This week's readings--particularly *The Image of the City* and "Lynch Debord: About Two Psychogeographies"--presented interesting perspectives on psychogeography. From my understanding, Situationists like Guy Debord emphasize individuals' experiences when randomly exploring the city and put those under an umbrella term--*dérive*. Debord puts relatively fewer restrictions on the definition of *dérive*, only suggesting that it might be better as a small group experience rather than "*dérive-ing* alone." In comparison, Kevin Lynch tends to categorize individuals' experiences of cities in a more modernist way. More specifically, Lynch surveyed the mental map of more than 30 residents in one city (in the case of LA and Jersey City, it was 15) to draw objective parameters of mental maps.

While this course was the first time I encountered Debord's theory, I have been familiar with Lynch and *The Image of the City*. The first time I learned about Lynch was in an urban planning workshop in Rome--during my semester abroad. The professor asked us to walk around a designated neighborhood and draw our maps according to Lynch's five elements of mental maps--paths, nodes, edges, districts, and landmarks. As a newcomer to the neighborhood, I found it hard to grasp the definition of each element, let alone drawing a map containing all of the above. Later, our team also asked the residents to draw the neighborhood. We found that for people not trained under the discipline, they would have a hard time drawing a map in the first place, let alone identifying nodes or edges, because they do not experience spaces in that way. Similarly, when we showed them the roads network of the neighborhood, pulled from Google Maps, they were unable to tell that it was the place they live in. Realizing this, we changed our strategy and turned the task into a survey form. More specifically, we directly asked residents what are the common places they go to--where do they get groceries and walk their dogs; how do they call this part of the city where they live in, and where do they think the neighborhood ends. This survey form turned out to be quite successful.

While I am not challenging Lynch's method of mapping or experiencing the city--I actually found it quite helpful after I grasp the key ideas behind each of the five elements--I am wondering if Lynch's method is limited to people trained under design and planning professions. In comparison, Debord's idea of *"dérive"* might be easier for people from all walks of life to understand--after all, it is about encouraging people to explore the city and highlight their emotional response to spaces.

On a separate note, I found Grady Clay's idea of "beats" an interesting unit of analysis for cities. Particularly, I was fascinated by the idea that while beats are "predictable, mappable, and often negotiable," spontaneous trips are also a part of "accumulating buildup of beats" (pp. 112 and 115). This makes me think about the effects that COVID and stay-at-home orders have had on beats. Did it disrupt old routines and create new forms of beats? Looking at Clay's drawing of beats on page 113 of the chapter, I was thinking about what would the beats of Cambridge be like before and after COVID. Before, beats are likely to occur between residences and homes, conducted by people from all walks of life. Now, beats might be mostly constituted of essential service providers, such as medical staff and delivery guys. Trips for public spaces and outdoor leisure might be entirely replaced by routes of logistics, and beats might be concentrating on roads and hospitals.

11.S942 Wanderings in Psychogeography: Exploring Landscapes of History, Biography, Memory, Culture, Nature, Poetry, Surreality, Fantasy, and Madness
Fall 2020