



# A WALK IN THE SCIENCE PARK

## OUTDOOR LEARNING ABOUT INDOOR GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVES?

Teaching history & philosophy of the field can be super dry.

but it is also necessary...

context: the course GEO1-7008, *Foundations of Geography and Planning*, started 2022-2023

...to shape the students' understanding of how the field has come to be: 'geography is what geographers do' is very true in Human Geography & Spatial Planning!

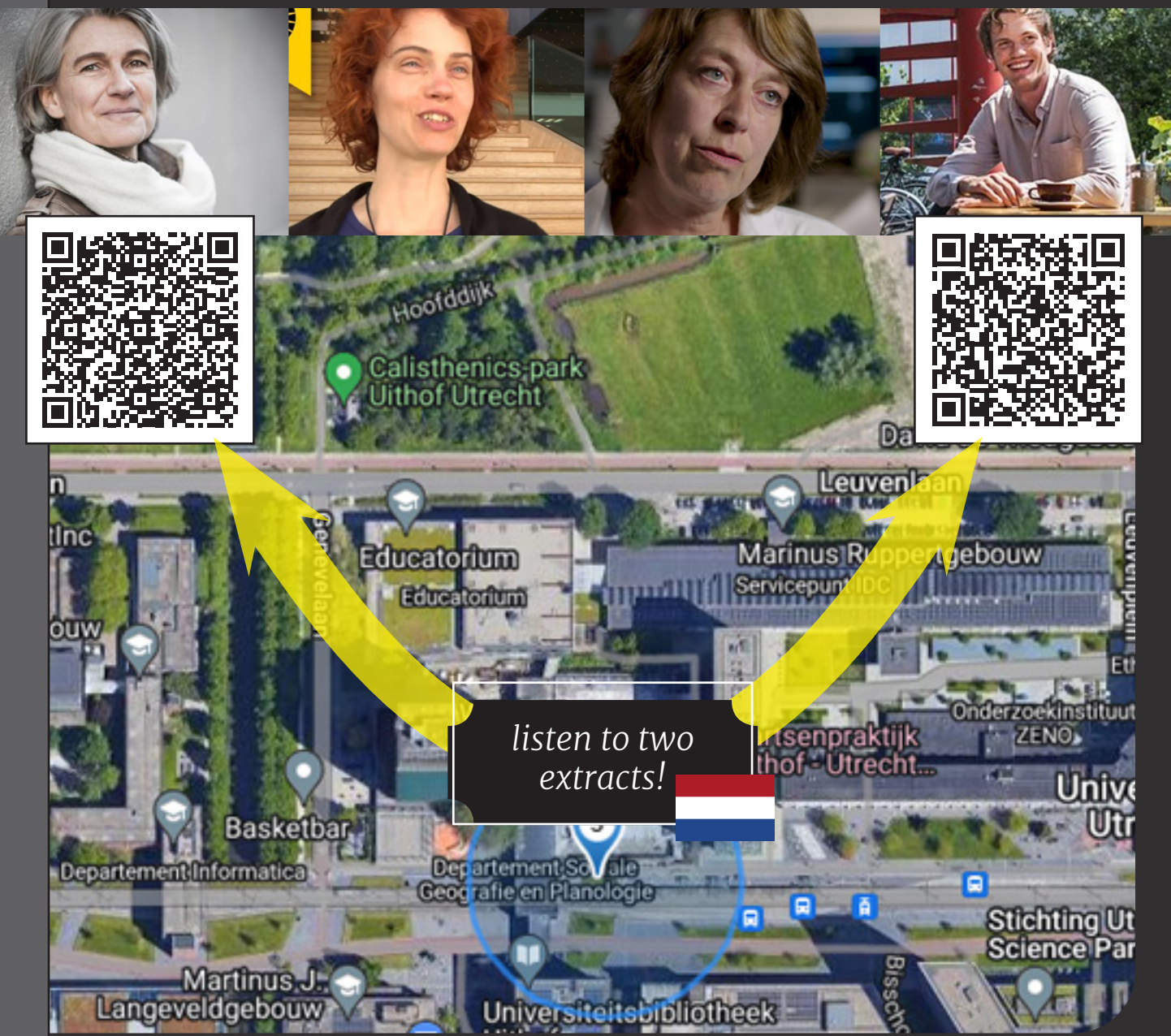
...to inform the students of the impact of their choices: what does it say to others when you use the concept 'capital'? Is the question 'how do we generate economic growth in region X?' really value-free?

...to shape the students' identity as a geographer, now and later on: what will others hold you accountable for?



The variety of **perspectives** within geography & planning is crucial: you can look at the same place and tell very different stories!

So we made an **audio tour** to show this.



outdoor learning enhances the cognitive – knowledge and skills

outdoor learning has an affective component – emotional values

outdoor learning connects to the conative domain – that of motivation  
Scott, Humphries & Henri 2019



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thanks to Francien Yntema for the original idea of a multivoiced walk, to the 'voices', and to the students for their participation

feel free to contact Martijn for the izi.travel app for self-guided excursions

### Research question & experimental setup

How do students **experience** and report on learning from discussing an outdoor audio-walk on different geographical disciplines, and does the **sequence** in the course matter?

We look for their **knowledge** of different perspectives, their **understanding**, and their **motivation**.

Part of the students (randomly allocated) does the **walk after the very first lecture** of the course – green and fresh; they will discover new things but without preparation.

The others **first get five lectures** and then do the walk. They have more background to understand what is going on.

### Results

Table 1: students (definitely) agreeing to our question on knowledge and insight. (n=118)

	all students		students walking before lectures	students walking after lectures	significant difference?
I know more about my own disciplinary 'voice'	63%	✓	69%	61%	no
I know more about the other students' disciplinary 'voices'	41%	≈	38%	42%	no

Table 2: students' motivation, on a Likert scale (1–5) with st. dev. (n=118)

	all students		students walking before lectures	students walking after lectures	significant difference?
motivation before the walk	2.82 (0.96)	≈	2.87 (0.99)	2.80 (0.95)	no
motivation during the walk	3.67 (0.86)	✓	3.66 (0.79)	3.67 (0.89)	no
change in motivation	+0.85 (1.14)	✓	+0.74 (1.18)	+0.89 (1.13)	no

"There were clear examples that could be easily retold and explained. This was because it had stuck in our heads, because we were actually on the spot."

"In the debriefing we soon found out that the different disciplines were very far apart. That made the discussion very interesting. Translating each other's discipline was therefore not difficult and even instructive!"

"Instead of a walk in which we listened to a story, we were also busy exploring the space around us."

### Conclusions & Recommendations

A walk is a lovely and very geographical way to motivate students.

Students enjoyed sharing knowledge within small groups.

Students are somewhat critical of how much they learn from others in these groups.

Our approach worked well for first-year students, who reported a 6,4 grade (out of 10); but older students gave a 4,7.

The sequence of the walk within the course did not really matter.



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