Keynote: Really? Are we the new Renaissance?
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Are we Renaissance peoples propelling societies toward a better future? Or, perhaps, are we technocrats putting old wine in new barrels? To judge we need to think about what the renaissance was and what it might mean, for us, today. And if we are to be the vanguard we need to think about what “geospatial intelligence” really is and what it contributes. Has the digital revolution and its attendant tools promoted new ways of thinking or just a better way to promote old ideas with data pre-chosen for a singular point of view. Technologies do not guarantee a renaissance. Maps can make anyone an enemy, or a friend, a danger or a boon because maps are arguments about things, and the data we use is chosen to promote those views. Without new ideas we have no renaissance, nothing worth changing and certainly no boon for the future. Simply training people in specific skills with expertise in specific programs, is not revolutionary. To bring forth a Renaissance, we also need to make history central, teach rhetoric, ethics, law, and personal responsibility.

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