Taking the Stickiness Out Of the Stuck Places Using Government Information

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TOWSON UNIVERSITY ALBERT S. COOK LIBRARY

Background on the *Framework*

- Six core concepts (frames) that make up information literacy
  - Authority Is Constructed and Contextual
  - Information Creation as a Process
  - Information Has Value
  - Research as Inquiry
  - Scholarship as Conversation
  - Searching as Strategic Exploration
- Different approach than *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*
  - *Framework* is less prescriptive
  - *Framework* less dated
  - *Framework* recognizes students as content creators

Incorporating the *Framework* into Government Information Instruction

► Information literacy looks different for different disciplines
► Teaching to "Stuck Places"
► Value of government information
► Developed discipline specific
    presentations
    ► Journalism
    ► Geography

https://flic.kr/p/eehGSn

Finding Online Government Information: What is Available and What Isn't
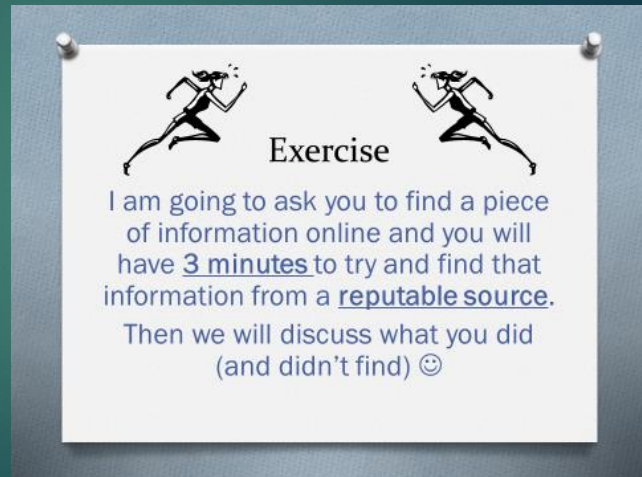

https://flic.kr/p/4xGRpo

► Uncovering the "stuck"
► Taught to a 2nd semester intro journalism class in fall 2014
► Taught as a workshop twice in fall 2014 and spring 2015

How we taught it

▶ Series of exercises
  ▶ Finding Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco's license plate number
  ▶ Current salary of the TU president
  ▶ An iconic photo from the Vietnam War
  ▶ How many veterans live in the village of Long Reach, Maryland
  ▶ Where to renew your U.S. passport online
▶ Discuss what they found and the issues (like copyright and privacy) that make these searches challenging


Exercise

I am going to ask you to find a piece of information online and you will have **3 minutes** to try and find that information from a **reputable source**.
Then we will discuss what you did (and didn't find) ☺

What they learned

▶ Students say they learned about tools
▶ I remind them about the bigger ideas too
▶ Adaptation by other journalism librarians

https://flic.kr/p/rECgUF

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Turning Spaces into Places

THE PROBLEM:

- Geographic Awareness

- Life decisions and Research Directions;

- Long Learning Curve for ArcGIS 10.2

❑ Information literacy differs by Discipline

❑ Geography: More crucial than ever, but hard to conceive or access

❑ Tobler's Law

  ❑ Everything is Related

  ❑ Closer Things More So;
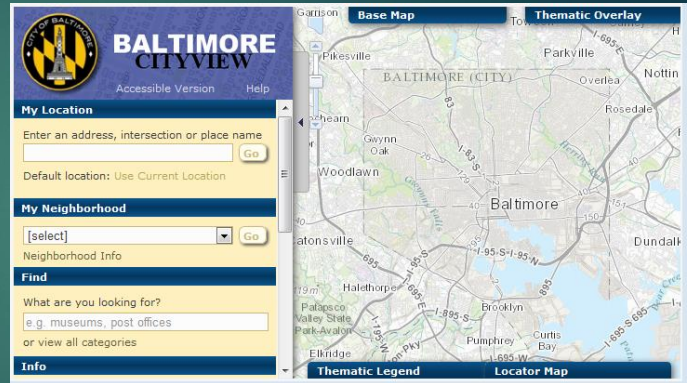
ONE ANSWER: Government Interactive Maps

http://cityview.baltimorecity.gov/

STUCK PLACE: GEOGRAPHIC AWARENESS

❑ Should I even attend college near Baltimore?

  ❑ Baltimore Riots, April 2015

  ❑ Goucher College, Baltimore County, MD, April 2015

  ❑ Decline in Matriculation; Spike in Rescissions;

Constructed/Contextual Authority:

Constructed/Contextual Authority:

What is space?

Leibniz   Spinoza

Relational Space

❑ Absolute Space: Earth as unmoving center
❑ Relational Space: Area defined by multiple relationships, boundaries, comparisons & contrasts…

Aquinas   Newton

Absolute Space

Moon   Earth   Venus   Sun   Mars

Concepts Create Information

PHYSICAL-SPACE

"Physical space, defined by boundaries, that make up the fabric of daily life"

❑ Planimetric: Plain Vanilla borders and features
❑ Cadastral: boundary maps (property, politics)
❑ Reference Maps: borders and orienting features;
❑ Measurements are very artificial;
❑ Space is <u>constructed</u>, as much as any knowledge
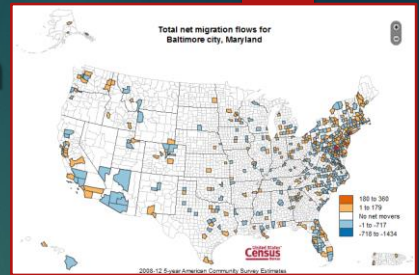   or standard.
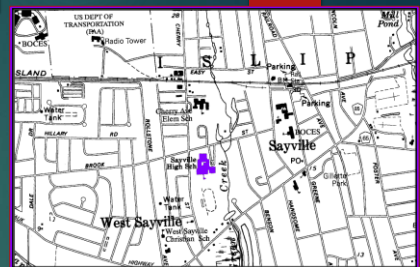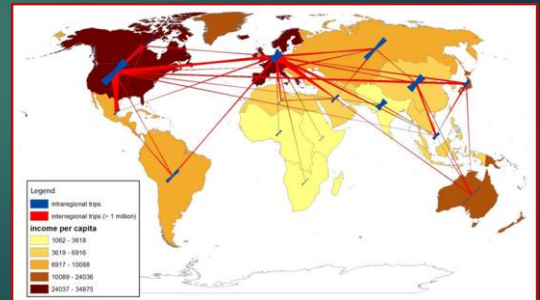
Reaves, Dorsetshire, UK

Concepts Create Information

FLOW-SPACE

"Relationships and flows between discrete spaces, varying by kind or intensity"

http://flowsmapper.geo.census.gov/

❑ "Block-Space" problem

❑ What are your "To" and "From"?

❑ And can you get data for it?

❑ Often limited to global level

Concepts Create Information

IMAGE-SPACE

"Proliferation of images that produce new apprehensions of space"

❑ Impact on Decisions? Manipulation?

❑ Media Tropes? Cultural Memory?

❑ Photoshop? Staged events?

❑ Availability (Kahnemen & Twersky, 1979)

Baltimore Riots, 2015

Palestinian Intitada, 1999

Concepts Create Information

PLACE SPACE

Sandtown Winchester

"Physical/cultural space, ill-defined but pregnant with meaning for visitors and inhabitants"

❑ Place combines physical, flow and image space;

❑ Sandtown Winchester in the 1940's is not the same space;

❑ Even the next street over is another world.

Information Has Value

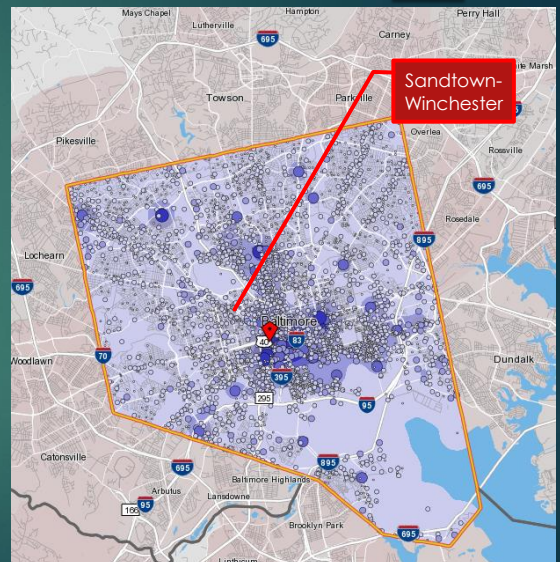Census Bureau On the Map Portal
http://onthemap.ces.census.gov

Sandtown-Winchester

Pattern and distribution of employment:
- Heavy cluster downtown
- 205,000 people commute in
- 118,000 people commute out

Top job sectors in Baltimore City:
- Health Care & Social Assistance   21.6%
- Educational Services   16.3%
- Public Administration   11.2%
- Meds, Ed's and Feds: 49.1%

Information Has Value

Average Household Size	2.6 p.
Median Household Income	$24,822.4
Children Living Below Poverty Line	47.6%
Female-Headed Households with Children Under 18	73.4%
Households Earning Less than $25,000	48.9%
Families Below the Poverty Line	31.6%
Households Earning over $75,000	7.4%
65 years and over	11.8%
Black/African-American (Non-Hispanic)	96.6%

Sandtown-Winchester
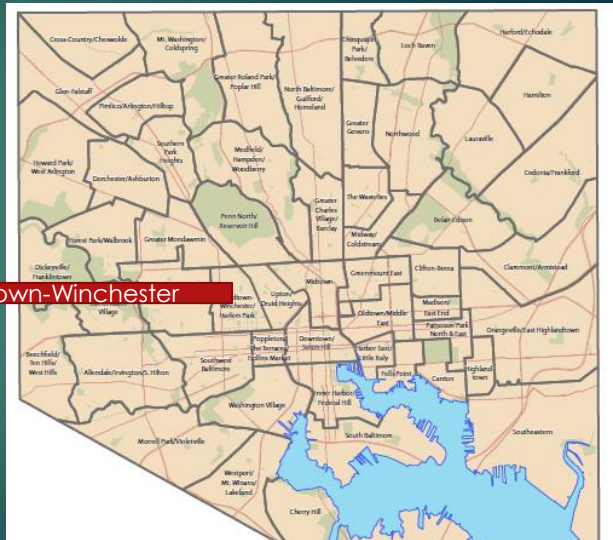
Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance
http://bniajfi.org/

Research as Inquiry

Opportunities for multiple scholarly conversations:
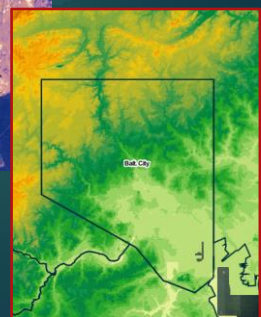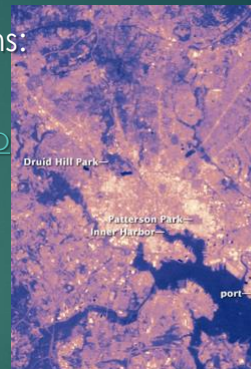
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future http://bit.ly/1iDEUCO

❑ Food desert in Baltimore; Korean Stores, Pharmacies

NASA Earth Observatory http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/

❑ Heat Island Effect: Asphalt radiation, water runoff

Maryland iMap http://imap.maryland.gov/

❑ Elevation Map: Sandtown-Winchester: 190 feet; Goucher College: 403 feet

Research as Inquiry

Distance-Decay

❑ What are the odds of a riot spreading?

❑ Analogy: Where was Bin Laden in 2006?

❑ Geography Class, U Cal Berkeley, 2006

❑ Distance Decay: Movement takes energy

❑ Island Biogeography:

　❑ Needed Resources

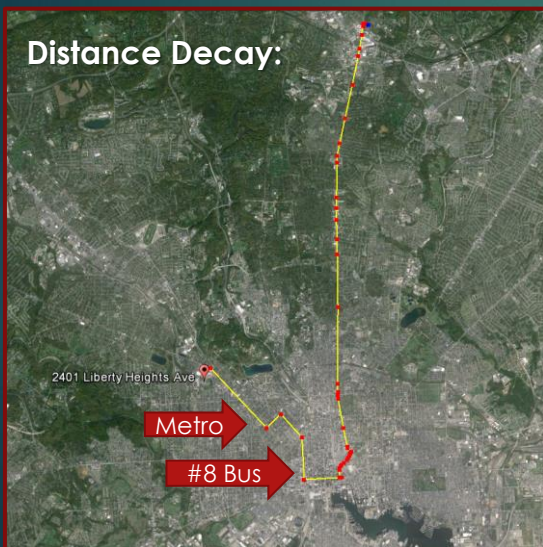　❑ Safety and Concealment

GLOVIS: USGS Global Land Visualization
http://glovis.usgs.gov/

Tora Bora, Afghanistan

10-km radius

20-km radius

30-km radius
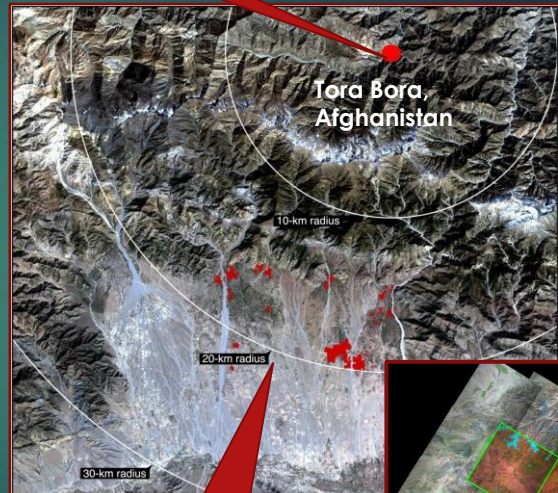
Island Biogeography
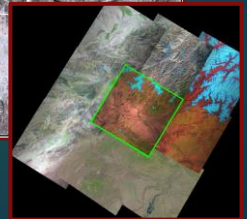
Scholarship as a Conversation

Distance Decay:

2401 Liberty Heights Ave.

Metro

#8 Bus

• **Conversation is where reasoning takes place:**

　• What are the odds of the riot spreading?

　• Can it reach Goucher College?

　• What is "Real" distance?

　• Is Baltimore a "city of neighborhoods…?"

BREAKING NEWS
MASSIVE BUILDING FIRE IN BALTIMORE

Strategic Exploration:

- **MD Department of Planning;**
- **Land Use Map with Incidents Plotted;**
- **Clustered in Commercial Zones;**
- **Island Biogeography;**
- **Density of Similar Organisms;**
- **Familiarity of Space;**
- **Anonymity; Consumables;**

MD Department of Planning Land Use Map
http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurProducts/iMaps.shtml
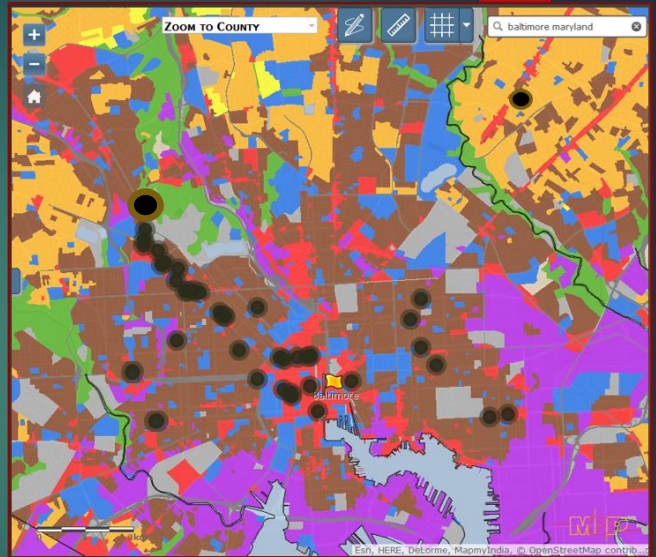
Turning Spaces into Places

What They Learned:

❑ Difference between measurable distance and "real" distance for geographic problems;

❑ Finding lots of maps less important than finding the right maps;

❑ Concepts and resources can turn spaces into places.

http://www.mdmerlin.net/

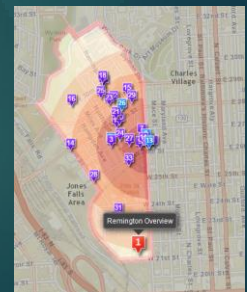http://viewer.nationalmap.gov/viewer/   http://planning.maryland.gov/

Questions?

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