Darion Porter

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Lab 5

**Introduction:**

This map shows the geolocation of Instagram pictures uploaded in the city of Paris, France with a specific focus on the areas immediately surrounding the Eiffel Tower. The data that makes this map is theoretically “owned” by Instagram, but using their API I was able to display this data as an overlay on a leaflet web map. The main goal of this map is to show the Instagram pictures in an easy and user friendly way that allows the information to be accessed with relative ease by the user. This map is not made with any particular humanitarian efforts in mind, as it is simply made to show the pictures with a map so users can get a sense of where the pictures are taken from a geographical standpoint.

**Methods:**

In order to create this map there were a couple of steps that I needed to take in order to make sure everything was successful. I had to first create a base leaflet map. This is something that I have done before so it was fairly straightforward. I was then tasked with gathering or “scraping” the data from Instagram. This was slightly more complicated as it required me to register for an access token and use that to display the data from their servers on my map. I went through the process of registering for an access token and was granted one just to find that it did not work. This was mainly due to the fact that their API is fairly restrictive and perhaps it is not meant for that type of use anymore. I was able to use the key provided by my Professor in order to complete the map. This key and the requests for Instagram data would allow me to create an Instagram overlay on my base leaflet map. I then decided on an area to focus on within my map. I finally decided on Paris, France as it is certainly a well photographed city. Going even further than that, I centered my map on the area around the Eiffel Tower, a place I have visited and one that I know is well photographed. This would hopefully ensure that there are always new and fresh photos on my map as people are always uploading new ones to the Instagram servers. I then made some very minor changes to the layout and styling of the map.

**Results:**

The results of this map are straightforward. It shows photographs that are geotagged, and are located in the area around the Eiffel Tower in Paris. It shows these photos in relation to the leaflet base map, so that people can get a sense of where these photos are taken in relation to the city itself. This map does just that with a relatively simple layout and simple controls.

**Conclusion:**

This lab shows the geographic locations of pictures taken within Paris, France, specifically those taken around the Eiffel Tower. This is a fairly straightforward map and it is not something that might seem the most useful at first, but upon further thought a map like this may be more powerful than we think. At first that is due to its relative simplicity, there are only a few thing happening with this map (granted they all have to go off without a hitch in order for the map to actually work). It is fairly simple, the data (in this case Instagram photos) are requested from their servers, and with an access key we are able to display those photos as an overlay on the map. These photos are refreshed fairly often as I would imagine Instagram’s servers are always kept up-to-date with the latest photos. In my time with this map, it seems as if the photos change every few minutes. This type of “real-time” information would be extremely useful in a time of crisis or disaster. Maybe Instagram photos would not be the best indicator of disaster but certainly a service using data from Facebook or Twitter would be helpful in a time like this. This is certainly not a new idea, and has probably already been done before but that just goes to show how something as simple as “pictures on a map” can truly be when needed. Given all of its promise, this map is far from perfect. First off, it seems as if Instagram’s current API will not even let us do this type of mapping with their data anymore, so this map may not actually be possible with Instagram data. Second, we have to have an access key and understand the proceedings of gathering data from the web to display on the map (a fairly straightforward, but still complicated process). Most large websites will not just let you use their data, and some strictly prohibit the use of their data for these purposes. So while this type of mapping can be immensely powerful, it is limited by the information that can realistically be gathered from the web.

**Link:**

<http://gus8068spr16.github.io/exercises/Dporter_Lab%205%20map.html>