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Walking as feminist political research

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Outline

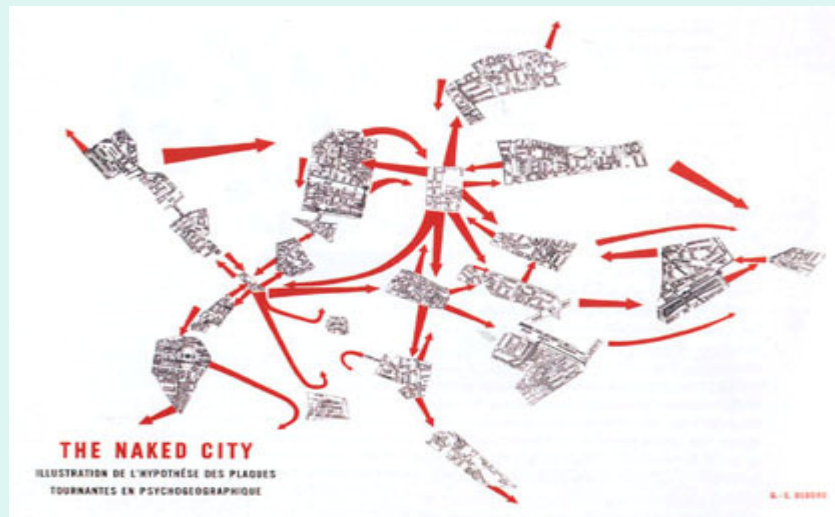
- Topic – Feminist psychogeographical walking
- Rationale – reasons for doing feminist psychogeography
- Theory - social spaces as political spaces/ gendered subject positions/environment and experience
- Methods - developing new methods in psychology
- Implications – questions and issues

Researcher standpoint

- My position as a deconstructionist psychologist
- Politicising research
- Importance of reflexivity
- Integration of work/life understanding

The situationists and psychogeography

- What is psychogeography?
- Who are the situationists?
- Situationist practices



Feminist geographers & psychologists

- Lack of research on feminist study of place in psychology and in psychogeography
- Documenting women's experiences of places and tackling gendered inequalities
- Wording – flaneurs and flaneuse (Wolff, 1985)
- 'Walking as a masculine freedom' (Wilson, 1992: 68) 'object of erotic vision' (D'Souza and McDonough, 2006: 6)

Burnett et al (2004)

- Dérive walking method
- Gendered subject positions, structural demands of work/life
- Difficulties in disrupting work/life patterns
- Head gear and 'spoil yourself directives'
- 'Academic' dérive account

Group of Lesbian Feminists (2005)

- (Grup de Lesbianes Feministes) Spanish anti-capitalist lesbian and feminist collective
- Street interventions (i.e. Sapho) and political writing
- Against positioning of women as 'consumer-market subjects'
- Social spaces as political spaces
- Useful theoretical and practical ideas



The Women's Design Group and the Loiterers Resistance Movement

- Women's Design Group (www.wds.org.uk/index.htm) and the Loiterers Resistance Movement
- Regeneration/built environments effecting women safety, street lighting, alleyways ...



Mapping out feminist methods

- Theoretical basis and concepts
- Theory informs research
- Reflexivity and gendered subject position
- Politically based research
- Informed by the situationists and critical research/social activist groups

- Example research questions and aims
- *‘How are experiences of social environments shaped by gendered subject positions?’*
- How do women experience places?
- Are particular places gendered?
- Do particular places enact certain types of gendered behaviours?
- What would non-sexist environments look like?

- Data methods
- Individually or in a group
- Site specific or general disorientation
- Photography, diaries, stories, maps, dice, cards
- Referring to other research, i.e. Burnett et al (2004)

Conclusions

- What does walking change?
- Connections with art, activism and public concerns
- Importance of tackling gendered inequalities in everyday life

