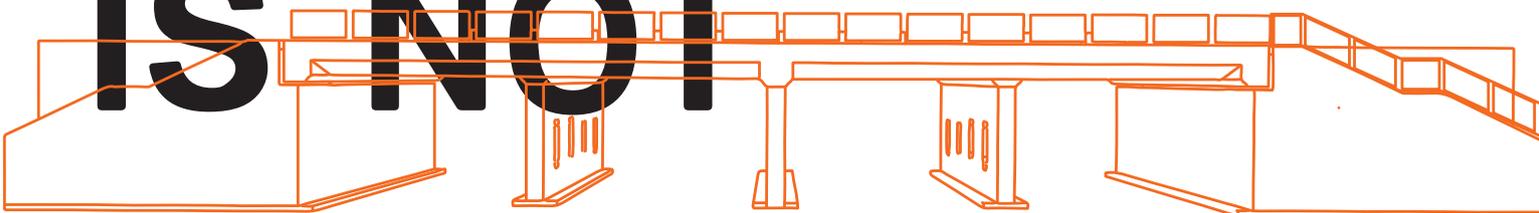


**VRIJ
GYM
NATIONAAL
PARK
BRABANT**



IS NOT

**A(NOTHER)
BOURGEOIS
(RE) CREATION**

YUFEI GAO

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I mean, EVERYONE

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1.Preface

Keep these questions in mind before you start reading:

What is the sense of belonging?

What is a community?

Why do we unconsciously seeking for connection?

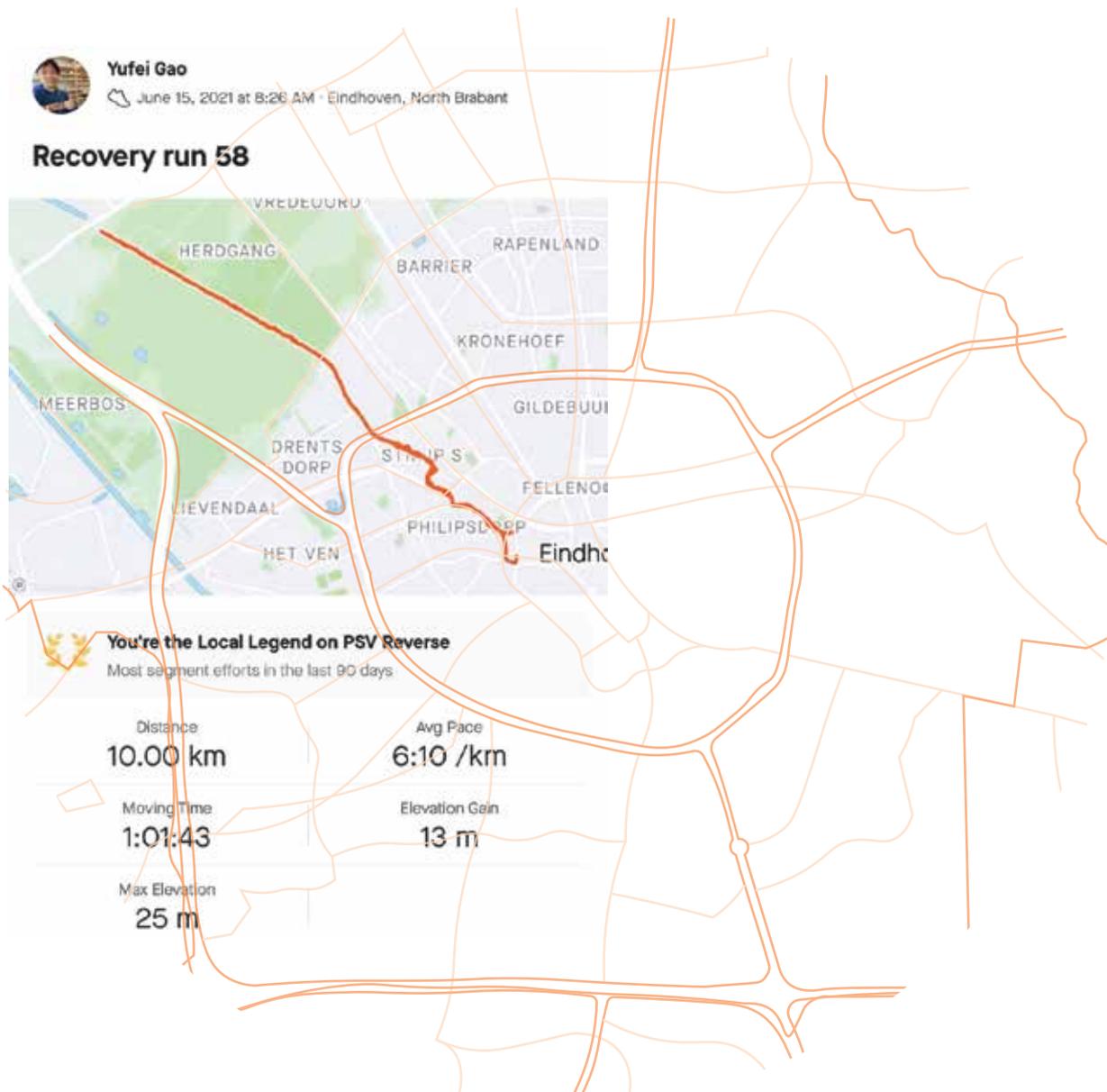
What is recreation? What is leisure? Who has the right to have it?

What is play? Why do we play? What's the relation between recreation and play?





2. Morning runs: the starting point



Since the last week of March, I started to run at least 5 kilometers a day outside along the road. My biggest surprise is how often people greeted me and cheered me along the way.

As an ethnic minority, I don't have a lot of strangers who greet me or even make eye contact on the streets, inevitably, sometimes there are even some racists.

Being a runner somehow disguises the fact that I'm Asian? I encounter the most kindness everyday when people slow down their cars and smile to me when I'm about to pass the intersection. For the first time I feel a sense of belonging to Eindhoven through running/being a runner.

With the question:

“How can urban sports create solidarity/social cohesion in VGNP?”

in mind, I started to research into people who do sports in public open spaces.

In this survey by the Eindhoven municipality in 2019, 65% of Eindhoven residents exercised at least once a week. 21% exercised twice a week, and 29% 3 times a week or more.

During the pandemic, gyms and other sport venues were closed. As spring comes, wildflowers bloom around every corner, same as people who utilize every open public space possible for exercising.



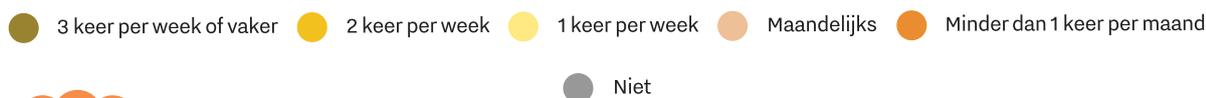
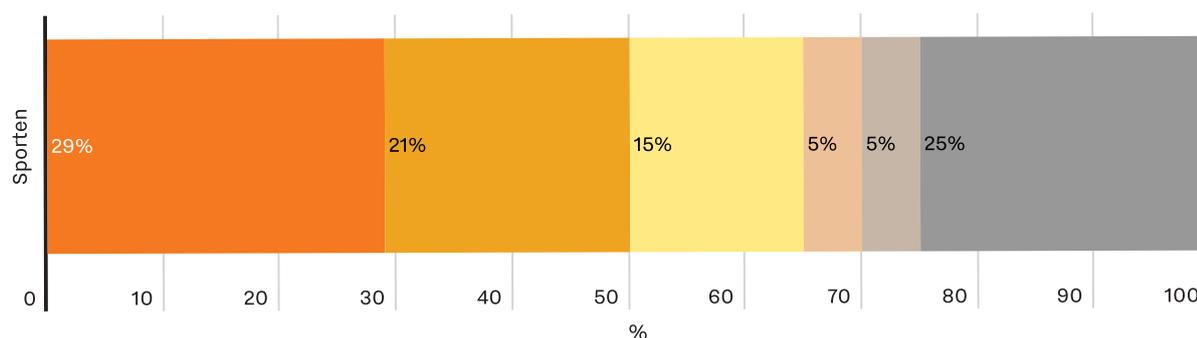
Sport & bewegen

65% van de Eindhovenaren sport minstens 1 keer per week. 21% doet dat 2 keer per week en 29% 3 keer per week of vaker.

25% van de Eindhovenaren doet helemaal niet aan sport.

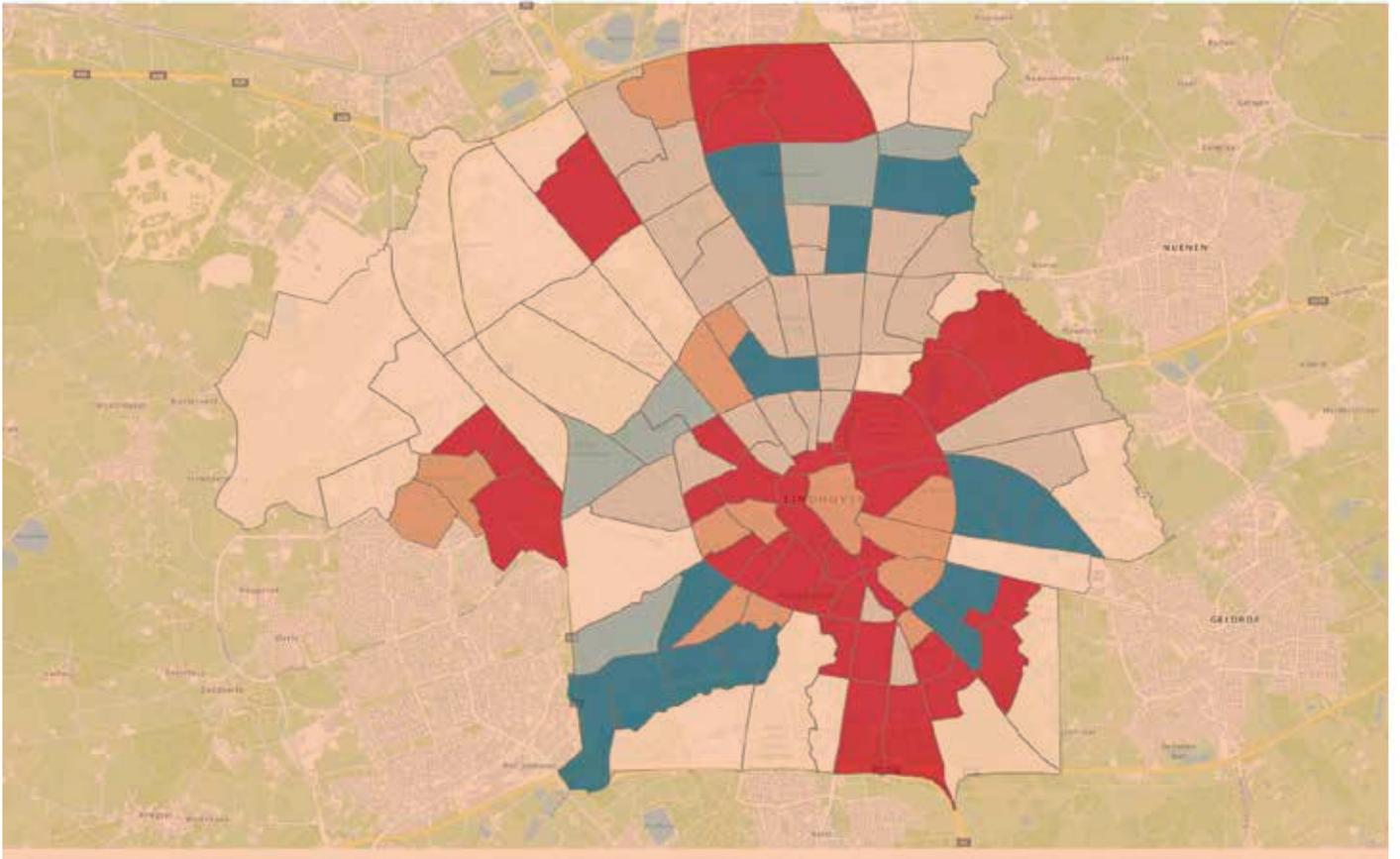
Eindhovenaren doen aan verschillende sporten. Zo doet 32% aan fitness (individueel). Andere populaire sporten zijn wandelsport (21%), hardlopen / joggen (19%) en wielrennen / toerfietsen (16%). Daarnaast doen mannen ook vaak aan voetbal en mountainbiken. Vrouwen daarentegen doen juist vaak aan yoga en fitness in groepsverband. Vrouwen doen ook minder vaak aan wielrennen / toerfietsen dan mannen. Daarnaast is 27% van de Eindhovenaren lid van een sportvereniging.

Hoe vaak sporten Eindhovenaren?



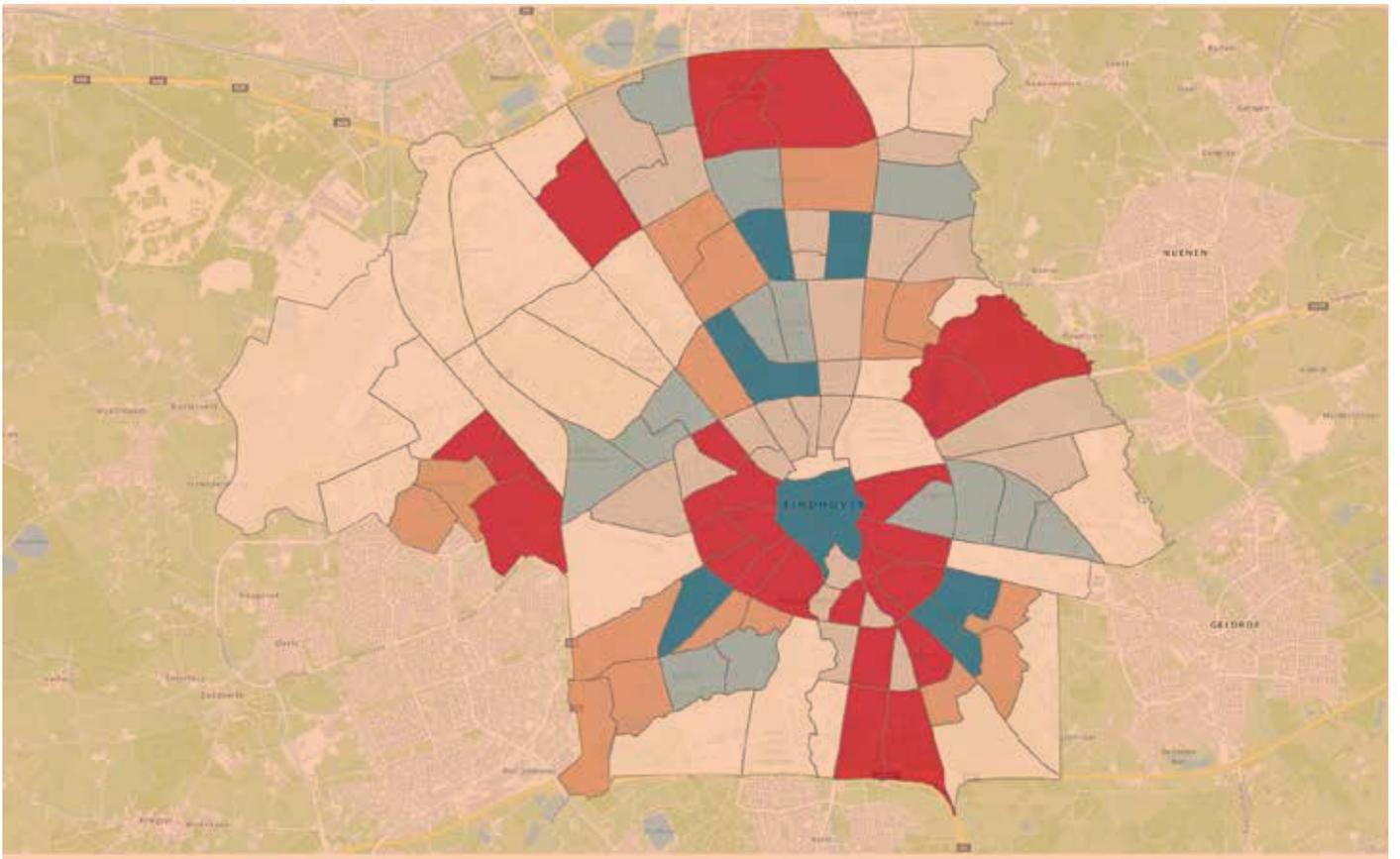
27% van de inwoners is lid van een sportvereniging

doet aan sport % 2019 - Buurten



■ < 60 ■ 60 < 64 ■ 64 < 68 ■ 68 < 72 ■ >= 72
Speciale waarden Ontbreekt
Eenheid: percentage

is lid van een sportvereniging (18-84 jaar) 2020 - Buurten



■ < 28 ■ 28 < 32 ■ 32 < 36 ■ 36 < 40 ■ >= 40
Speciale waarden Ontbreekt
Eenheid: percentage

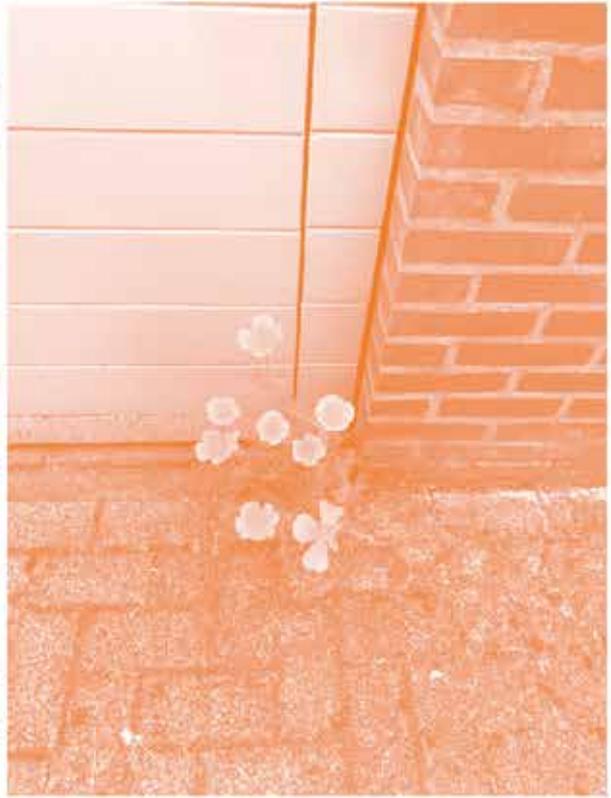
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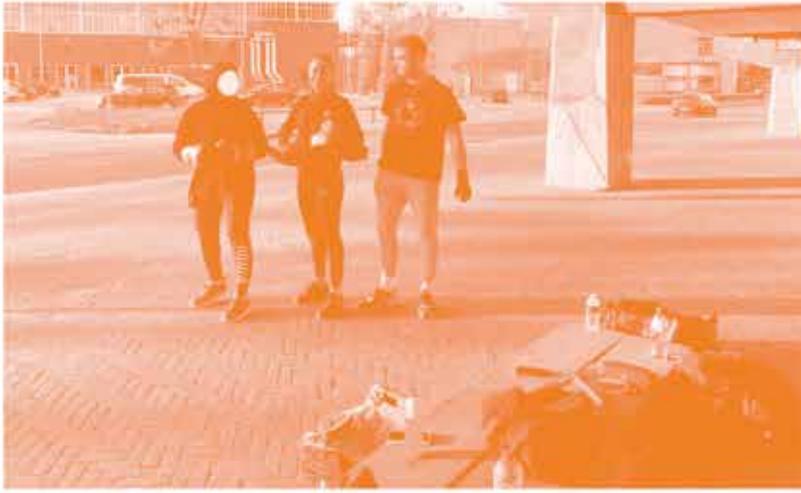


3.Observations: grassroots gyms and grassroots

I was fascinated by the vitality of the wildflowers, weeds, and human, and the similarity of this vitality, if this is not what “being ecological” means, I don’t know what else it can be.

It’s too early to mention Deleuze’s rhizome theory at this point, but I will elaborate in a chapter later.







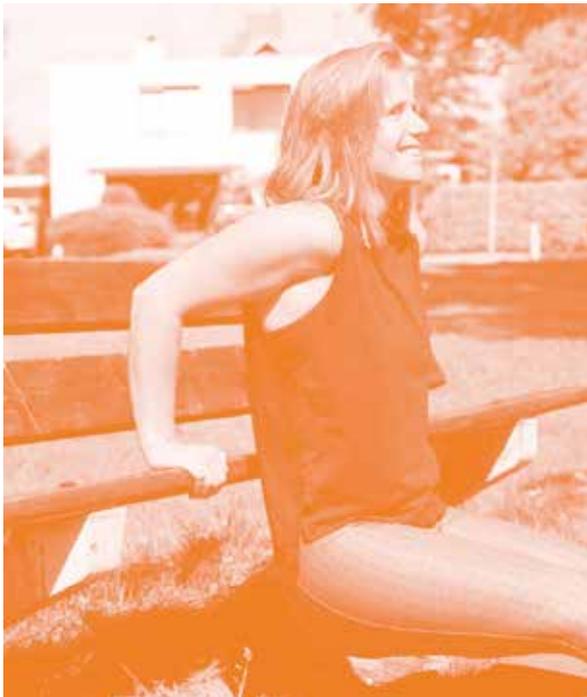






4. Insights from a insider, interview with Kim

Kim is the initiator of the bootcamp/fitness group that utelize the parking lot in front of Microlab.



Yufei: I feel like through doing sports, we can create a sense of belonging and a sense of community to connect people together.

And also, another not very relevant point is that we have a decreasing number of cars, the reason why I interview you is that you are using the parking lot.

Kim: I've been using it in the evening and in the weekend, so it's not a lot, of course. During the day, it's a bit crowded, but there's always a spot to find. Yeah. But I hope it will decrease because then you have more room.

Yufei: How long have you been using the parking lot as the training space? And is this one of the reason you choose makerlab as your location?

Kim: No, it was not the parking lot why I use this location, it is because it's more in the center. So you have also a nice park around you have strijps. So it's also nice. If you want to go running with a group, you can go a lot of places. So sometimes I go running through the park, that was the reason I have it. I chose the spot. The reason I try it on the parking lot. Yeah, I like it, because I can take my weight from my chair and go to the parking lot. So it's really easy for me to use parking space as well.

Yufei: But I heard starting from next week, we can start to train indoor again. Are you gonna change your plan?

Kim: My bootcamps will stay outside because groups lessons is also more for outside and is not allowed inside.

But normally, I have all my personal trainings inside. But I already asked my clients and some of them want to train outside, even when it's open inside.

So I think I'm going to be flexible for inside and outside. And I didn't do that before.

I actually like doing outside. Yeah, I think also, if people do a lot of office work or sitting behind a computer at home a lot. You forget to go outside. If they are sporting, and it's raining, and you go with a car hearing people outside, then you think, Oh, I'm good that I'm inside.

But now we were stuck outside. And now they said oh, I'm really enjoying it. And they didn't expect it. So I think because we are into habits. So and then you're stuck in the habit. And now it was totally different.

Yufei: And what are the pros and cons of using the outside space comparing to indoor and also comparing to like a natural space like in the Park, on the grass.

Kim: I like in the park because you don't need a mat on the floor, because it's really rough area here, the parking space is also a bit dirty, too. Sometimes there is some glass or cigarettes. So that's what I don't like about it.

In the nature, it's more clean. And if you get a bit dirty, it's not that bad because it's from undergrad. Yeah. What I like indoors is that you, I'm flexible with my material, because I have a car and I take everything outside.

But inside, you can also do a lot of other exercise because I have more stuff inside. So that's why I like also I said also to the people that want to train outside. I said, okay, but let's go inside when it's raining, because then we can also do other stuff. Because you're also you can take kettlebells, you can take dumbbells, but you can do bodyweight, but that's just a series of group exercise that you can do.

And you can also do a lot when you're inside. So that's what I like, about inside you are more flexible, you have everything which you can use.

Yufei: Just imagine if you're gonna transform the parking lot into like, somewhere you can use as a gym, what would you do to change it?

Kim: I think I would definitely also have a space that has a roof on it, so that it's open from the outside the sides, but that has a roof because sometimes it's rainy, you're dropping, and then the material get wet as well.

I think I want to have also like, some bars like colored stem next. So I think that's, that's cool.

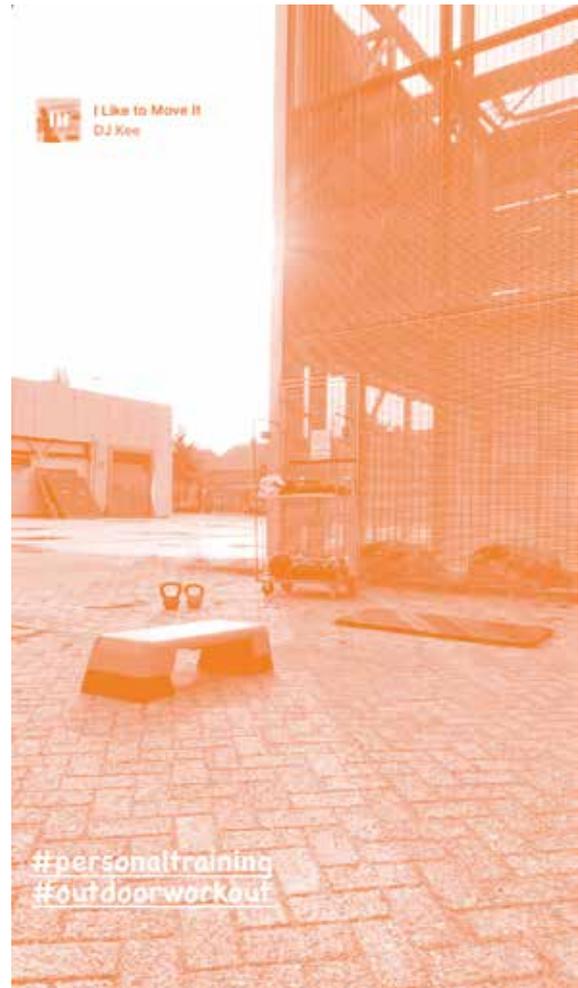
Yeah, you can do a lot of I think I'm my coaches for like a gym, but then open. We're also running parts. And you can also have like the, I don't know, if you notice SMART goals, there's also fun with the lighting that you can run and if you have to catch the light, and then come back and then the light is already giving you a challenge.

So stuff like that. I think that's also nice. A lot of football players use it for training. I think that stuff is really nice for us in our tech team because you can use the space and this is for me this is a small space so I would really make it big and then every part something different like a little grass floor for some jumps or whatever. And then like bars to do everything you can also like have rope climbing or something like that.

Yufei: I already mentioned a little bit when it's raining. But I also want to still want to ask, how about winter and bellwethers. Do you still have your boot camp outside when they're still outside? Yeah. Is that part of the experience?

Kim: So with boot camp, it's a thing that you can get dirty. So if it's rainy, there are actually people coming like in the rain, then people come, like 10 people, so they know that it's going on, but what I would want to have is like a little roof because in front of microlab.

There's a little thing that you can put yourself dry but you have to stand in the rain because there's no space to hide from the rain.



Only when there's Thunder it's not no boot-camp and when it's really snowy and it's icy. Because then it's not safe. Yeah, for the rest is always good.

Or I have the policy that there has to be two. So if it's really raining and nobody is coming or like just one, then I can cancel it or say, Okay, let's do it online., because of covid, people can accept that.

Yufei: How's corona affecting the situation? Are there more people join the since corona or less people?

Kim: In the beginning, it was not allowed to give a group lesson. So we took everything online. So nobody knew what was coming in. Then we went outside, but it was also still not allowed to have group trainings. But you could have in small groups of three or four.

Kim: So we have some groups that train together, and then we had some small groups. We split them up. But still, nobody was coming. Because I think a lot of people were scared still.

And I think since November, December, after the bad winter, and the new sound came and you think like, okay, maybe it's possible, we can have a holiday this year. But the gyms are still closed. And then the people came. So I think I have in the last couple months, I have like 10 new people.

So I think because we can do this and the gyms are still closed, they came. But because the gyms were open last year, they didn't take this online, bootcamp was not a hit. Yeah. And also in the April, I think, March, April and May, the bootcamps is becoming popular. Because then everybody's thinking, Oh, bikini body, I need to work on my condition. And then they see the nice weather, and I think maybe sports outside. That is nice. But I think I have more people because of the gyms closed.

Yufei: Do you have like a social circle of personal trainers or like people who are really into fitness in Eindhoven?

Kim: I have some personal trainers in my group. And we help each other out. So because if you are someone but you don't have colleagues, so sometimes it's really hard. Oh, yeah. If you get an assignment for like, Hey, we have a group of 30 people do you want to train us that time But 30 people in by yourself is a lot. So you can ask your, like, colleague friends, can you help me out and I will give you money for it or we will, or even or I will do another job for you as well. So I have a little bit of that. But not every personal trainer is the same. And you'll also not have the same connection with everyone. Yeah, so I have I think like, six to eight people that I have in my group that I can also ask to help me out.

Yufei: So what do you think, advantage of doing sports with other people and then doing it alone? Do you like group exercise?

Kim: I think the nice thing of a group exercises that you feel a bit of the pressure of the group. So if you see that a lot of people are coming in, you think oh, maybe to get ready to come as well. And also, if you see that everybody can do push ups. You want to do also more push ups. So I think that's nice. It's also a social thing. So you can also chat a bit and meet new people, and especially when you're expert, it's a really nice place to meet other people. I normally don't train in a group, because I'm the trainer. And otherwise I have to find another place to train. But I have my own gym. So that feels a bit strange for me.

Yeah, so that's what I sometimes find hard because some exercises I do by myself, because I don't have a supporter. So yeah, but I also like strength training. So you can also do a lot of like, maybe not a benchpress but you can also do it with dumbbells and a you can throw them on the floor. So it's actually the same exercise with them. safer.

Yufei: Are you from Eindhoven and do you think in general is an active city or City of sports.

Kim: I'm not really myself, I live here now for 20. No, sorry, 12 years. I'm coming from Oesterreich, it's near silver. They have more forests. So you can walk there.

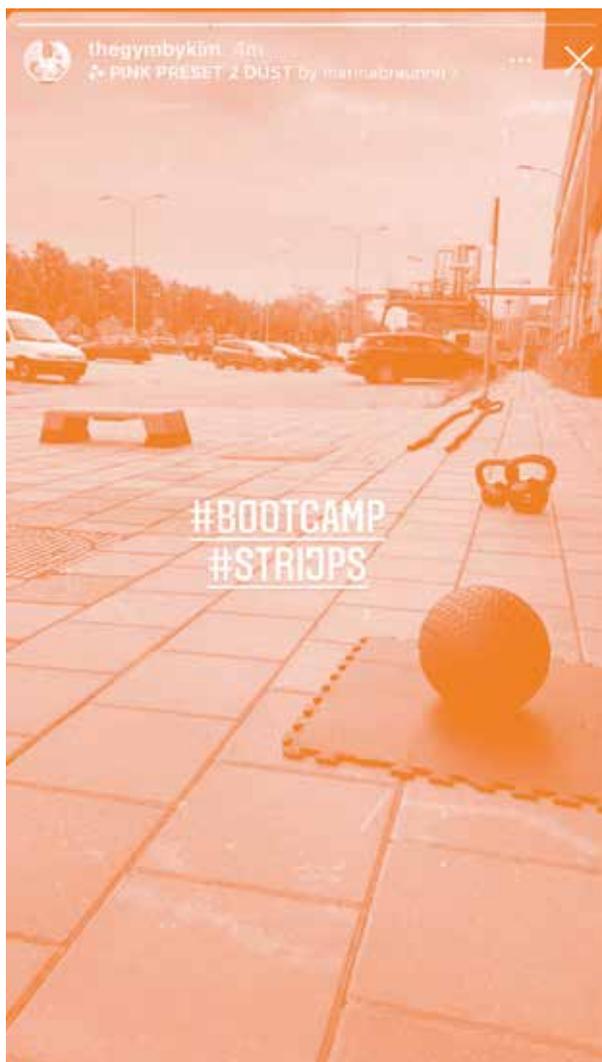
And I think, here are more parks where people sports, and you see a lot of boot camps. That's what I like about them, and everybody is using this space.

Like there are blocks on strijp-5 and everybody is using them for sports. That's what I like, we have the stairs there. Yeah, everybody's using them.

Yufei: Do you have something more to add?

Kim: I think sports is also a thing for happiness. Because if you take care of yourself, you feel better. If you do sports, you feel the rush after, so or during. It's a social thing. So some people are already like, excited to be here again.

So if you don't have a lot of friends, or if you are an expert, and you don't have your family around, it's nice to have a group to come to it's like a friendship group. So I think it's also everything. You feel better because you do sports, maybe eat healthier because you're good in sports. I think it's a circle, no brainer. And I think that makes sports also a happy place. Maybe not always if you're doing like lunch jobs, and you're like really sorry, relax, but yeah, actually feel great. Like Well, I did this and you can be proud of yourself.



5.(Psycho)analysis on parkour and urban space





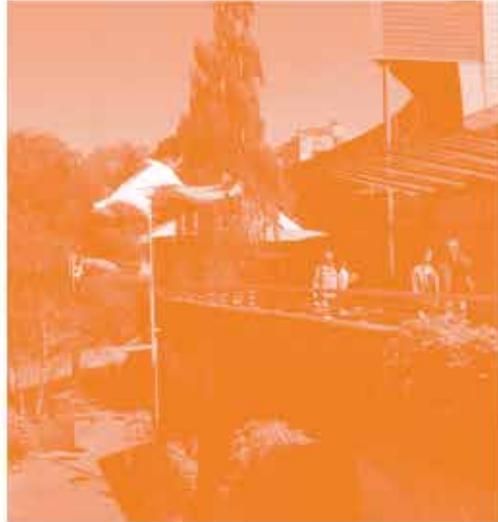
Parkour is a modern physical activity that consists of using the environment, mostly urban, as a playground of obstacles.

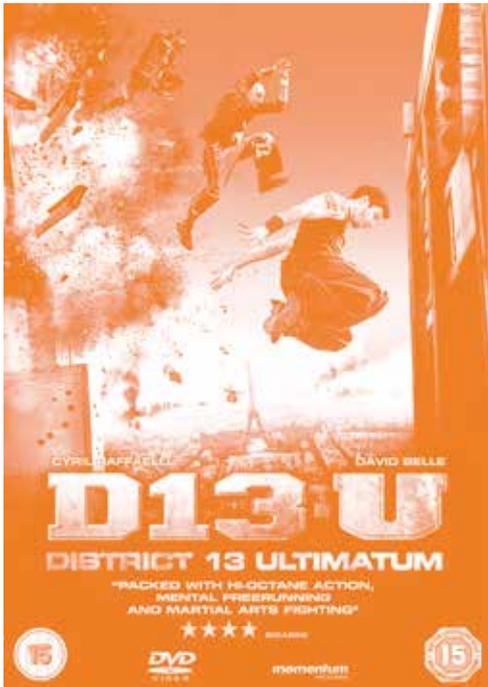
It has been very popular in many cities in the Netherlands, Eindhoven is no exception.

In this chapter, I will first show the visual materials I collected during the research, then I will sociology and Lacanian psychoanalysis to explain why I excluded parkour from the sports I mentioned in the second chapter, and why I think the urban sports park is not working.

Besides that before we move on to the next chapter I will briefly talk about social class distinction using Bourdieu's cultural capital theory.







The growth and popularity of parkour within the broader context of identity, cool individualism and leisure in late-capitalism.

Whilst these are highly influential forces, it would be a gross misrepresentation to reduce the traceurs motivations and attraction to parkour as exclusively rooted in the desire to form cool and culturally identities. Much like other transgressive urban and spatial practices, the corporeal sensations, affective experiences and intimately embodied connection with space and place are undeniably at the heart of traceurs' motivations.

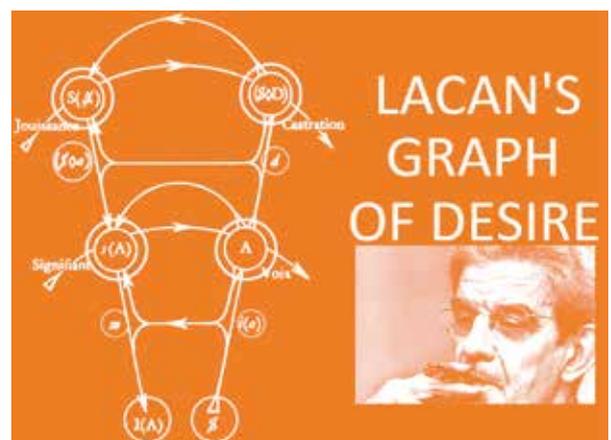
However, the greatest error in studying parkour would be to treat issues of identity and lifestyle as separate to or distinct from its embodied experience and practice. In fact, what is required is an understanding of the interplay between consumer capitalism and these authentic and often ineffable embodied experiences.

The desire to establish active and intimate bodily connections with space runs contrary to the encouraged passive bodily reception of the 'concept city' as it is imagined by urban developers, planners and city councils interested primarily in its economic returns.

This could be seen as merely the griping of the public around young people and the attention-seeking 'stunts' and imbecility of mass media.

Consumer capitalism's 'precorporation' of parkour and other similar urban practices results in the witnessing of parkour being experienced not as the Real, which penetrates the illusory artificial sphere of urban space.

Rather, parkour and indeed other practices like urban exploration are experienced and witnessed as the illusory image, just like the semblance that occurs in the fictional realm of films, TV shows and adverts. We see elements of parkour in numerous action films and adverts. Far from being a niche feature, the movements of parkour are more pervasive than one might recognise, all situated within 'unreal' scenarios and plotlines, which are too ludicrous for real life.



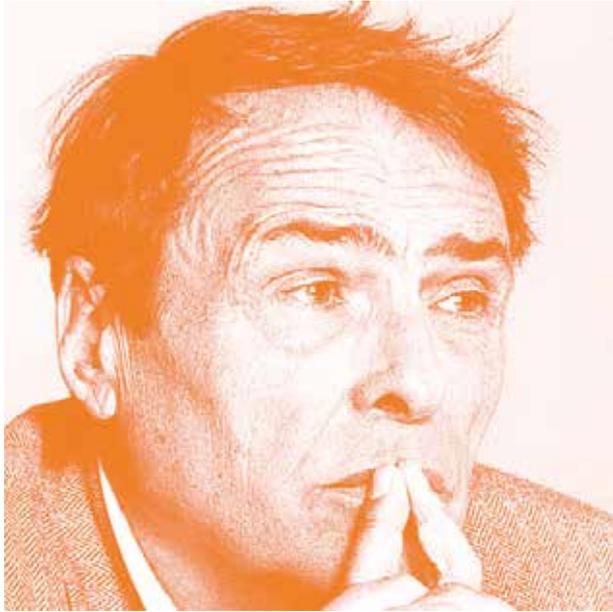
Moreover, let's talk about the urban sports park.

By extracting the activity itself out of the context, the spatial-bodily relation has also been dismissed, together with the potential unsettledness the deviant recreation creates in the urban landscape.

parkour is clearly one example, another one in Eindhoven is arena. It is essentially the same as building an urban sports park--by extracting the decorative aesthetic value out of the practice of graffiti, the desire behind has been dismissed leaving the art form as an o

Like this person says: step out of the arena, the freerunners have the same reaction to the urban sports park, but in a more intuitive way, they ignore it.





Many studies on social differentiation in sports and exercise behaviour show that the degree of participation as well as the preference for certain sports is related to social class. In general, people from the higher social strata more frequently participate in sports and physical exercise than people from the lower strata.

While Bourdieu often considered sport in analyses of culture, there have since been relatively few studies that are focused on considering sport within the broader landscape of cultural consumption.

The habitus produces practice in combination with capital and in a particular field. Capital can be defined as usable resources and powers, the main forms being economic (income, monetary assets), cultural (skills, knowledge), social (connections) and symbolic (status). 'Sporting capital' can be seen as a form of cultural capital, which comprises skills and knowledge necessary for successful participation in sports and exercise. In a specific field, i.e. a relatively autonomous particular social arena with its own logic and social conditions, the combination of one's habitus—embodied and lasting schemes of (perception of) practice—and the specific volume and composition of capital results in certain behaviour. For example, in the field of organised sports, this can result in participation in a certain sport at a specific club because one has a 'sense of one's place' or no participation at all as one feels that 'that's not for the likes of us'.

Reference:

Bourdieu, (1984), *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*

Raymen, T. (2018), "The Parkour City", *Parkour, Deviance and Leisure in the Late-Capitalist City: An Ethnography* (Emerald Studies in Deviant Leisure), Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley, pp. 101-123.

5¹/₂. Reflection :

Is it possible to design for everyone?

I mean, EVERYONE

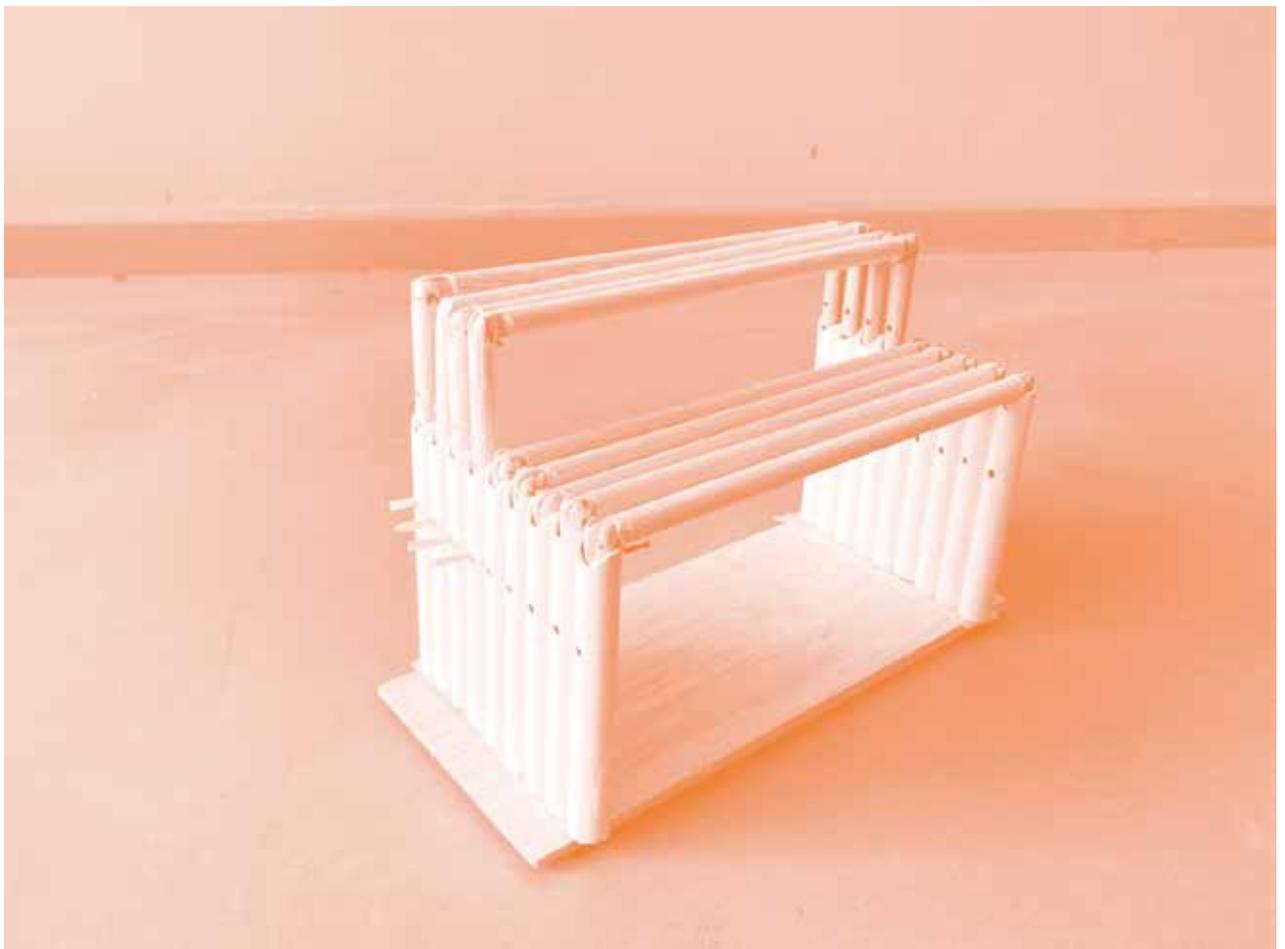
After I did some analysis on the demographic group in my interviewee and people I saw, I realized how “bourgeois” the demographic is, well educated, white collar, middle class people.

I got treated more friendly in my nike running suit, it is not the action of running which dismiss the distinction and barrier, it is the lifestyle which implies my social status and in which legitimatize my existence and humanize my “alien” presence in this country.

Then the question is, is it possible to design for everyone, despite all the things differentiate us from each other? Is there a way to achieve real solidarity, using the mechanism of sports, like how it worked for certain communities, can it be extended to a larger social scale?



6.The bench, design proposal1.0



Public benches: the seat of civilisation

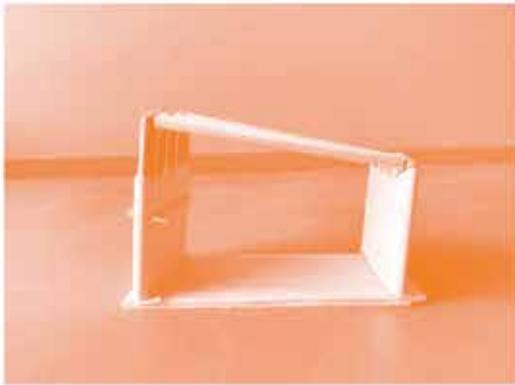
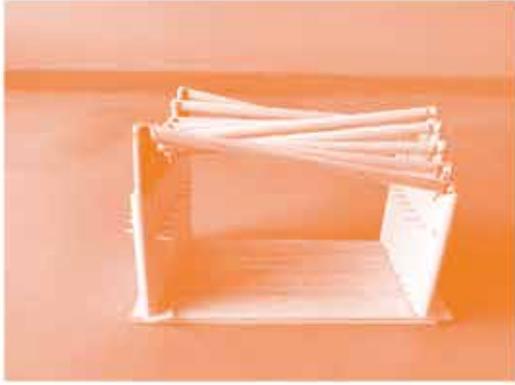
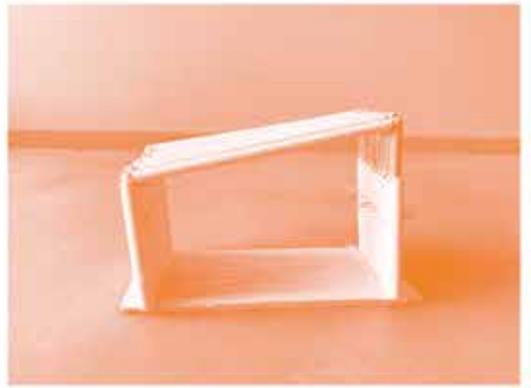
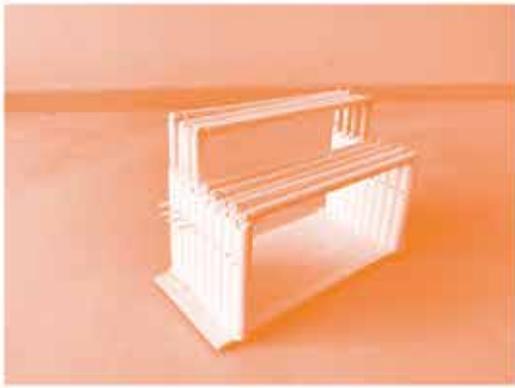
The most archetypal item of furniture is inscribed in the language, culture and social spaces of our cities



The ultimate free space, benches at a playground in Jardin Catherine Labouré in 7th arrondissement in Paris

For a utopian idealistic design proposal, I had to start with something that's essentially universal, so I chose the bench, for it's the oldest and most common public furniture.

I made a prototype of a transformative bench, with which you can change the angle of the seat, you can pull out some bars for various exercises. It is fun and versatile.



7. What's in your local governor's mind?

After making my own vision of how I want to approach the idea, I realize I miss the status quo. So I did more research on the reality.

In this chapter, I will show materials about how the Dutch, British, and the EU decision makers position sports, and the policy and strategy made to promote it.

Then I will zoom in to the existing policy/facility around sports in Eindhoven.



Report to Commissioner Tibor Navracsics

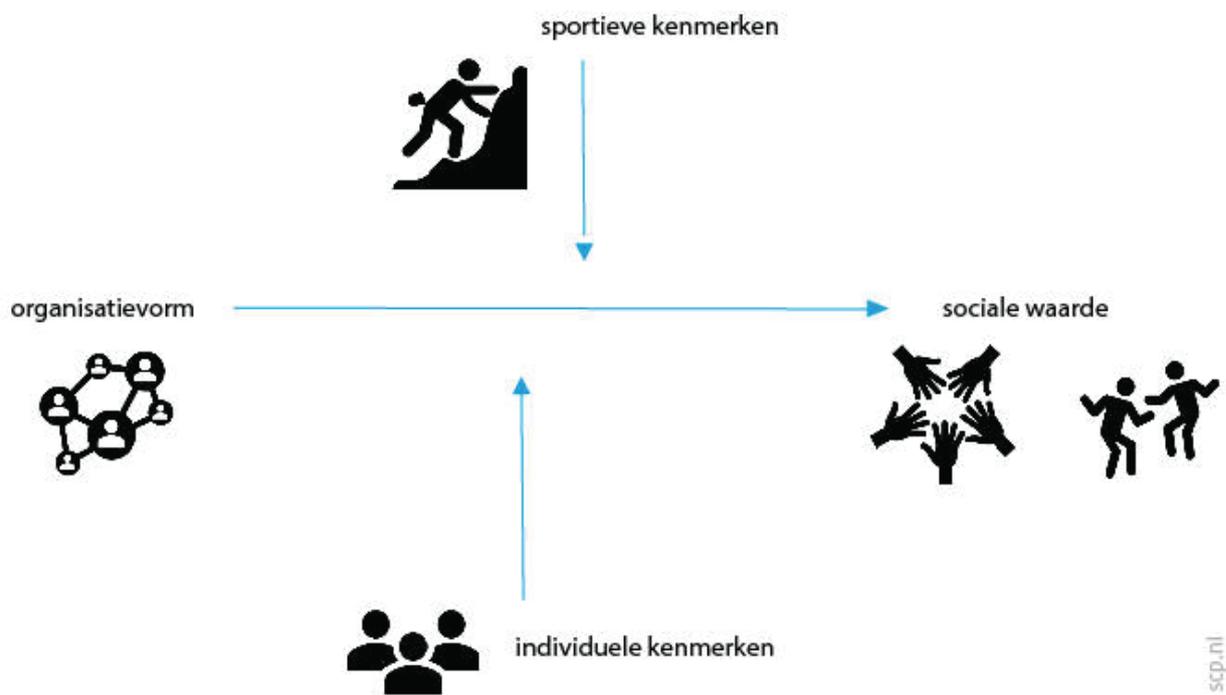
'Grassroots Sport - Shaping Europe'

*High Level Group on
Grassroots Sport*

***Sporting Future* identifies five key outcomes where the Government believes grassroots sport and recreation can make a positive contribution and which will guide future funding decisions:**

- Physical health
- Mental health
- Individual development
- Social and community development
- Economic development

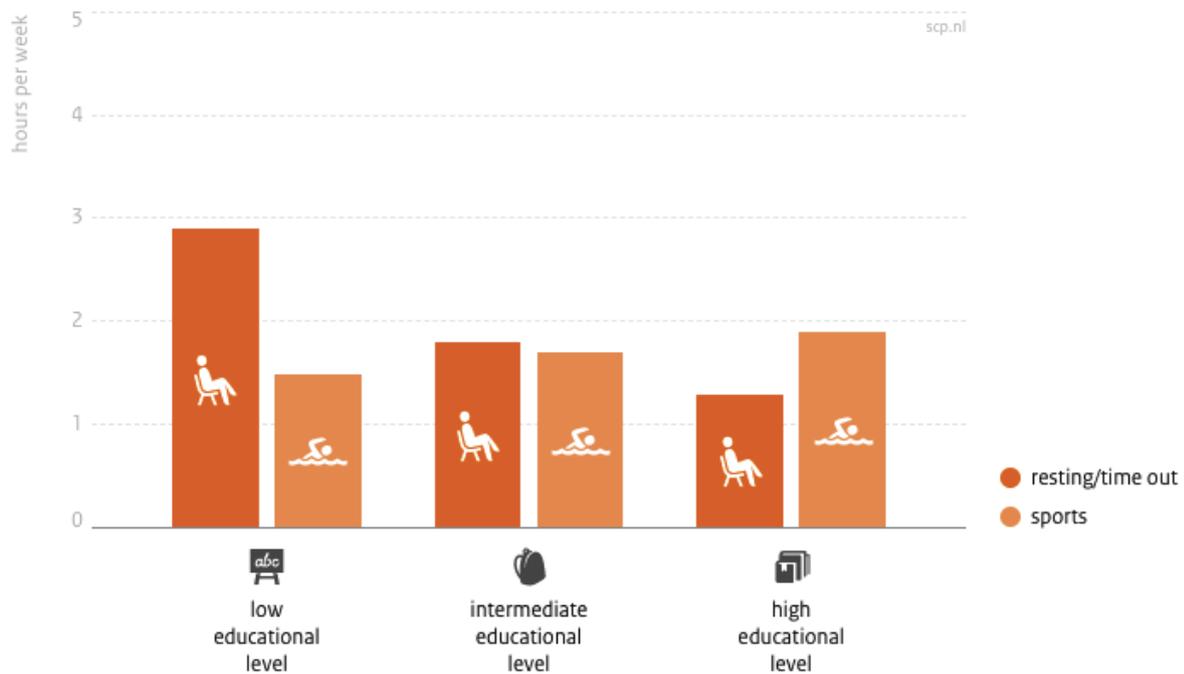
A report and future strategy made by the European Union in 2016
https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/sport/library/policy_documents/hlg-grassroots-final_en.pdf



Leisure time by educational level

Sports and resting

Choose:



Source: SCP/CBS (TBO'16)

Figures from a research by Dutch Social and Cultural Planning Office
<https://magazines.rijksoverheid.nl/scp/scp-specials/2020/01/waarde-van-sociale-aspecten-van-sport-voor-beleid>

Paragraphs from a report made by the SCP office, from which we can see where does the government see the value in sports

Sport and exercise are an important part of our daily lives and were given full attention during the restrictive measures to combat covid-19. After all, sport also contributes to the health of many Dutch people and helps to combat loneliness, for example.

However, the sports preferences of the Dutch are changing: the proportion of Dutch people who are members of a sports association is gradually decreasing (RIVM 2020). In the total share of weekly time that people spend on sports, association sports only account for a quarter (NLSportraad 2019). The Dutch are increasingly active (also) in a disorganized manner (half the weekly time for sports) or sports organized differently (one fifth of the sports time), such as via commercial sports providers, company sports or the healthcare sector.

This special shows that athletes who are active in groups attribute social value to their sports group, club or association. Many appreciate the good atmosphere, meet new people, make friends and receive help and support in private matters. Sport therefore has a connecting and bridging value. The sports association has traditionally been seen as a source of bridging and connecting social contacts (Van der Meulen 2007), but informal groups and commercial and other providers also form a place where participants appreciate social aspects (Van den Berg et al. 2011). Especially now, in times of the corona crisis, when contacts are lost, it is noticeable that sports groups form a connecting link between people, which the participants now miss.

<https://magazines.rijksoverheid.nl/scp/scp-specials/2020/01/sociale-cohesie-en-de-rol-van-de-sportsector>

The Framework for a new Sport Strategy



Sports strategy from British governmental report



Rt Hon David Cameron
Prime Minister

Sport is part of our national identity. We invented many of the sports that the rest of the world plays. We take pride in hosting some of the greatest sporting competitions on the planet. Whether it is our national teams competing in World Cups, our Davis Cup team winning for the first time in 79 years, or Team GB going for gold in the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the whole nation follows their progress, agonising over every setback and savouring every success.

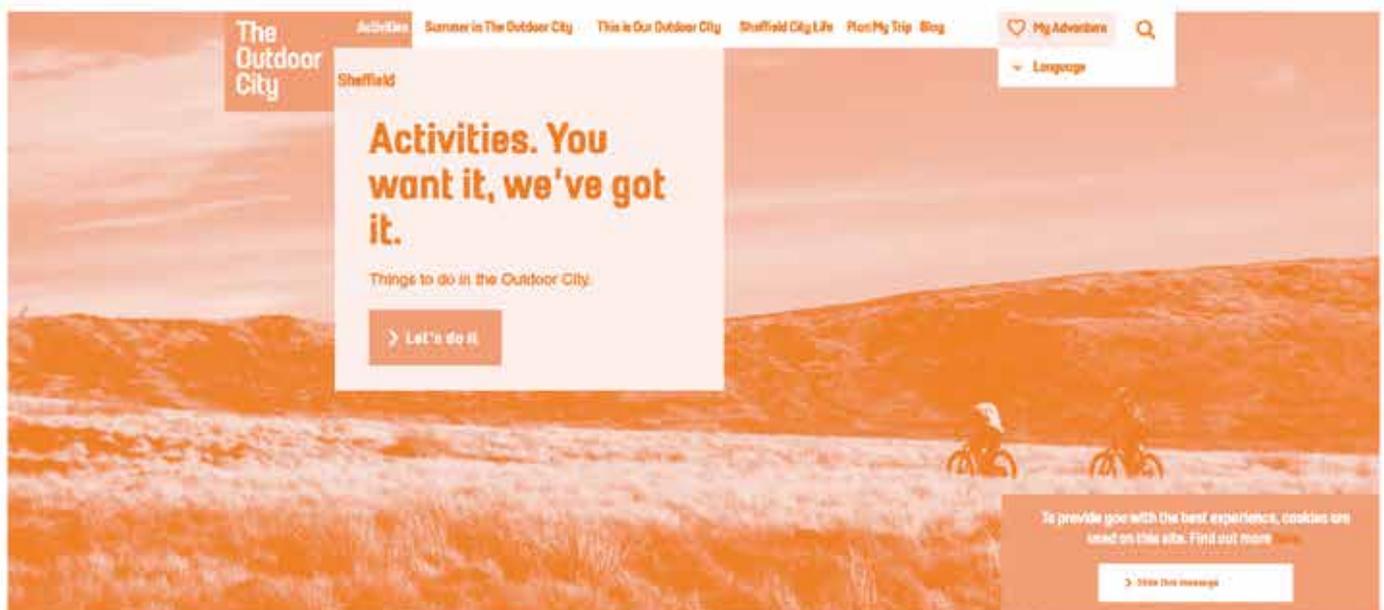
Get Your Kit On - A Guide to Grassroots Sport and Recreation

The *Get Your Kit On: A Guide to Grassroots Sport and Recreation* has been created by the Sport and Recreation Alliance. The guide has been designed to help parliamentarians understand the key issues surrounding grassroots sport in their constituencies. You can navigate your way through the guide by using the quick navigation on the right of your screen. Alternatively, if you're on a mobile device, you can use the quick links below to jump to relevant sections.

[DOWNLOAD FULL REPORT >](#)

1. [What is this guide and who is it for?](#)
2. [Section 1: Understanding the sport and recreation landscape](#)
3. [Section 2: School provision](#)
4. [Section 3: Grassroots clubs](#)
5. [Section 4: Outdoor recreation](#)
6. [Section 5: The health and social value of grassroots sport and recreation](#)
7. [Section 6: What does success look like? Case studies](#)
8. [Your role as a parliamentarian](#)

#GETYOURKITON FOR GRASSROOTS SPORT



<https://www.sportandrecreation.org.uk/pages/grassrootsguide#7>

A website promoting grassroots sports by the British government, and the successful example of the city of Sheffield: The outdoor city: <https://www.theoutdoorcity.co.uk/>

LEES DEZE BELANGRIJKE INFORMATIE:

- Koop je e-tickets voor baantjes zwemmen, (therapeutisch) recreatief zwemmen en aquasportief (met uitzondering van aquaspinning) in de nieuwe webshops van de Tongelreep [🔗](#) en Ir. Ottenbad [🔗](#). Lees ook de [veelgestelde vragen](#).
- Vrij (recreatief) zwemmen in het buitenbad en het recreatiebad van Ir. Ottenbad is ook weer mogelijk! [Lees meer over de openingsdata](#).
- Ga naar de pagina 'Coronavirus' voor informatie over de versospelingen vanaf 26 juni.

**IK BEN OP ZOEK NAAR**

Zoek

**CORONAVIRUS: LEES DE
UPDATES EN**

SamenUit Agenda and Eindhoven Sport have joined forces and have created a place where sport and meeting are central. You can search for a sports and exercise buddy, join a sports group or start one yourself via the SamenUit Agenda website!

There are various groups on the [SamenUit Agenda website](#) [🔗](#) that you can participate in: cycling, walking, running, streetball, etc. Is there nothing for you? Then create a new group or place a call for the sport you like to do with others!

**TogetherOut Agenda of Eindhoven Sport**

Eindhoven has 2 websites contributing to providing sports related information to the general public

One is <https://eindhovensport.nl/>, the other one is [samenuitagenda](#), for the latter one, I checked it out during the research, it was founded 3 years ago, there was groups categorized by different sports, it's basically an online platform for people to organize sports events and communicate. However, it's not working out well, last time I checked, the lastest update was 2 years ago, and during the editing of the research document, the website is out of service already.

But gemeente Eindhoven doesn't give up on online platform that easily, they created this eindhoven sport account last year, as in 2021, Eindhoven would be the host city of National sportweek, however, it's too early for me to judge if it serve the purpose well.



Besides the online places for people to get together, there are of course offline spaces that serve the same purpose.

There are 2 ways how a normal urban developer would do for this demand. (see next page)



rendered image of this urban park plan





2. the second type of space is the kind you might find in the center of a lot of residential areas.

They are usually for casual recreational activity purposes.

the idea to place it in the center, mostly for parents to watch over their children, has created a stage effect, which adults with self-awareness are not much a fan of.

And gradually, the design is also leaning towards focusing on preadolescent demographic.

To sum it up

2 kinds of existing public spaces for recreational sports:

1. outside of city center, extract the activity out of its context

centralized

functionality focused

professional facilities

2. in the center of a residential area

decentralized, but regulated like a formula

stage effect

casual

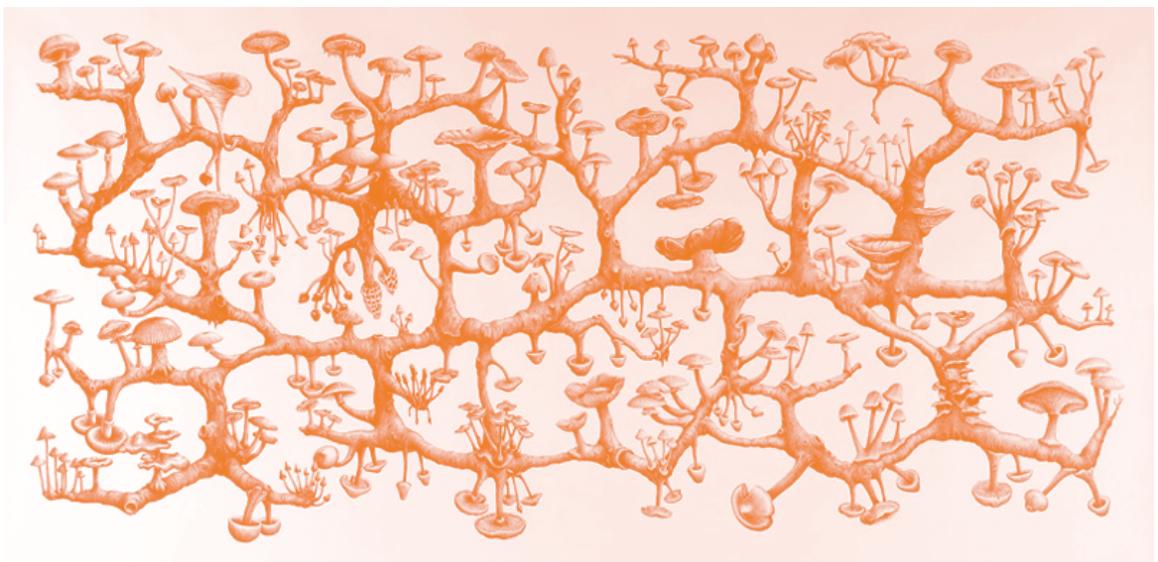
both

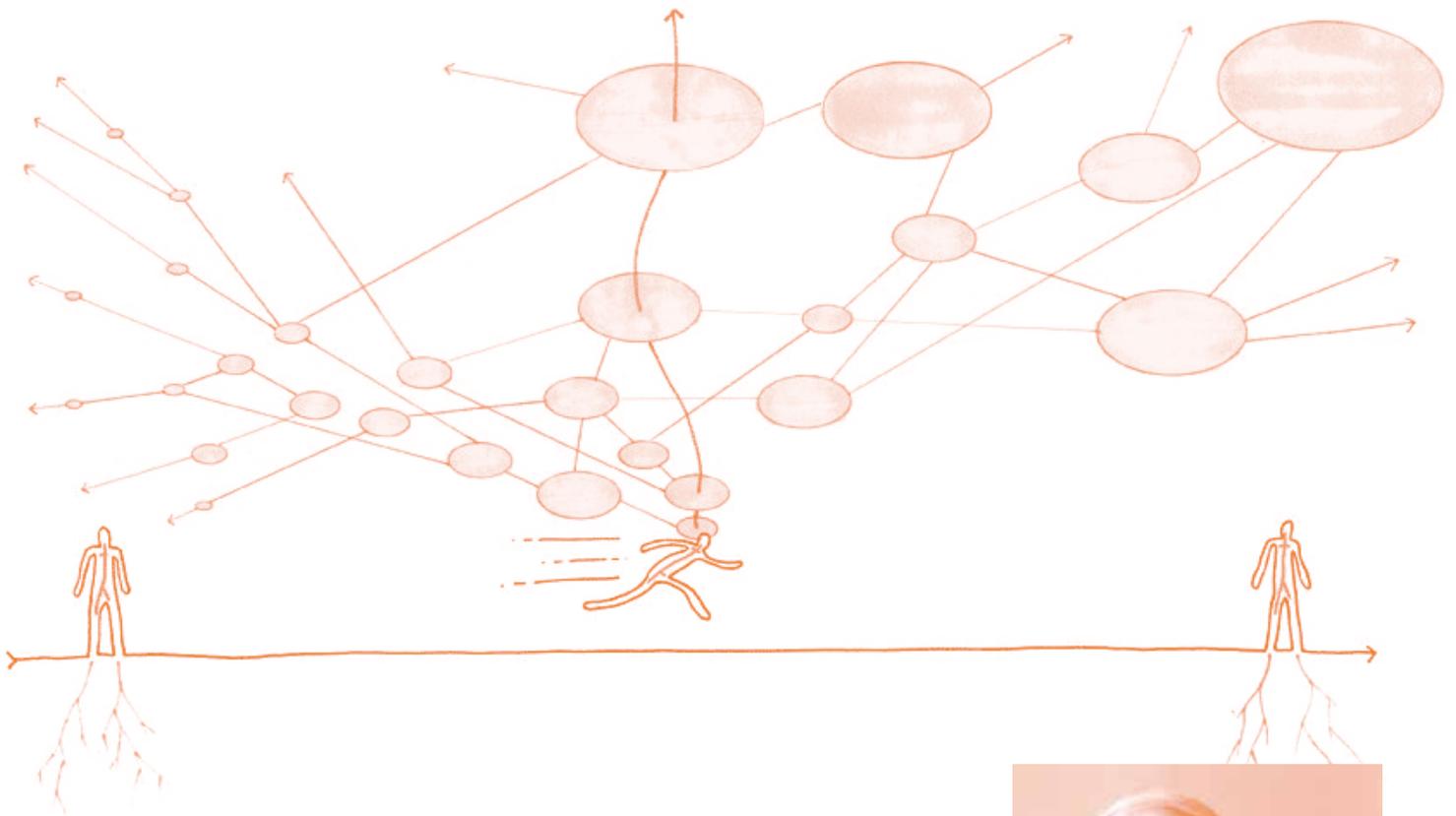
very regulated and structured, little space for creativity and imagination, subculture based sports are being decontextualized.

And my idea? is everything opposite to it. And I coined a term to oppose the stage-like centralized idea, that is the billboard effect, I will elaborate on this 2 chapters later. (And the 2 chapters inbetween are very helpful for understanding this concept)

8. Theory, more theories, hence more inspiration.

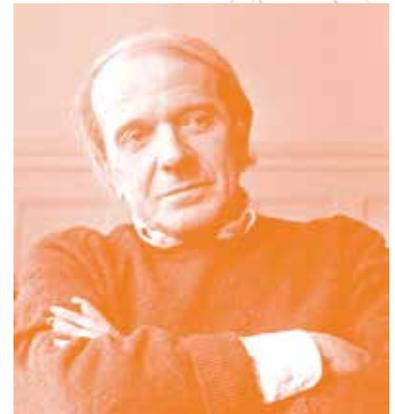
In this chapter I will try my best to explain the rhizome theory coined by Deleuze and Guattari, and how it can be, has been, and might be applied in urban planning.

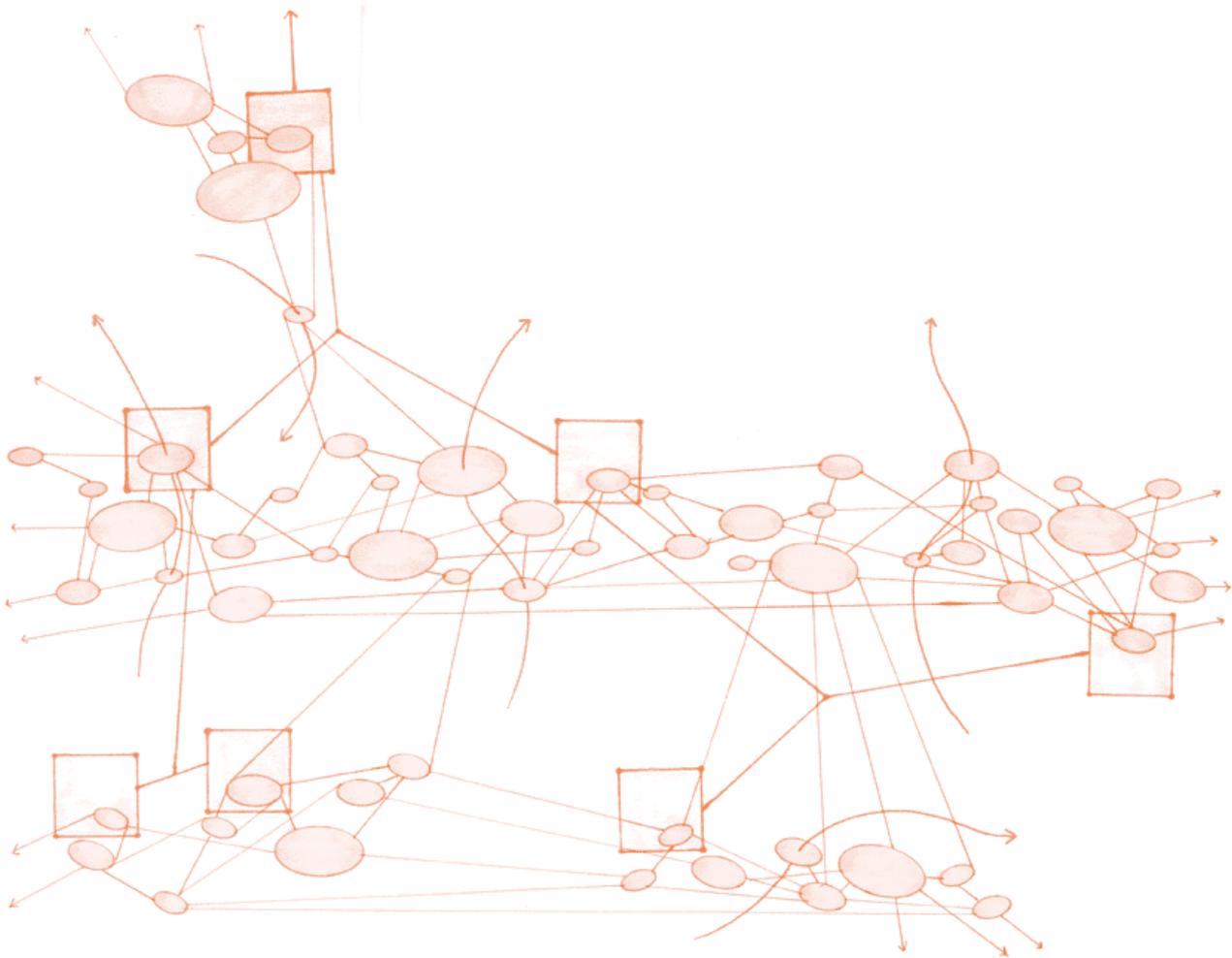




Deleuze and Guattari use the terms "rhizome" and "rhizomatic" (from Ancient Greek *rhízōma*, "mass of roots") to describe theory and research that allows for multiple, non-hierarchical entry and exit points in data representation and interpretation.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, they oppose it to an arborescent (hierarchic, tree-like) conception of knowledge, which works with dualist categories and binary choices. A rhizome works with planar and trans-species connections, while an arborescent model works with vertical and linear connections. Their use of the "orchid and the wasp" is taken from the biological concept of mutualism, in which two different species interact together to form a multiplicity (i.e. a unity that is multiple in itself). Hybridization or horizontal gene transfer would also be good illustrations.

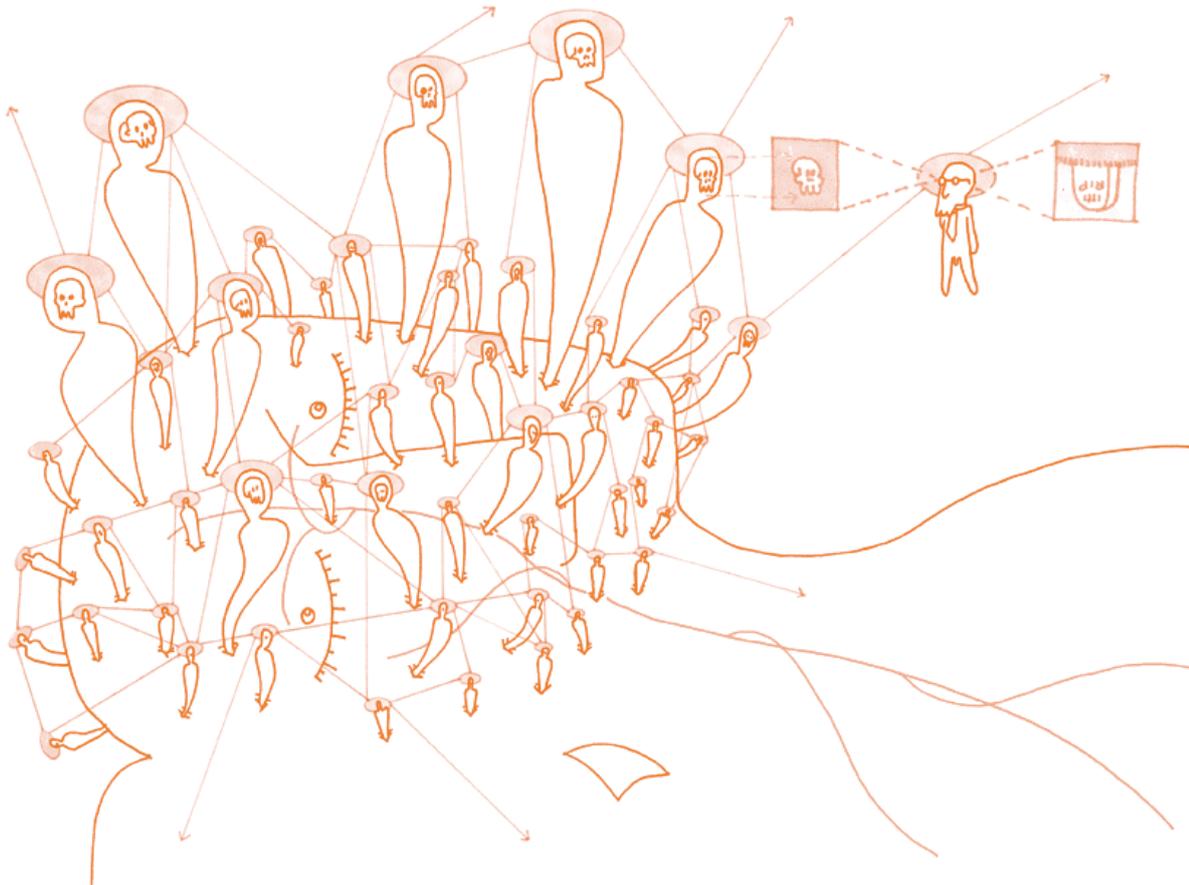




"As a model for culture, the rhizome resists the organizational structure of the root-tree system which charts causality along chronological lines and looks for the original source of 'things' and looks towards the pinnacle or conclusion of those 'things.' A rhizome, on the other hand, is characterized by 'ceaselessly established connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles.' Rather than narrativize history and culture, the rhizome presents history and culture as a map or wide array of attractions and influences with no specific origin or genesis, for a 'rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo.' The planar movement of the rhizome resists chronology and organization, instead favoring a nomadic system of growth and propagation.

"In this model, culture spreads like the surface of a body of water, spreading towards available spaces or trickling downwards towards new spaces through fissures and gaps, eroding what is in its way. The surface can be interrupted and moved, but these disturbances leave no trace, as the water is charged with pressure and potential to always seek its equilibrium, and thereby establish smooth space."

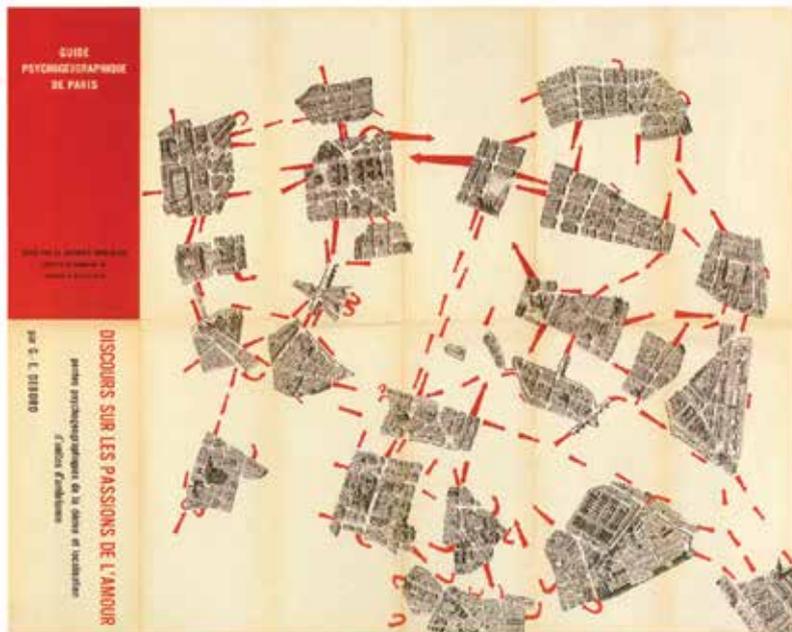
Amongst the many fields that have informed urban planning, the social sciences have been particularly important, especially since the 1970s (Hall 2002). Understanding, analysing and influencing city design by borrowing theories, techniques and frameworks from social science is nowadays very common in planning.



The rhizome is a-linear, multiple, spread out, all proliferating and without boundaries centres/margins or limits. This is what Deleuze terms a “horizontality” of thought. Rejecting the “Father Principle” or the principle of the origin.-as-identity, Deleuze and Guattari argue that there is no distinction between the individual and the collective. Traditionally the individual has always been associated with desire and the collective with the law. Deleuze and Guattari instead propose a “social desire.” This suggests that desire is always in movement, always constituted by different elements depending upon the situation. This, they suggest, is machine-like rather than a drama (of Oedipal representation). Desire is not lack, which suggests negativity. It is affirmative in its state of movement and change. Thus the “body without organs” (BWO) is constantly in the process of formation, deformation and reformation. The BWO is itself rhizomatic, which loses a point/channel of desire (deterritorialisation) only to start off along a new path like a rhizome’s, spread (reterritorialisation).

9. Hanging in there, last bit about human-urban, spatial-bodily.





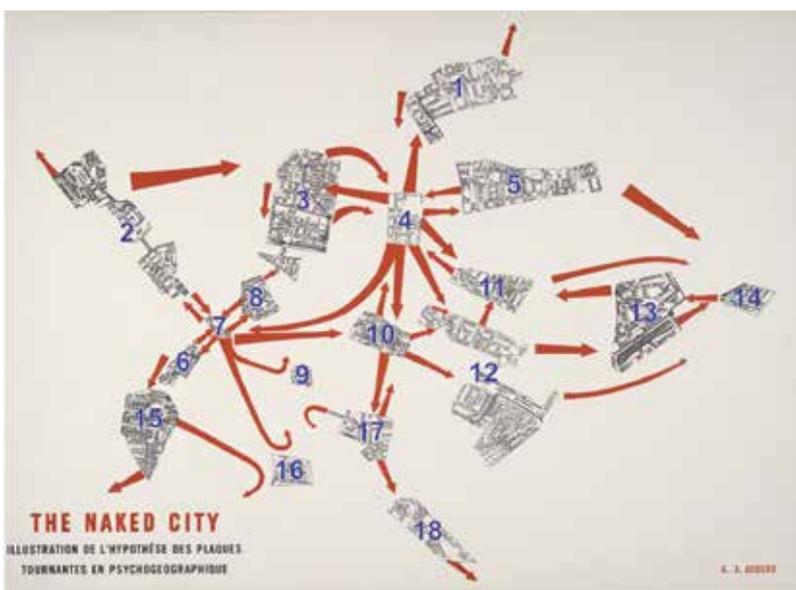
Guy Debord, 1955

"Psychogeographic guide of Paris: edited by the Bauhaus Imaginiste Printed in Denmark by Permild & Rosengreen - Discourse on the passions of love: psychogeographic descents of drifting and localisation of ambient unities"



Guy Debord did a mapping of atmospheric unities of a city on the basis of ideas of the international Lettrist and Situationist movement.

The map of Paris has been cut up in different areas that are experienced by some people as distinct unities (neighbourhoods). The mentally felt distance between these areas are visualized by spreading out the pieces of the cut up map. By wandering, letting oneself float or drift (*dériv*er is the French word used) each person can discover his or her own ambient unities of a specific city.



The red arrows indicate the most frequent used crossings between the islands of the urban archipel (separated by flows of motorized traffic).



New Babylon is an anti-capitalist city perceived and designed in 1959-74 as a future potentiality by visual artist Constant Nieuwenhuys.

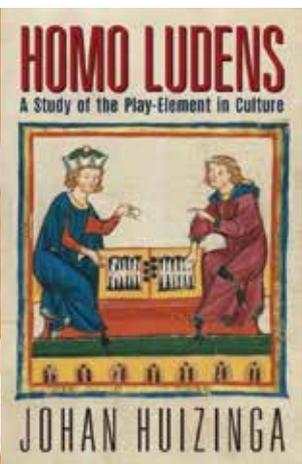
Initially known as Dériville (from "ville dérivée", literally, "drift city"), it was later renamed New Babylon. Henri Lefebvre explained: "a New Babylon -- a provocative name, since in the Protestant tradition Babylon is a figure of evil.



New Babylon was to be the figure of good that took the name of the cursed city and transformed itself into the city of the future."

New Babylon-Rotterdam
1963
48.3cm x 61.6cm
geographical map, ink
Collection Kunstmuseum
Den Haag, NL

Constant's work is inspired by Johan Huizinga's play theory.





10. Revisiting my materials, what do those “gyms” have in common?



1. Half open spaces



2. Far away from crowd or residential area

3. Has traffic around it, which makes it like a billboard, different from the stages in the center of residential areas which attracts your neighbor's attention.

4. And in this way, your safety is assured and people who are interested could approach.





5. Normally not business area, which means people just pass rather than stay.

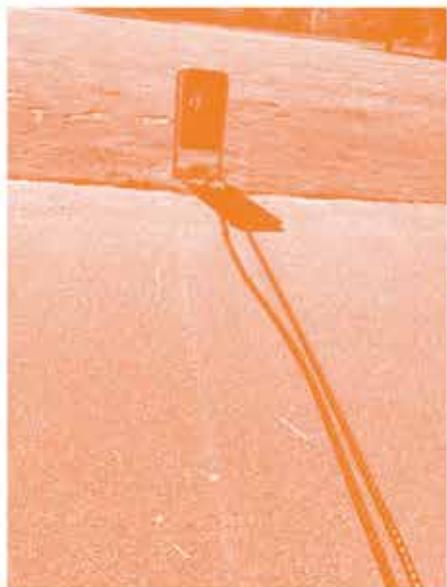
6. Flat ground





7. Objects with a height to use as public furnitures

8. In better cases, you can use them to exercise

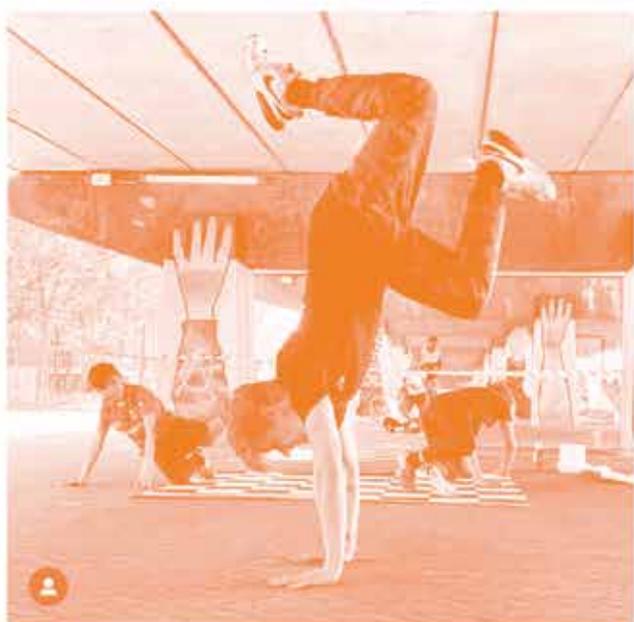


People transform or reinterpret the function of public objects, to me, that's the core of my fascination.

11. Social cohesion? That has been achieved.

Case study: Strijp-S Bultje









The Strijp-S Bultje space attracts diverse groups in terms of social class, age range, and type of activities. In my research, there have been 2 kick-boxing groups, several small groups of recreational fitness people, skateboarders (adults and children), dance classes, etc. This space is a perfect example for looking for future "vrij gyms", moreover, it can also be better utilized by some subtle interventions initiated by local authority.

VGNP concepts

1.decentralized

2.small scale

3.outside of residential area but in the heart of the city

3.versatile, open to interpretation

4.inviting but not instructing

12. Back to the reality, what do I do now?

Barrier: between Strijp and Woensel west



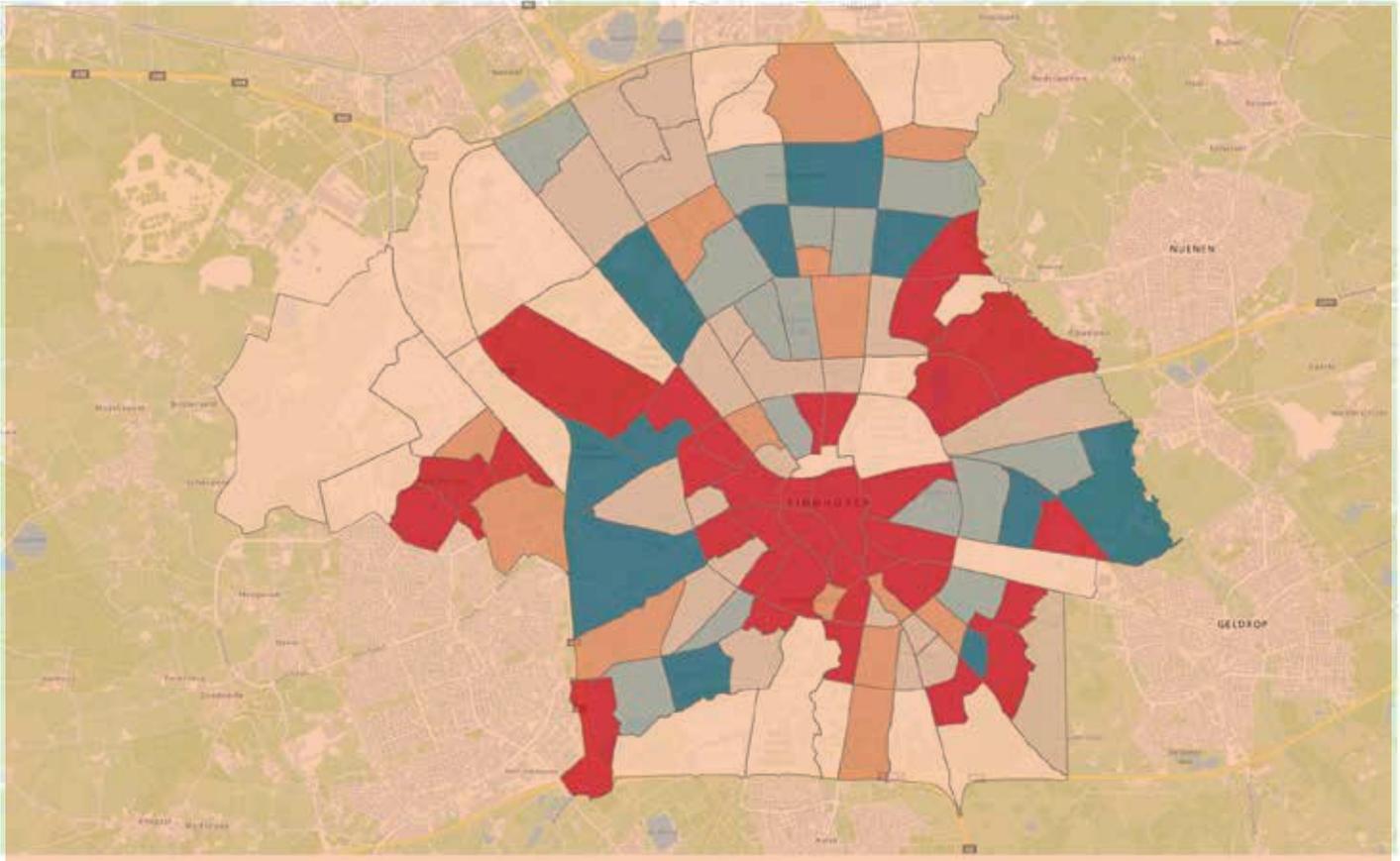


Back to the reality in Eindhoven, I noticed the division made by the railway between strijp and woensel west. The gemeente Eindhoven has and is having a lot of plans for this area, but in my opinion, instead of making changes within de area, what we can do is to break the barrier, first physically.

Woensel West

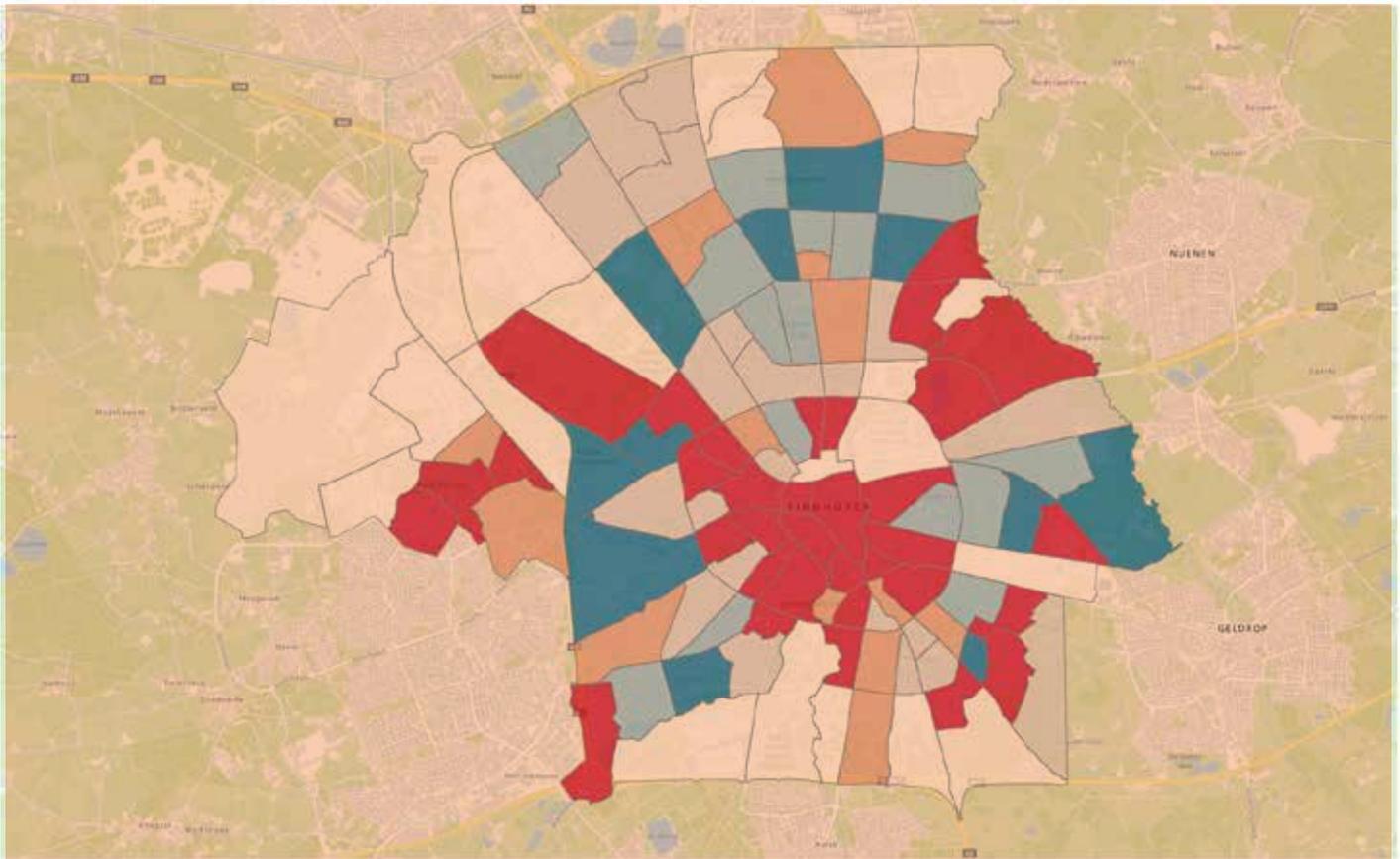
The district is characterized as a real working-class neighborhood and has many small houses, the rental houses, and a reasonable number of large houses, the owner-occupied houses. Edisonstraat is centrally located in the district. The official place for window prostitution is also located in Woensel-West , on Baekelandplein. Almost half of the residents in the district have a migration background.

Hoog opleidingsniveau % 2019 - Buurten



■ < 24 ■ 24 < 32 ■ 32 < 40 ■ 40 < 48 ■ ≥ 48
Speciale waarden Geen waarde
Eenheden: normantennas

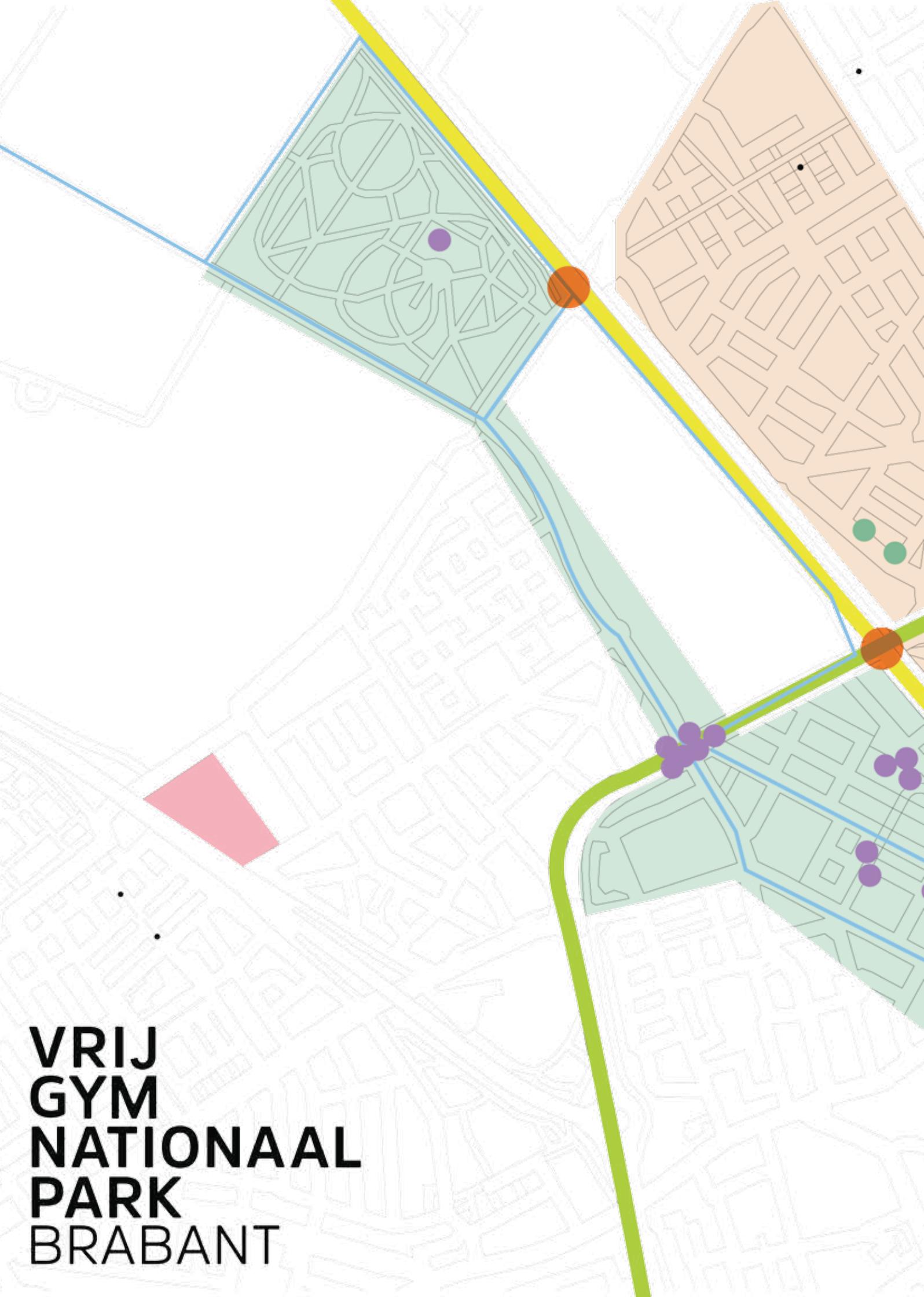
Hoog opleidingsniveau % 2019 - Buurten



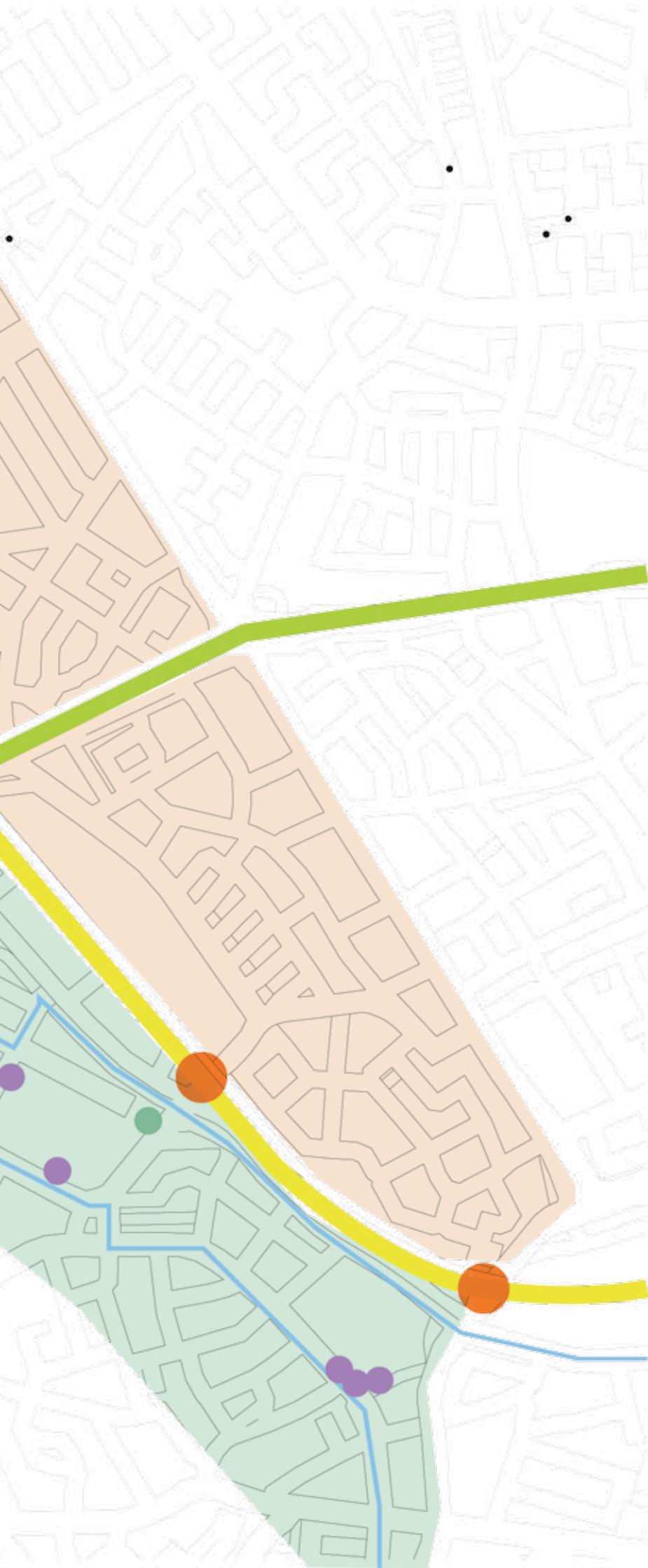
■ < 24 ■ 24 < 32 ■ 32 < 40 ■ 40 < 48 ■ ≥ 48
Speciale waarden Geen waarde
Eenheid: percentage

Bron: CBS

With the existence of the railway as a physical barrier, there are also obvious economic and life quality difference.



**VRIJ
GYM
NATIONAAL
PARK
BRABANT**



LEGEND

-  0.1 km
-  VGNP Spots
-  Railway
-  the Ring
-  Grassroots Gyms
-  My Running Routes
-  Urban Sports Park
-  Woensel West/Erp
-  Research area in Strijp
-  Basketball&Football for public





13. Vrij Gym Nationaal Park: design proposal 2.0



Vrij Gym Nationaal Park

Yufei Gao

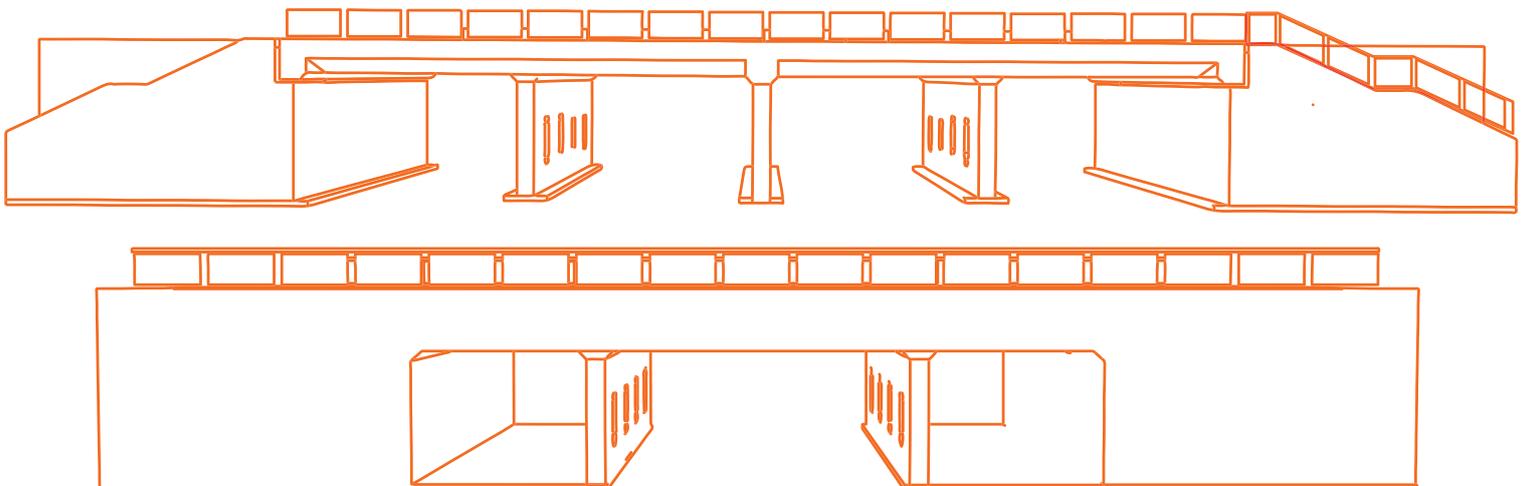
Can we make the city a better place by reimagining how and where we do sports?



What: A research analysis of the phenomenon where people reinterpret open public spaces and creatively use them as recreational sports facilities, with a practice of the analysis' outcome as an example, to question the conventional decision making in urban planning in terms of recreational spaces and bodily-spatial relation.

Why: Doing recreational sports, on a spectrum between play and compete, has long been an essential way to spend our leisure time. Beyond the surface of the need to stay healthy physically and mentally, there are so many layers in sociological level.

How: By mapping the where are the spaces and how people use those spaces, then analyze it by using various theories to get conclusions, then combine the outcome with the reality of Eindhoven.



13¹/₂. My very last reflection, I promise

In the very beginning of this semester, Yassine said something that stuck in my head, because it was the struggle I've dealing with for a while.

He said, as designers, the research we do should be different from the academic ones in the fields of humanities, you have to find your own language, the language of a designer.

With that in mind, I've been avoiding dipping my toes too deep into theories, it feels like writing with your non-dominant hand, eventually it ended up with a backlash--I'm throwing all the theories on paper, if you have read the pages before this.

Funnily enough, this also makes me realize, instead of trying to not borrowing too much from theories, what I'm good at is actually making a cocktail of theories, the freedom of the art&design practice, there's no restriction to the way you use theory, of course based on a correct interpretation and understanding of the theories to start with.

Although this research document has already been filled with text, I still have some subjects I have tackled on during my research yet not presenting them in this research document, due to the capacity of the document and my brain, those are autonomy, subjectivity, and community under a postmodernity and late-capitalism context.



As you might have noticed, my cover looks a little bit confusing in terms of the relation with the content. Long story short, as my research went on, my focus took some unanticipated turns during the journey, however, I decided to keep the cover this way, as it is also a part of the thinking process.



Last but not least, I feel the necessity to give Timothy Morton an honorable mention, even though I didn't use or quote their theory in my research. However, looking back, I feel the way I form sentences and titles for chapters have definitely been influenced by their language, due to the heavy reading of their books during this semester.

Yufei Gao
June 2021

It may be said that the twentieth century has witnessed the triumph of the spirit of community over the spirit of society.

The ideologies of modernity - socialism, liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, fascism, anarchism, kibbutz democracy - have all been inspired by the quest for community.

Indeed, it may be suggested that the quest for community has been inspired precisely because of the failure of the social.

While society has been associated with the negative aspects of modernity - rationalization, individualization, industrialism, disenchantment - community has been more successful in expressing the emotional demands and needs of solidarity, trust and autonomy.

-Modernity and Postmodernity Knowledge, Power and the Self
by Gerard Delanty

DA
E

Letter & Co



VAN
GOGH
NATIONAAL
PARK
BRABANT