The Meaning of Reading

Questions

The starting point of my project is storytelling, books and looking at paper compared to e-books. I love paper books because of the smell, feel, and the way I feel like I connect more deeply with the story than if I am reading on an e-reader, phone, or computer. I feel like reading on these devices make the experience more impersonal and, somehow, more consumerist. I have always read quite a bit, but I don't remember ever finishing a book that wasn't paper. So, I want to show how great paper books and reading are through this project. Another theme I wish to look at through this project is how correlation can be used and how absurd it can get. I remember an economy teacher in high school explaining the difference between correlation and causation, and I think it is fascinating to see how numbers can align despite not having anything to do with each other, and how it can be used by people to say absurd things.

In this project, I want to convey my opinion on paper books by using data and overexaggerate their awesomeness by manipulating the data. The idea I have is to create a visualisation of paper book and e-book data. I will then add layers of correlating data on top of each. I want to pretend like the user has a choice on what they wish to see and how it applies to the two different types of reading I am exploring, but, really, I will take data that "shows" that paper books are good and vice versa with e-books. I want to see how absurd I can get with data manipulation, like how paper books can end world hunger or how e-books increase the risks of an asteroid hitting earth (these are examples of absurd correlation that could be fun to explore but won't necessarily be in the project because I haven't looked at these datasets yet). The project will be an online website that anyone can access.

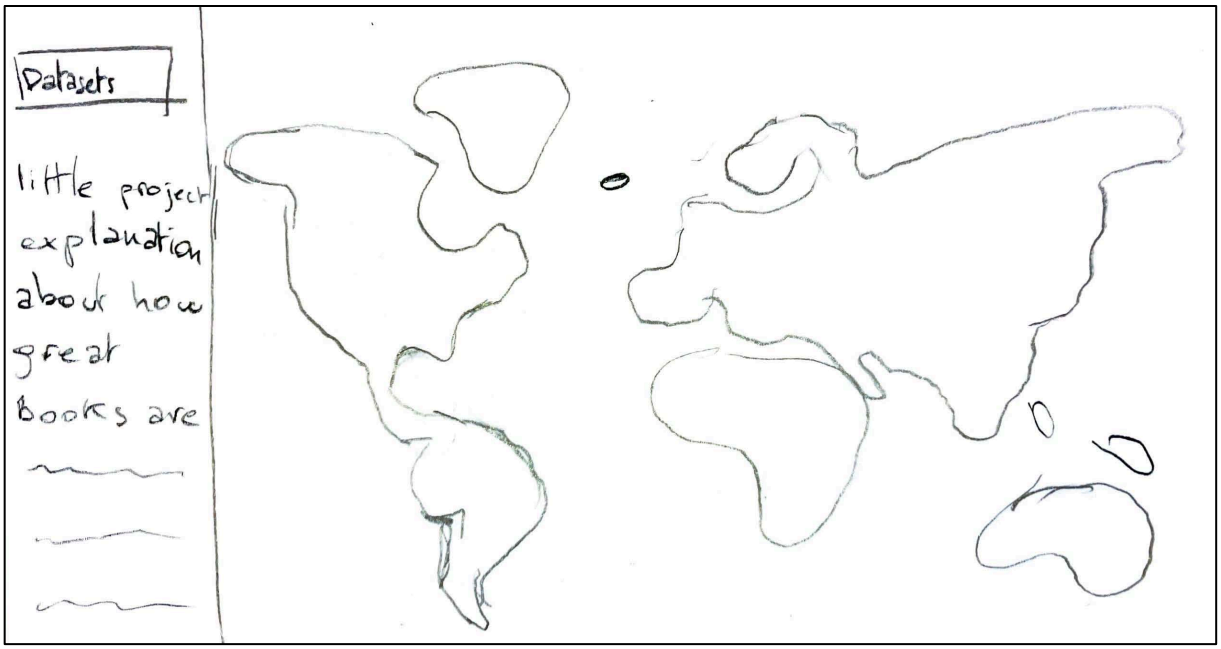
The text A Sea of Data: Apophenia and Pattern (Mis-)Recognition was interesting when it came to Apophenia and how people and machines can imagine connections when no connection is there in the first place which is a big part of the project where I am connecting different types of datasets together despite them not having anything to do with each other. Mimi Onuoha's text is also interesting when it comes to data collection biases and

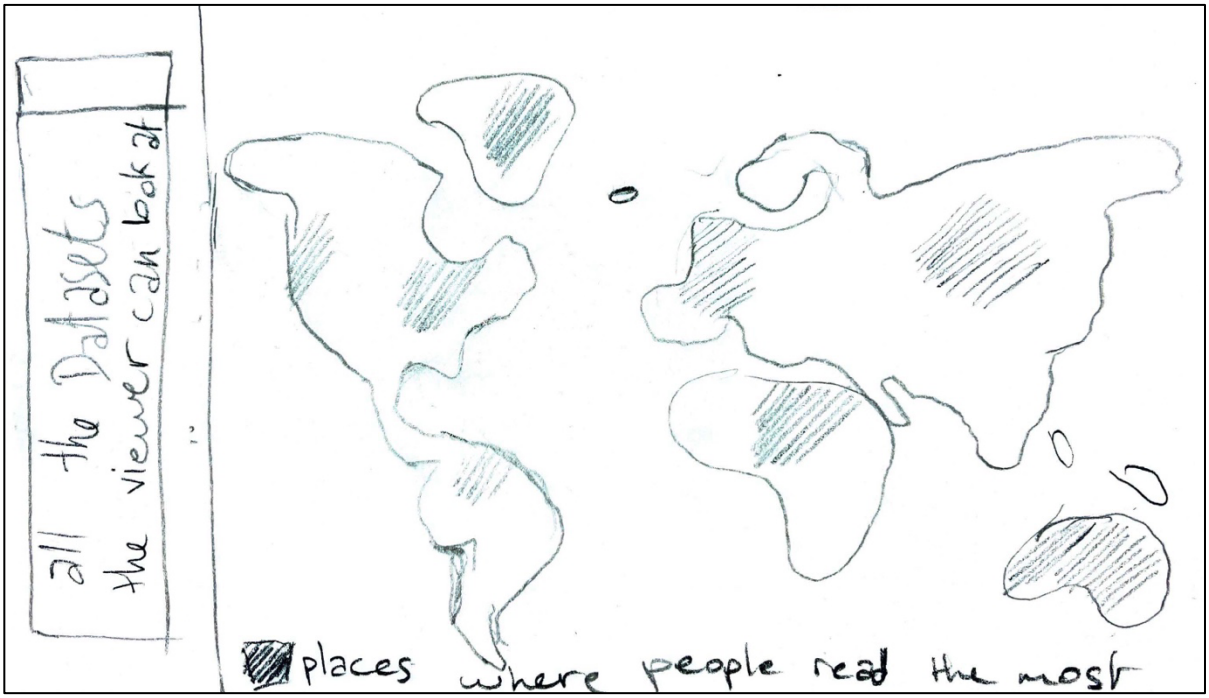
how two datasets looking at the same thing might get very different results based on the way the data was collected. She also talks about correlation, where putting two datasets together can give an answer to something which can be right or wrong as I will explore in my project.

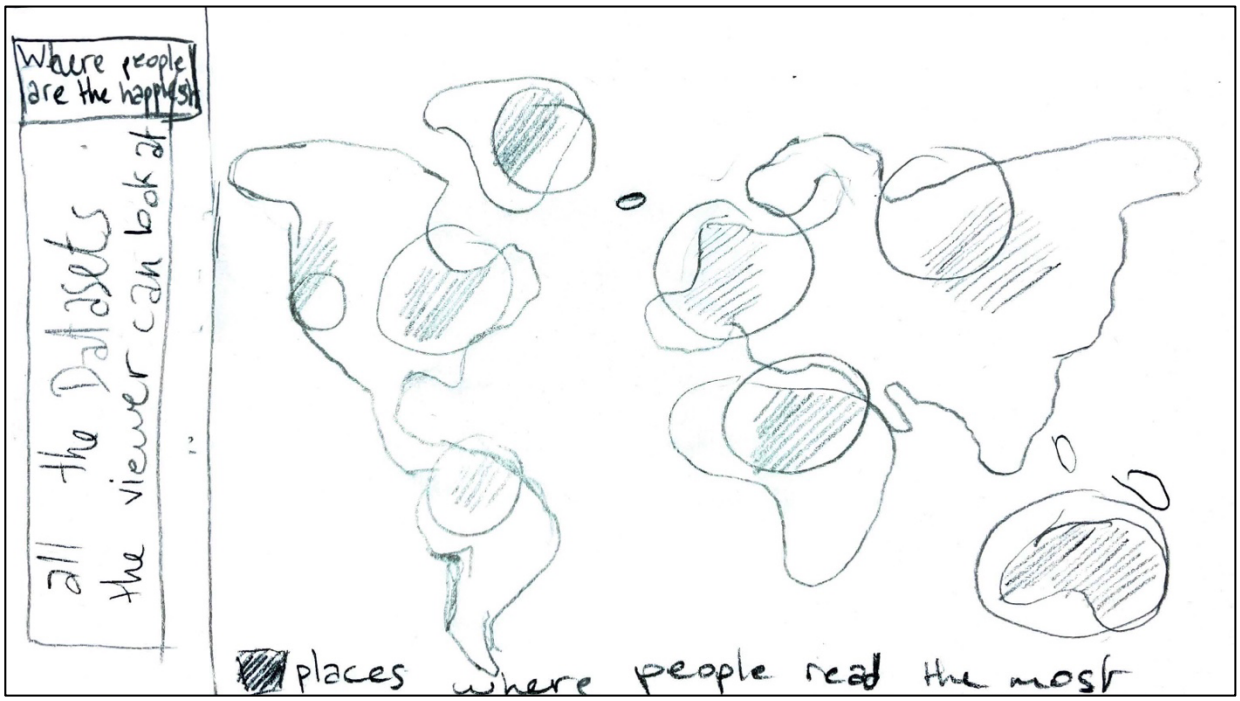
I was thinking of using a website as it is a simple way of making something accessible to many. I also like the idea of having the user be able to toggle on and off the different datasets that correlate with books that I will include. I appreciate the interactivity that a website offers and the freedom I get as the creator.

I will use quite a bit of data in different fields, and I will need to study the datasets before choosing them as I need them to work with the books data. I will need data on the amount of paper books and e-books read as the base of the project. This data will be used in a rather objective way as I am simply telling the user the amount, therefore, I would like to get data that is as close to truth and unbiased as possible. I was thinking of maybe get that data down on a world map, where do people read the most? Do they read more online or on paper? If I do end up using a world map as my background, all the rest of the data will need to have some geographical information to be able to overlap it on top of the book data. I won't personally be collecting data, so I will need to find sources that will provide me with adequate information. Given that I am leaning into the manipulative and misuse of data, I would like to look at some heavily biased data for some of my overlapping segments.

Storyboard


Datasets
little project explanation about how great Books are


all the Datasets the viewer can look at
places where people read the most


Where people are the happiest
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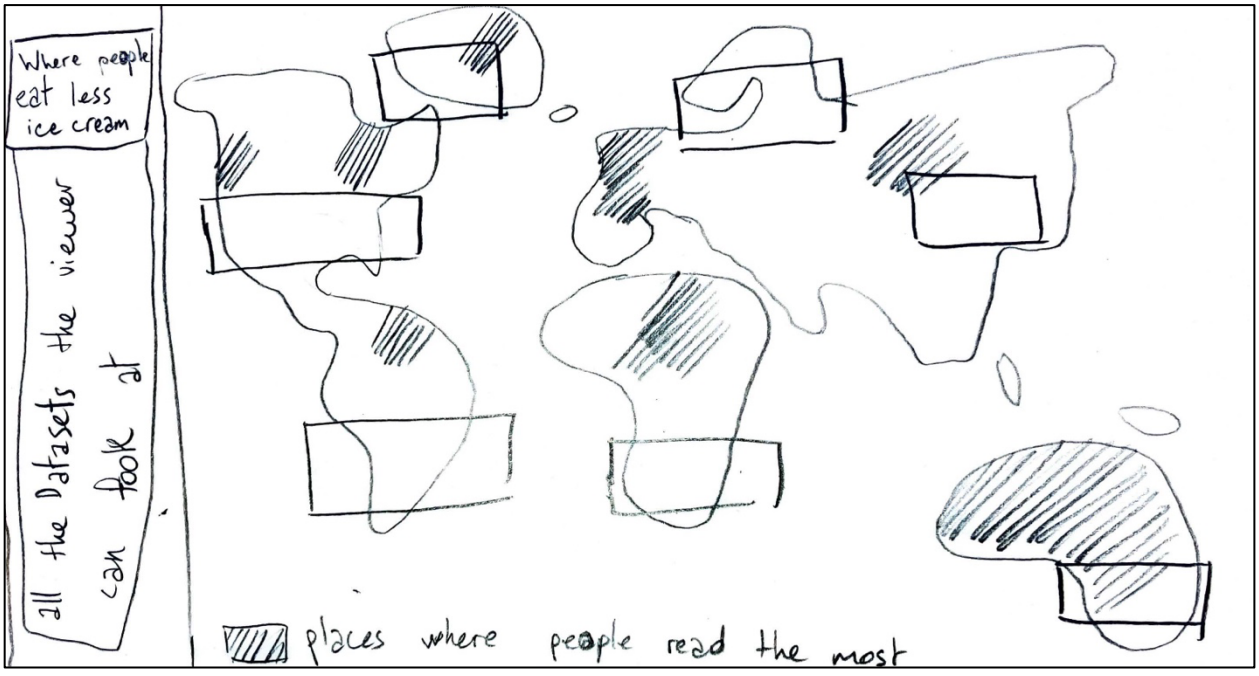
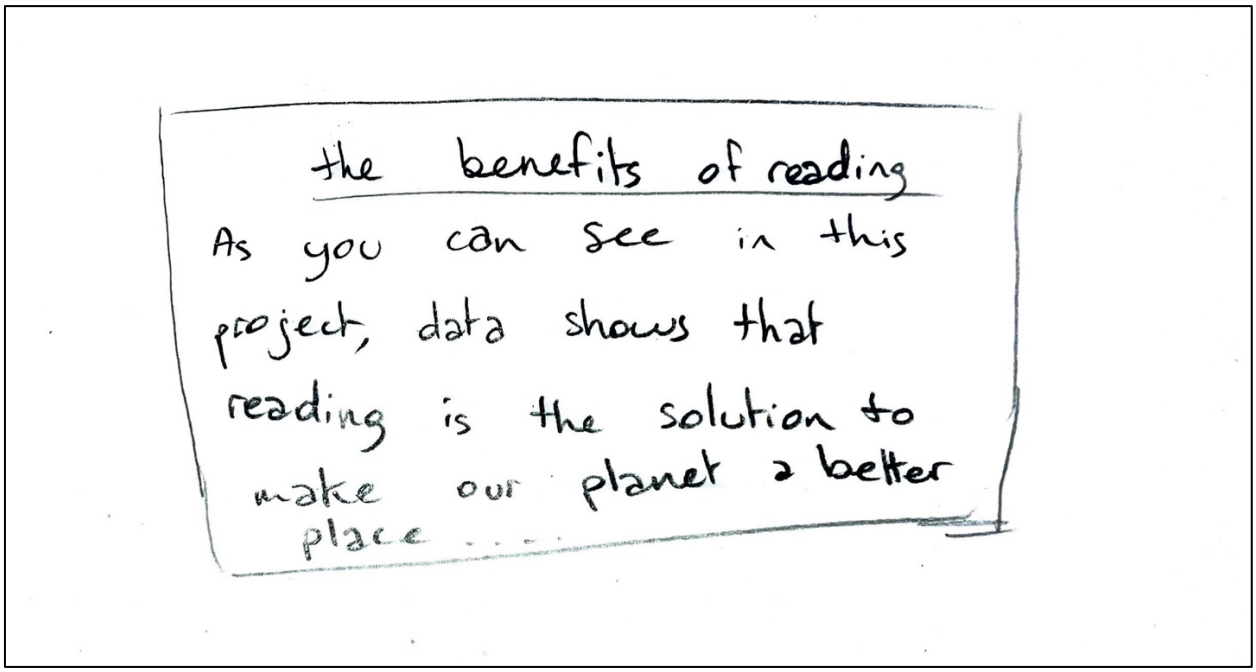
places where people read the most


Where people eat less ice cream
all the Datasets the viewer can look at
places where people read the most



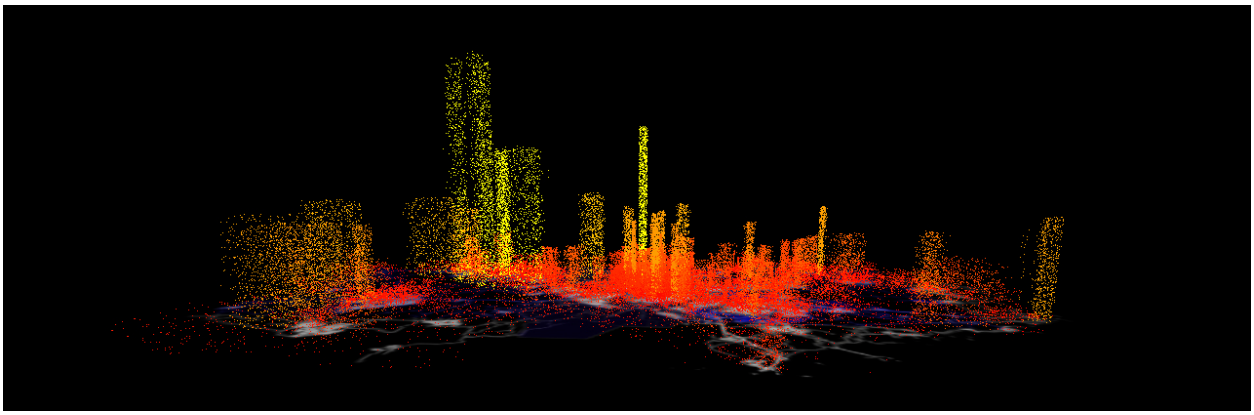
Similar Projects

Amsterdam SMS

Amsterdam SMS is a project created by Aaron Koblin in 2007. In this project, he visualises data on SMS being sent in Amsterdam for one night and displays it in a map of the city. He uses 3D as a tool to show the data, the more SMS that have been sent in an area of Amsterdam, the taller a column. He also uses colour as a way to show the number of SMS. It goes from red where few SMS are sent and yellow where a lot of SMS are sent. This project is very interesting for the purpose of my own project as it uses some kind of visualisation of data. I also like that it is centered around a map, which is one of the ideas I would like to explore. I like the way he uses colour, which is something I intend on using, but I was also intrigued by his use of a 3D depiction of the SMS data in the city.

I also find it super interesting that, in this project, we can see the evolution of the number of SMS sent throughout the night as this night in particularly is

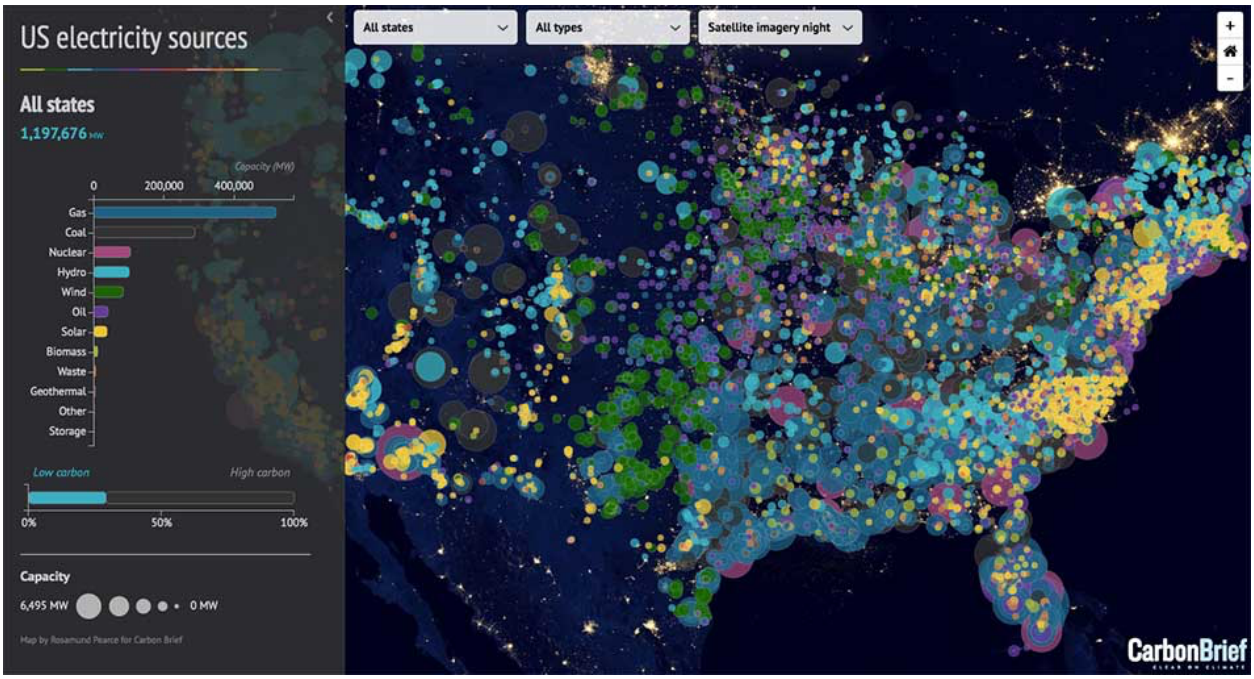
New Years Eve which means that the number of SMS explodes at 12:00 when the New Year finally begins. It is fun to see the drastic change in the data over a short period of time in this example. I do not think that I will incorporate any live or changing data as Koblin has in this project, however, it is still inspiring to see that it is an option.



http://www.aaronkoblin.com/project/amsterdam-sms/

U.S. electricity sources

U.S. Electricity Sources is a project realized by Carbon Brief and visualised by Simon Evans and Rosamund Pierce in 2017. It is a project based on energy sources. It is a fascinating project that shows what different part of the United States uses as their power sources depending on their geographic position, the policy and needs of the states as well as the natural resources around. It is a very informative map on the subject it covers, and I really like that they overlap different types of energy sources used. It looks at the geographic location of energy sources, the capacity in MW by looking at the size of the points, but it also looks at the multiplicity of energy sources in some areas, having more than one type of energy used. Similarly to Koblin's project, I like this project because of the use of a map as the base and the building on top with multiple layers of information. I also appreciate the user's ability to toggle things on and off and focus on different things like a specific state, or a specific type of electricity source at the top of the map. It also modifies the legend with the appropriate numbers when looking at a specific state.

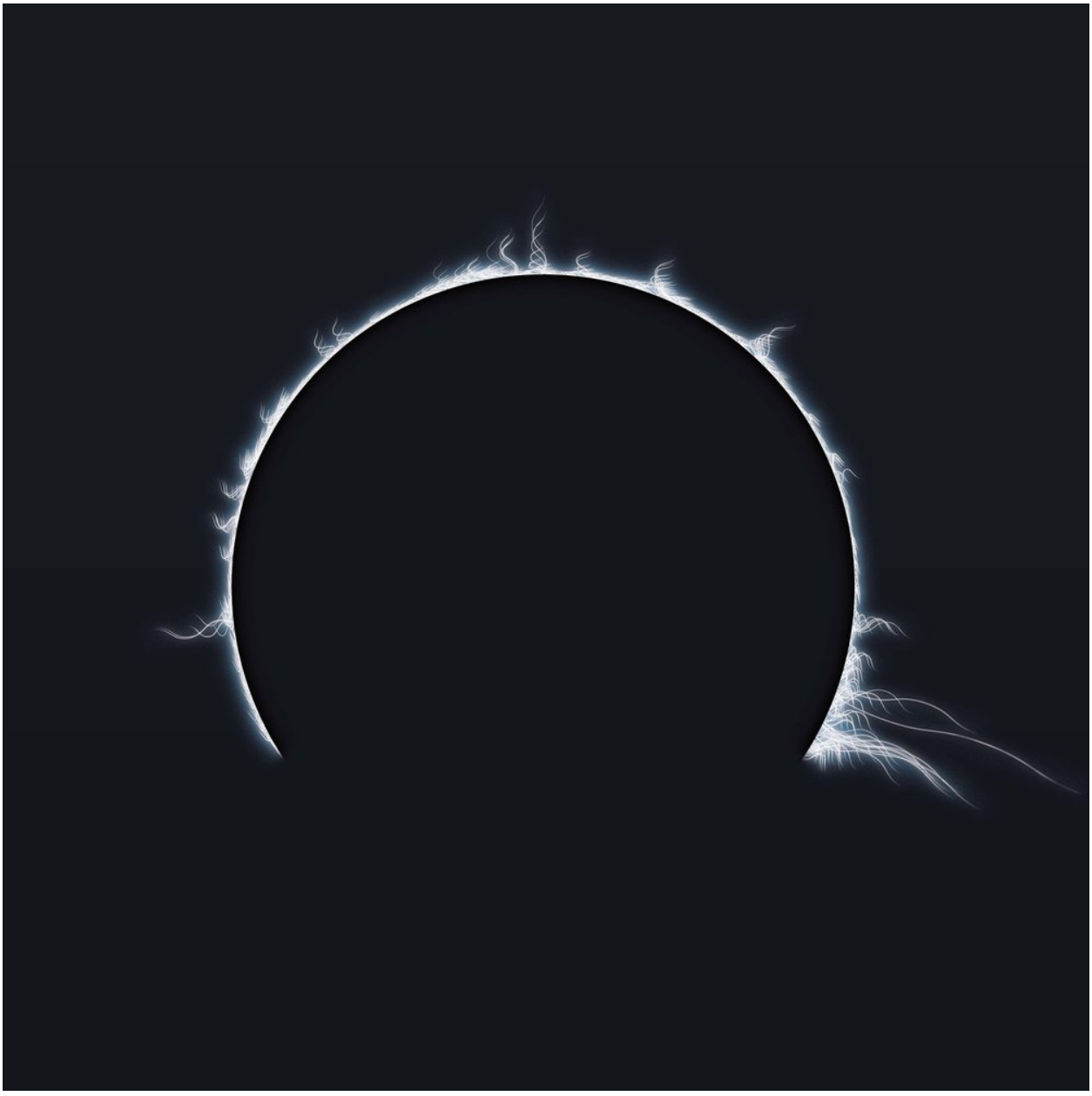


https://www.carbonbrief.org/mapped-how-the-us-generates-electricity/

Morpheús

Morpheús is a piece by Tiziana Alocci and it is part of the series Necessity Collection – Visualising Sound. The series is about converting sounds into visuals. Mropheús specifically was created from data Alocci collected during her sleep. She explains that she stopped sleeping well and decided to record sounds to try and figure out what was causing her bad sleep. As she says: "Morpheus chronicles the sounds and rhythms of inhaling and exhaling over the duration of one night's sleep." She then used that data and transformed it into a visual. I like this artwork because of the unique and creative way Alocci visualises her data. The end piece is very beautiful, but the viewer will not necessarily understand what it means exactly just by seeing it. It is a way of using data as a starting point for an abstract artwork. I am not sure if I could use this as part of my own project, but perhaps, I will explore more than one visualisation type for the different datasets I use. I do like the idea of conveying to the viewers that the numbers and datasets that I chose for my project were

assembled in a very specific way to seem genuine, but really, the numbers and assembling of them are not saying the truth.



https://www.tizianaalocci.com/home/necessity