Newsletter

Department of Geography, Planning and International Development Studies

2008/07

19 December 2008

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Agenda

- **Thu 15 January**: New years reception, 16.00 hrs hall 1st floor G-building
- **Fri 16 January**: PhD defence by Fenne Pinkster, 10.00 hrs Agnietenkapel
- **Tue 20 January**: Lunch lecture by Edith van Ewijk
- **Fri 23 January**: Inaugural speech Prof. Dr. ir. Luca Bertolini
- **Thu 29 January**: AMIDSt lecture by George Galster, Does Neighborhood Matter in the Development of Low-Income, Minority Children? *Exploiting a Natural Experiment in Denver, 15.30hrs
- **Tue 20 February**: PhD defence by Cathelijne de Busser

Letter from the AMIDSt director, Ton Dietz

Dear colleagues,

Already the third time! Time is running. The year 2008 is almost ending, and I would like to start with thanking all of you for what feels like 'soft landing' in my function as your new research director, and I wish you all nice ‘end of the year’ days and a happy, healthy and fruitful new year. I hope to see many of you at the ‘afdelingsborrel’ January 15th. And please also make sure you block the afternoon of March 20 in your diaries! This will be the day we want to launch our new research programme for the 2009-2013 period, in which many of you have been involved during the last few months. The idea is that we also invite many ‘old hands’ (former staff and former PhD candidates) and make it a bit of a reunion as well.

I will summarise some of my experiences during the last month, and I will again look at various levels of scale.

KNAG, IGU-Netherlands, and the national level

At the national level we lost a battle, but we won the war. As some of you may know there has been a rather fierce debate about the way the international evaluation committee, assessing our research work for 2000-2006, gave ‘points’ for our performance. Unlike many other committees, they did not stick to round numbers, but decided to suggest much more precision. When (at long last) the booklet with results will appear, this indeed will show 3.7 and 4.8 instead of 4 and 5. Thanks Groningen *(er gaat niets boven Groningen)* for resisting doing the obvious! However, we, and our Faculty (and many others) will use the round figures, with an average of 4x4 (= ‘very good’) for AMIDSt as a whole. What is clear, though, is the need to make sure that this will never happen again, and revitalise the ‘discipline-overleg’ for human geography and planning (and international development studies).

I think we should treasure the contacts between geographers (in a broad sense) at the national level, as we are becoming part of ever-wider organisational arrangements (‘urban studies’, ‘social sciences’, ‘social and behavioural sciences’), which might undermine the disciplinary survival of (human) geographers and (urban and regional) planners. We still have the Netherlands chapter of the International Geographical Union (IGU), which
even combines human and physical geography. In November Frans Thissen and I handed over the secretariat and the chair to others (Professor Huib Ernste from Radboud University Nijmegen takes over), but I will continue representing ‘Amsterdam’ in IGU-Netherlands. With the IGU world congress planned in Cologne, in 2012, and us playing a role in the organisation of this huge event, I think it would be wise for every member of staff of AMIDSt to link her- or himself to one of the IGU groups and activities. Look at www.igu-net.org.

I think we should also link ourselves more visibly to the Royal Netherlands Geographical Society, KNAG. Sako Musterd is part of its leadership and our former member of staff Marijke van Schendelen is the current Chair. Many of us read *Geografie*, and some contribute to *TESG* and *Agora*. But for many in AMIDSt there is quite a large distance to what KNAG is doing, and particularly to the many geography teachers for whom KNAG is a key agency. On Friday 12/12 I was asked to give a workshop in Wageningen about our recent book *Van Natuurlandschap tot Risicomaatschappij* (co-authored with Herman van der Wusten and Frank den Hertog; and also with contributions by other AMIDSt members; it was published by Amsterdam University Press earlier this year) to an audience of mainly geography teachers. The KNAG *onderwijsdag*, as it was called, attracted more than 600 people. Hidden in some corner ‘OWI GPIO’ had a stand, with Reyna Veldhuis and Jan Stammes trying to get some attention. But besides them I was the only person from our Department, representing ‘human geography from Amsterdam’. Our colleagues from Utrecht, Nijmegen, the Free University and even Groningen were more prominently visible than we were.

**The Faculty**

On November 25 Joos, Johan, Len and I were present at the *Heidad* of all managers at the level of the Faculty, in Felix Meritus (next to the Kremlin room). It is good to see how much attention there is for the quality of education at College and Graduate School level, but research issues were not so important. After that meeting something important happened, though. We could convince the Dean that one of the three focal research points of the Faculty needed a boost: urban studies (the other two are: ‘cognition’, and ‘global health’). Sako Musterd, IMES director Jan Rath and I prepared a budget proposal for an Urban Studies *zwaartepunt* Programme for 2009, with additional ideas for 2010-2012. In total the Faculty will spend more than one million euro on this focal point as additional money. Sako Musterd will become the director for this focal point and all four AMIDSt research programmes will be represented in an advisory board, next to IMES and ASSR.

**AMIDSt**

There was an official farewell party for my predecessor Robert Kloosterman, who took the opportunity to share with us (and the dean) his praise for the outstanding quality of the University of Amsterdam as a top-level organisation with cum laudes for management excellence. He forgot to wish me luck. But I revenged by giving him a ‘barglobe’. If he fills it adequately and uses the contents he has two of them for the price of one. Robert: welcome back from your sabbatical! You can now lead a new research group with the promising title “Geographies of Variegated Globalizations”.

Gert and I had an interesting discussion with IT manager Willem Kox, discussing the possibilities of IT visibility for AMIDSt and all its members. Let us first all start to make our personal websites, link these websites to DARE, and then proceed. Much more is possible. Please ask for support at our AMIDSt secretariat if you want to start and don’t know how.

Three more ‘*beoordelingsgesprekken*’ took place with PhD candidates at the end of their first year. These are useful and revealing. What is striking for me (as a former director of a national research school) is the meagre participation of our PhD candidates in activities of NETHUR and the rather individualised training portfolios of those PhD candidates I saw until now. I am anxious to see how Len, as our new Graduate School director, will deal with it when he comes with his ideas (he promised he would think about it under the Christmas tree).

We are in the final stage of formulating our four new research programmes for the next five years. In January we will send these concept texts to our international advisory board and we will invite them (among many others) to come to our launching day, March 20. After that the process will be finalised. What I saw until now makes me proud to be director of such a vibrant research community. We have also decided to combine the (combined) annual reports of 2007 and 2008 and publish it as a combined booklet in March 2009 (not 2010). And we had a few more intellectual exchanges within AMIDSt (the PhD lectures, two AMIDSt lectures, an ASSR-AMIDSt lecture (Michael Burawoy) and also the PhD ceremony of Tineke Lupi) which I could not attend. John Forester’s lecture of 15/12 (though not attended by many) made me aware of the importance of carefully separating roles of facilitator, moderator and mediator, if you are involved in participatory planning arenas. Looking back at these last four months in my new role I wonder what role I have been playing most. But whatever it was, it was fun.

By way of end-of-year present, may I invite all of you to take a look at www.thebrokeronline.eu? For each of you interested in ‘linking knowledge domains’ between science, policy and practice, at the level of global and development issues, I think this has become a surprisingly informative journal-cum-website. You can look at it online and you can get a (free) subscription. If you like it: please inform your friends and colleagues as well!

Happy New Year!

Ton Dietz

Also on behalf of Gert van der Meer and the AMIDSt secretariat!
PhD defence by Fenne Pinkster – Living in concentrated poverty

The social consequences of concentrated poverty are a recurring theme in urban policy and have received much attention in academic research in the form of neighborhood effect studies. This dissertation explores the ways in which living in a disadvantaged neighborhood negatively affects residents' labor market participation and long term socio-economic prospects. By way of a case study in the Netherlands, the research focuses on explanations for neighborhood effects relating to the population composition of low-income neighborhoods. These include neighborhood-based processes of social isolation, negative socialization, social disorganization and mechanisms relating to the formal social infrastructure.

The PhD ceremony takes place on Friday January 16, 10.00 hrs in the Agnietenkapel.

Prof. Dr. S. Musterd and Dr. J.C. Droogleever Fortuijn

Call for papers for New Towns for the 21st Century: the Planned vs. the Unplanned City conference

June 4-5, 2009 - International New Town Institute, Almere, The Netherlands

What happens after planners leave the brand new New Town and complexity of society takes over? Does overruling of the planners' concepts imply the failure of planning? Or are these 'unplanned' additions and unforeseen use of the planned city actually the key to its success? In a two-day conference in June 2009 the International New Town Institute (INTI) wants to explore the relations between the planned city and the unplanned city.

INTI invites researchers and professionals of a variety of disciplines (economists, historians, architects, planners, artists, sociologists, anthropologists, politicians, policy makers, etc.) to take part in our call for papers and to contribute to this conference. Deadline for papers is January 5, 2009.

More information can be found on http://newtowninstitute.org/?q=node/2

Marco te Brömmelstroet receives Application Award

The 35th national conference for transport planners (Colloquium Vervoersplanologisch Speurwerk) has awarded the paper "Who controls the present now, controls the future: over de mismatch tussen wat verkeersmodellen kunnen en hun rol bij besluitvorming" with the Application award. The paper, written within the framework of DESSUS (a Transumo project), deals with the ideal and real behavior of parties involved in the use of transport models for decision making around large scale infrastructure projects. It describes the current stalemate situation and hypothesizes about the reasons behind this. It is a research proposal into these reasons and possible transition paths to a more balanced and transparent use of transport models.

A second paper from this project "De gemiddelde inwoner heeft niet de toekomst" by Marco and Professor Martin Dijst received a nomination for the Scientific award. This paper reports a case in Amsterdam where differentiated transport measures were used to support an urban strategymaking process.

ICT – Harmonisation FMG

The coming weeks the mail will be harmonized. From that moment on you can share your agenda with all UvA faculties.

Also the standard size of the mailbox will be doubled to 500 Mb.

Because of the migration, it will not be possible to use your (web) mail during two weekends.

- From Friday 19 Dec, 18.00 hrs - Monday 22 Dec 7.00 hrs: No access to UvA(web)mail
- From Friday 16 Jan, 18.00 hrs - Monday 19 Jan 7.00 hrs: No access to UvA(web)mail.

To preserve certain personal settings, you have to make preparations prior to January 16 (see the website).

Instructions for preparations, answers to frequently asked questions and supplemental information, are available at: http://www.medewerker.uva.nl/fmg_harmonisatie-english/object.cfm/A037CCF7-1321-B0BE-6841C095E1BA631A
New colleagues
- Emma Terämä
- Tim Wohltmann
- Maarten Mentzel
- Menno van der Veen
- Roger Andersson
- George Galster

Leaving colleagues
- Valentina Mazzucato
- Jan Beenakker
- Arjan Sas

Training/workshops for PhD students
- 13 én 20 februari 2009 Projectmanagement voor promovendi, 9.30-17.00, Inschrijven voor 3 april
- 13 én 20 maart 2009, 9.30-17.00 uur: Promoveren en Communiceren. 9.30-17.00, Inschrijven voor 27 februari
- 29 mei én 5 juni 2009, 9.30-17.00 uur training Loopbaan Oriëntatie voor Promovendi, Inschrijven vóór 15 mei
- 23 januari 2009 13.30-17.00 Research and finance (for PHD students), deadline for registration 9 january.

More info: www.uva.nl/promovendi

Personal webpage
For all staff members there’s a possibility to make their own personal page, which you can update yourself. It’s accessible at: https://home.medewerker.uva.nl/homepage; log in with your UvAnetID. When you’re done, click on “Activate” to publish your personal page.

Update your CV on the AMIDSt website
- Updates for your personal page on the AMIDSt website (http://www.fmg.uva.nl/amidst/staff.cfm): send the relevant information/ changes/photo to the AMIDSt secretariat at amidst-fmg@uva.nl

Out of office
In order to be more helpful towards our colleagues it’s important that the secretariat has a good overview of the room occupations. Therefore, we kindly ask you to report to the secretariat the days you are out of office (due to holidays, fieldwork, illness, etc.)

Common room
The common room and kitchen is communal space. We would appreciate it if everyone keeps this space tidy and does his/her own washing-up. It should not be seen as the task of the secretariat.