 2015. Web. Accessed on 16 Jan 2019 from <u>https://www.geolounge.com/types-</u> <u>map-projections/</u>



Buczkowski, Aleks. "These 5 tools will let you master map projections". Geoawesomeness. 14 Apr 2017. Web. Accessed on 16 Jan 2019 from http://geoawesomeness.com/5-tools-will-let-master-map-projections/

Projections

- The earth is a sphere
- Paper and screens are (usually) not spherical
- Putting a 3D thing into 2 dimensions means that something's gotta give
- Example: peel an orange. You cannot keep it circular, and see the entirety of the peel
- The same thing with the earth
- Every type of projection is trying to represent the earth on a flat surface in a different manner, and with a different purpose



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Questions?

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