

Walking with ethico-politico-urban-wonder

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ABSTRACT

Walking is an everyday practice for able-bodied folk. Yet it can cultivate much more than getting you from one place to another. Walking cultivates awareness and interactions with others and public spaces (aka civic engagement). Combined with the (re)thinking of social practices through artist, participant and audience process-making in participatory arts, further attention to the ethicality of interpersonal interactions can be cultivated. From years of researching two participatory arts projects (*The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* and *Walking Borders: Arts activism for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Rights*), I have distilled four concepts as central to the potential of walking as pedagogy. These concepts are: embodied and emplaced sensorial awareness, relationality, spatial politics, and divergence and détournement. Theories from social anthropology, post humanism, critical philosophy and sociology inform the explanations of each concept at play in walking as pedagogy through participatory arts projects. To exemplify these explanations, storied research insights gleaned from sensory ethnographic research of the two walking arts projects are provided. As participatory arts projects, the two walking projects offer particularly nuanced ethical awakenings. Collectively, the chapter advocates for combining participatory art with walking pedagogy to produce long-lasting ethical and political learning for urban co-existence, in essence—ethico-politico-urban-wonder.

INTRODUCTION

Humans are designed to traverse the earth by walking. Advances in transport technology across the last century have reduced how much we walk, so much so that in recent decades many health education campaigns (e.g., Heart Foundation, Walk to School programs) have actively promoted walking. However, the sociological educative value of walking is under-recognised in present times (Bairner, 2011). Adults typically walk with purpose to get somewhere within a set timeframe (Solnit, 2000). However, it is how we navigate public spaces with others, that offers the “valuable lesson about...the sharing of public space” (Bairner, p. 378). Walking as pedagogy was recognized in previous times, in, for example, what has been referred to as the peripatetic school of philosophy led by Aristotle in ancient Greece, based on the practice of learned discussions occurring along the peripatos or colonnaded walkway (Bairner). Many philosophers (e.g., Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Walter Benjamin) across history have exalted the practice of walking for the capacity to ruminate, in that “the physical movement of walking similarly allows for the slow digestion of thoughts and experiences” (Cutler, 2014, p. 12). The whole of body movement in “walking aerates mind, body and the spaces in between, so that a sustainable life force emerges between the rhythm of walking and that of a poetic digestion, forming a site and an event where the outside world meets with the interior realm of human reflection and creativity” (Cutler, p. 13). Walking provides a means to bring together moving bodies in shared spaces eliciting enhanced mindfulness. As Solnit (2000) describes in her social commentary on the history of walking, it is “a state in which the mind, the body, and the world are aligned, as though they were three characters finally in conversation together, three notes suddenly make a chord” (p. 5).

From years of researching two walking arts projects (*The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* and *Walking Borders: Arts activism for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Rights*), I have distilled four concepts as memorable essences of the potential of walking as pedagogy through attention to the triadic operations of body, place and mind. These concepts are: embodied and emplaced sensorial awareness, relationality, spatial politics, and divergence and détournement. This chapter

theoretically and empirically explores each of these concepts. My ethnographic research was not of everyday walking, but rather performative walking created through participatory arts projects. For both projects, artists were collaborators and producers of situations, as opposed to producers of works of commodifiable art. In participatory art, art is re-envisaged as an ongoing project for constructive change and audience members engaged with as participants in the situation (Bishop, 2012). Both walking arts projects sought change; political change—to count “a part of those without part” (Ranciere, 2010, p.36), that is, to make visible and audible those not defined to partake according to governing ideologies. And in both projects, social practice artists worked with participants in the creative processes, such as curating walks, and creating walk artefacts drawing on performative and visual arts.

By means of a series of workshops, *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* (<http://thewalkingneighbourhood.com.au/>) artists (led by artistic director Lenine Bourke) collaborated with local children, service providers, and residents to develop child-led walks for public performance for adult participants, based on the children’s neighbourhood interests and connections. First piloted in Brisbane’s Fortitude Valley in August 2012 (see Hickey and Phillips, 2013; Phillips and Hickey, 2013), *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* has since taken place in Chiang Mai, Thailand (see Phillips & Tossa, 2016, in press); Bagot, Australia; Seoul, Korea; Sydney, Australia; and Kuopio, Finland. Through walking pedagogy the project explicitly aims to invite participants to rethink the metanarrative of risk adverse childhood(s). The project cultivates civic learning for both children as independent leaders and negotiators, and adults as listeners and followers, as they cooperatively negotiating public spaces.

Walking Borders: Arts activism for refugee and asylum seeker rights (<http://walkingborders.net/>) sought to poetically invite focus on border politics during the G20 summit in Brisbane in November 2014, through a walked urban ephemeral art installation. From 13 November to 16 November (marking the duration of the G20 summit), lead artist, Scotia Monkivitch and fellow walking activists lined the G20 (Safety and Security) Act enforced declared zone security border of Brisbane continuously with paper boats as an ongoing vigil for asylum seeker rights. The physical endurance of walking along borders cultivated relationality, corporeality and

sensoriality that spoke for refugee and asylum seeker rights, producing civic engagement between artists, educators, community workers, retirees, children and young people as political agents collaborating together with deep care and respect for one another.

This chapter does not detail the artistic practice of these projects, but rather discusses the learnings from the projects emerging through sensory ethnography, supporting the case for the educative value of walking – especially as performative arts pedagogy. The pedagogical possibilities are boosted and intensified through participatory arts, in that provocations are offered to diverge or rethink people in movement in public spaces, attention to sensation and affect is heightened, with close observation and awareness of self and others and places through emphasis on the “process as product” cultivating “dynamic and sustained relationships” (Bishop, 2012, p. 19, 21). Participatory art responds to the ethical turn in art with ethical criteria guiding and informing the works. An “ethics of interpersonal interaction” prevails with “compassionate identification with the other” as “typical of the discourse around participatory art” (p. 25). The following describes how such attention to ethicality can invite and produce affective lasting learning for political co-existence with others, through ontological explanations and empirical accounts of each of the four concepts: embodied and emplaced sensorial awareness, relationality, spatial politics, and divergence and détournement.

EMBODIED AND EMLACED SENSORIAL AWARENESS

Walking is an embodied experience, especially if we fully switch on our senses and corporeality to encounters, rather than just our legs as a vehicle to get from one place to another. I have found in my walking research that by embracing an animist ontology, that is, to be “alive and open to a world in continuous birth” (Ingold, 2011, p. 64) as Ingold proposed in his essays on movement, we can walk with curiosity. Such ontology requires shaking off years of conditioning through the cannons of western thought (defining, classifying, categorising, constructing schema) that seals us from interactions with other beings and surroundings. In walking research, I thus endeavour to encounter everything as if for the first time – “sensing its pulse, marvelling at its beauty, and wondering how such a world is possible” (Ingold, p. 64). This way of being in research,

Ingold contends, recovers the sense of astonishment that has been muted in scientific research for the pursuit of objective truth and neutrality. Through embodied and emplaced sensorially being in research, I as researcher acknowledge that ‘I am affected’. I feel, see, hear, smell, touch, taste and wonder.

The act of feet touching the ground in walking elicits a grounded approach, as Ingold (2004) describes in his essay titled *Culture on the ground*, rather than being suspended from the environment as occurs with modes of transportation, through walking we are emplaced and embodied with others and the surroundings. Feet touching the ground elicit a more whole of body perception than the typical privileging of sight and sound, and the touch of hands that is so typically associated with touch. The weight of the body is carried by pedestrian touch, as the organ of touch connects successively and rhythmically with the ground, sensation ripples through the body. Whole of body touch is ignited, sensing the reverberations of impact through bones and the gentle brush of air on skin, and in nostrils perceiving temperatures and aromas of the surrounds. As Ingold declares, locomotion triggers perceptual activity, so that walking is in fact a form of circumambulatory knowing that is incorporated into our “muscular consciousness” (Bachelard, 1964, p. 11). The connection to the ground (place) sees, as Tilley (1994) describes, walking weaving landscapes into life, and lives being woven into the landscape, in an ongoing process of creation.

Through enhanced sensorial awareness and the mobility through places, I glean data from multiple directions with anticipation of weaving a fuller, deeper and richer story of participant experience. Pink’s (2009) explanations and principles (perception, place, knowing, memory and imagination) of sensory ethnography provide the closest definition of an aligning methodology. As I walk I am constantly reading what Barad (2007, 2010) refers to as “intra-actions” that is, what emerges from what happens within actions. Intra-actions involve all types of matter: natural, synthetic, corporeal or incorporeal. Distinct agencies emerge through intra-actions, as opposed to interactions in which separate agencies already precede the interaction. Agencies are only defined in relation to their reciprocal interconnection. I note perceptions of intra-actions as “phenomena—topological reconfigurings/entanglements/relationalities/ (re)articulations of the world” (Barad, 2007, p.141). Perceptions float into my consciousness that ignite wonder—

wonderings of what, how and why. Through reading intra-actions “the boundaries and properties of components of phenomena become determinate and particular concepts (that is, particular material articulations) become meaningful” (p.139). *Place* is the stimulus and the relata (i.e., how matter is related) of walking art research, as Massey (2005) proclaims spaces/places offer multiplicities of possibilities and are the product of interrelations that are continuously unfolding. *Knowing* is understood as a social, participatory and embodied process (Ingold, 2000), so that by walking with others I seek “to occupy or imagine places and ways of perceiving and being that are similar, parallel to or indeed interrelated with and contingent on those engaged in by research participants” (Pink, p. 34). Meanings (*knowings*) are elicited through being emplaced and sensorially reading intra-actions as they unfold. Knowledge transmission occurs through emplaced entanglements with persons and things (Ingold, 2000). My sensory *memories* (and those of whom I walk with) rise and intersect with our momentary perceptions of intra-actions of mobile bodies in place. Just as do our embodied multi-sensory *imaginings* of what happened in the place before, what could happen now and later. Later in writing about the sensory ethnography of the walking arts projects, memory and imagination collaborate with video and audio recordings in my endeavours to relay the learnings from the walking encounters. These principles guide my attendance to reading the sensoriality, corporeality and materiality of walking arts participants’ ways of being in the world. By aligning my body, rhythms and ways of seeing and listening with others to become similarly emplaced I glean insight into the socially, culturally and biographically specified meanings of what they experience and imagine as possibilities in urban public spaces.

When accompanying child led walks for *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* in Chiang Mai, the only words I could exchange with the child walk hosts were greetings (sawatdee-ka) and gratitude (korp-kun-ka). By not sharing a language – the emphasis on words diminished; sensoriality, materiality and performativity claimed more space. My senses were heightened to the somewhat unfamiliar cultural landscape. The removal of language as a means for meaning making compelled me to making meaning through sensory readings of matter rather than discourse. The unfamiliar surrounds readily invited encountering everything as if for the first time. Bai Bua (a girl aged 9) led her walk to Wat Duang Dee on a stickily humid Saturday after lunch. The soaring humid heat, intensified aromas of fragrant Thai cooking, intersected with

pungent odours of decaying matter to the point of near suffocation. When we arrived outside the monk residence of Wat Duang Dee, I became viscerally distracted by an elderly lady perched on a small wooden stool with a large woven tray laden with dozens of small baskets of birds. Each basket could fit in the palm of your hand and held four small birds for sale at 100 baht. I was puzzled. As a visitor to another sensory culture, I drew from my knowledge of human uses for birds, as pets, as food. Yet the baskets were too small and the birds too small. I wondered and imagined they must be for something else. I asked Tor (a project volunteer) what the birds were being sold for. He explained that the birds were native and that you buy them to set them free for merit-making—a Thai Buddhist practice. My inner Marxist alerted to the irony of the exploitation in this practice driven by entangled profit and virtue making desire. I was also reminded of the Thai folktale *The Freedom Bird* (Livo, 1988), with birds symbolising the resilience of freedom. These thoughts traversed through my mind whilst a monk spoke to us in Thai then immersed a bunch of fine bamboo sticks in a jar of water shaking them at us spraying fine droplets of water upon us. I savoured the momentary cooling droplets.

Figure: 1 Bird in basket

Kraing (a boy aged 11) then led us down an alley lane; I wondered where we were headed. The only clue I held was ‘sticky’ as Bai Bua and Kraing had named their walk *Sticky Duang Dee* and we had already visited Wat Duang Dee. Suddenly, Kraing stopped near a large concrete wall bordering a hostel. He invited us to admire a vine that was growing all over the wall. Kraing was fascinated by how it stuck to the wall. He invited us to stop and marvel at the beauty of the vine and wonder at its capacity to cling and adhere to the wall — as if encountering vines for the very first time. I had seen the vine before; in fact, something similar grows on a wall in my own garden. But, in this moment, following Kraing’s invitation, I noticed how the leaves diminish in size towards the end of a branch; reaching out with fine tendrils, and how the branches grow over each other sticking with fine stem roots clinging to other leaves as well as the wall. I marvelled at the aesthetic of its irregular tangled form. These visual wonderings would not have occurred, without Bai Bua and Kraing’s invitations to notice and wonder. Through heightened sensory awareness, ethicality in being and knowing were

awakened, alerting my recognition of entanglement of alterity, birds, plants, baskets, walls, of child and adult, of interculturalism.

Figure 2 Sticky vine

Through embodied and emplaced sensorial research of walking arts projects, such as *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* I have been alerted to the ongoing responsibility to the entangled other (Barad, 2007, 2010), that I am entangled with other people, animals, plants, things and places. I am affected; I am not separate from, but rather blurred with others. Such heightened awareness of whole of body in place with others feeds relationality.

RELATIONALITY

Relationality in walking cannot be denied, even though many urban walkers actively enact disconnection from others through eyes diverted away and silence. In a critique of how human roots are shaped by discovery, conquering and colonising migratory practices, Glissant (1997) declares that “The tale of errantry is the tale of Relation” (p. 18). Glissant discerns that it is the adventurous wandering of errantry (as opposed to discovery or conquest) that invites thinking about what we relate to. “Errantry gives-on-and-with” cultivating Relation that “is spoken multilingually” and “opposes the totalitarianism of any multilingual intent” (p. 19). Drawing from these ideas, I see that a wandering essence in walking can alert the participant to the ethics of being with others, be they human, animal, plant, object, landscape and/or built environment. The agency of each other is welcomed.

Focussing on intra-actions (Barad, 2007, 2010) in walking encounters with all matter can make *relata* visible. In Karen Barad’s (2007, 2010) post-humanist agential realist framework, she disrupts human exceptionalism as the default for ethical analysis. There is no hierarchy of one form (human, animal, plant, object) over another (Barad, 2007). All matter matters. If there is no fixed dividing line between self and other, then we are entangled (that is, “specific material relations of the ongoing differentiating of the world” [Barad, 2010, p. 265]), not as one larger interconnected being, but rather as “relations of obligation – being bound to the other – enfolded traces of othering...an indebtedness to the ‘Other’” (Barad, p. 265). Such thinking requires letting go of self;

letting go of prior assumptions and existing with openness—to responsive actions with others. Barad goes on to explain that relations define responsibility as the ability to respond, that is, a matter of inviting, welcoming and enabling the response of the Other. “Responsibility is not an obligation” and “is not a calculation to be performed...It is an iterative (re)opening up to, an enabling of responsiveness” (p. 265). In the walking arts projects *The Walking Neighbourhood* and *Walking Borders*, I witnessed relationality at play between participants, artists, audience members, pedestrians, nature, built environment and objects that was dynamic and organic with an ongoing responsibility to the other. The following description provides some insight of such at play in *Walking Borders*.

In walking with others, bodies often seamlessly become in-tune, aligning perambulatory rhythms to sustain a similar pace to be with another. For *Walking Borders*, we walked together to create a visible trail of paper boats along an imposed security border for the G20 Summit in Brisbane in 2014 as an ephemeral art intervention for asylum seeker rights. Organically, we formed production lines, one person opening up flattened folded boats, another scooping gravel from the trolley, another pushing the trolley that carried paper boats and gravel, with others taking piles of gravel-filled boats and laying them carefully along the ground that we walked. Our gaze intermittently looked back to honour the trail of boats we collectively created, and ahead to the line that required reconstruction. Monkivitch and fellow activists maintained the trail of paper boats perpetually across the G20 declared zone border of approximately 30 kilometres for 96 hours. In between these routine actions we responded to each other’s needs for gravel, boats, space, water, sunscreen and rest. Collectively, we welcomed and enabled the response of the Other in working together to create something beautiful yet ephemeral...a circulatory trail of delicate paper boats—our response to the injustice of off-shore processing and detention centres (the Australian Government policy for asylum seekers). As Barad (2010) declared “Only in this ongoing responsibility to the entangled other, without dismissal (without ‘enough already!’), is there the possibility of justice-to-come” (p. 264-5).

Figure:3 Filling boats

Both walking arts project sought justice. They were designed with a political agenda, as Ranciere (2010) defines politics—to count “a part of those without part” (p.36). *Walking Borders* sought to count asylum seekers right to seek asylum in Australia with dignity and respect. *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* sought to count children’s agential inclusion in the public sphere. Urban walking brought public visibility for these political pleas and the relationality cultivated entanglement with others—an ongoing responsibility to each other feeding a strong resounding sense of the possibility of justice-to-come. As one audience member spoke of his experience of a child-led walk in the *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children*:

AM: Without being really aware of it I realise now I had a preconception that we'd talk about childish things, whereas actually we talked about shared concepts, we just had another language...I think what I was really aware of was how people were taking notice of listening to a child, you know I think that is really valuable because this is obviously too big a group to be just family, and the fact that we had an interest in what they were saying.

LP: So you noticed pedestrian responses?

AM: Yeah, people sitting around at the shops and stuff. Which is really great, I love that sense of being aware of people who are outside the experience becoming part of it. (Interview transcript 11/08/2012)

By letting go of prior assumptions and being open to all that the encounter offers, shifts in attitudes and an opening of possibilities for justice-to-come occurred, with flow on effects to those on the periphery. The relationality of walking with others is cultivated through openness “to each meeting, each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly” (Barad, 2007, p. x). Attention to relationality cultivates ethical awareness of others and in turn awareness of the politics of shared spaces.

SPATIAL POLITICS

In being sensorially aware and connected with others when walking, spatial politics are noticed. Who and what is privileged and who and what is silenced, neglected or missing are visibly noted. The designs of both walking arts projects sought to provoke a (re)thinking of spatial politics for the silenced, neglected and missing from the polis:

children and asylum-seekers. To critical philosopher Jacques Ranciere (2010), policing commonly demands that pedestrians ‘move along’, so that the only permissible activity is movement *through* public spaces. He then states that “the essential work of politics is the configuration of its own space” (p. 37), that is, disrupting the borders of what is publicly permissible as visible and sayable. Both walking arts projects sought to disrupt the policing of what is visible and sayable in public spaces. *Walking Borders* brought the visibility of the asylum seeker into the public through an ephemeral art installation. *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* project claimed children as visible leaders in public spaces. Both projects also experienced the rebuttal of policing to the disruptions. Security guards and council cleaners repeatedly orchestrated the removal of the *Walking Borders* paper boats. The ephemeral art was condoned as refuse—not to be publicly permissible as visible. And the local child protection authority stipulated that the *Walking Neighbourhood* children needed to be chaperoned by adult guardians who had been certified safe to work with children through criminal history checks and carried walkie talkie radio receivers for signaling back to central base (see Hickey & Phillips, 2013). This imposed policing on the project perpetuated the child protectionist discourse that the project sought to disrupt.

Politics transforms the policing space of ‘move-along’, to refigure what can be done, seen and named in public spaces: a space for the visibility of “a subject: the people, the workers, the citizens” (Ranciere, 2010, p. 37). *Walking Borders* refigured public space as a landscape for paper boat trail making. *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children* refigured public space as a stage for child-led walks, that is, on the surface, in terms of divergence of space through the arts. On closer examination, much more unfolded about the refiguring of space for the visibility of “a subject: the people, the workers, the citizens”.

In *The Walking Neighbourhood* project in Brisbane’s Fortitude Valley in 2012, a significant example of problematising spatial politics occurred when one group of children encountered a homeless woman on the street. Initially, the children wanted to take a photograph of this woman as evidence of what they noticed in their explorations of The Valley. However, they soon questioned each other on the morality of doing such, as they wondered how the woman might feel being photographed, that it wasn’t respectful to do so, especially since she probably had incurred some significant loss to

be living on the streets. The children questioned why she was living on the street; why she didn't have a job; why she didn't have family to go to; and whether she wasn't well physically and mentally (see Hickey & Phillips, 2013). The discussion demonstrated an awareness of the collision of private space with public space. Common understanding of public space is for moving through and is policed through the 'move-along' to be defined as such (Ranciere, 2010). The private practice of sleeping and storing personal possessions on public streets disrupts the 'move-along' definition and was visibly unsettling to these children's social perceptions and imaginations.

The Walking Neighbourhood project also highlighted how children desired access to spaces that they were excluded from. Ten year old Chad, one of the walk hosts of Brisbane's Fortitude Valley walks in 2012 noticed a tattoo parlour in the mall with full glass frontage, which ignited desire and so became his chosen walk destination. One afternoon, Chad and artswoker Min, visited the tattoo parlour to talk about the idea of leading his walk there. Chad surveyed the happenings in the parlour, eyes bouncing from one tattoo artist at work to another, taking in newfound close-up detail of the tattooing process, tools and atmosphere. The tattoo parlour staff seemed dismissively supportive of the suggestion of Chad leading a walk there, and were quick to set parameters on the grounds of health and safety. No tattoo artist could be interrupted during the delicate work of tattooing, so she offered that the walkers could look in from the outside: the advantage of a glass-fronted parlour.

Chad led eight groups of walkers to the tattoo parlour, but they were never welcomed inside. They looked through the glass from the mall, whilst Chad explained the process of tattooing and then applied temporary tattoo transfers to walkers' arms from children to seniors. Chad insatiably desired to see the work of a tattoo artist live, but instead he was prohibited from the space, left to be an outsider looking in with envy.

Figure: 4 Tattoo transfers outside tattoo parlour

Tattoo parlours are one of a number of prohibited spaces (e.g., bars, clubs) for children. Chad's walk made visible the tensions between the desired, the prohibited and adults constructions of children. What was offered as possible was temporary skin transfers and a glassed off safe distance from the real thing—a stark reminder again of

the child protectionist discourse at large in the policing of spaces, which sees children demarcated largely to the private spaces of home and school (Roche, 1999). Frequently, on various walks with children across the iterations of *The Walking Neighbourhood* in various cities and countries, children would make comment about desiring access to prohibited spaces, be they bars, strip clubs, drains, and canal tunnels.

Walking Borders played out at a time when public spaces of the CBD of Brisbane were further policed through restricted zones surrounding high-end hotels and a declared zone border of approximately a three-kilometre radius. Unyielding bulletproof barricades shouted *No Entry*. Approximately 4500 Queensland Police Service officers, 1500 interstate and New Zealand police officers, and 650 Australian Federal Police were involved in the security operation of the G20 declared area (approximately 12 kilometres long and 5 kilometres wide) (Brennan, 2014; Crime and Corruption Commission Queensland, 2015). In fact there were more police on the streets than pedestrians, as most Brisbanites vacated the city due to media security scare-mongering (Doorley, 2014). Many of the police officers were heavily armed in riot squad gear, yet all we held were paper boats and a bucket of gravel. Policing, through police surveillance and regulation and as “the division of the sensible” (Ranciere, 2010) was escalated to the point of complete and utter irrationality – division by “the sense-less”. The *Walking Borders* protest endeavoured to refigure what could be done, seen and named within the gaps of the divisions, by working with the aesthetic of the political dimensions: the borders and the restricted items. Paper boats stabilised with a spoonful of gravel were provided as offerings to the temporary, invisible, scarcely known border between the ruling and the ruled.

Figure: 5 G20 Bullet proof fencing

Walking Borders sought to disrupt the harsh enforcement of borders with softness, by placing delicate paper boats along the border edges. The space was refigured for the visibility of a subject: asylum seekers. A homeless man added to this refiguration with “I’ve seen your boats and let me tell you what I did to them. Let me show you” and he walked up to a boat, and he picked it up and placed it closer to the curb and he said, “I’ve done that to all of your boats for you, so I’ve just moved them so there’s one on the gutter, one on the walk, one on the gutter, one on the walk”. His

gesture added further to the fragility of the story of those without part—not every ‘boat’ follows the line. Not every boat is on stable territory. At least every second one is ‘on the edge’.

Ranciere (2010) describes that those “with out part” (that is, without access to social, civic and political resources and participation) – share aesthesis, that is, they share sensation, perception and awareness. In these stories that I share, the children seemed to share aesthesis with the homeless woman, and the homeless man shared aesthesis with the symbolic representation for asylum seekers. It is through shared sensation, perception and awareness that understanding and empathy of spatial politics is nurtured.

DIVERGENCE AND DÉTOURNEMENT

Both of these projects diverged from conventional walking practice and participation in urban spaces, inviting participants to (re)conceptualise urban spaces and civic engagement. The collaboration between children and artists heightened the divergent explorations, as both groups are more akin to experimentation and exploration. As discussed in spatial politics, policing defines what can be done, seen and named in public spaces. People create further self-rules of what can be done, seen and named in public spaces, with de Certeau (1984) claiming his essay on *Walking in the City* that “spatial practices in fact secretly structure the determining conditions of social life” (p. 97). The spatial order of urban spaces organises an ensemble of possibilities (that is varying routes) and prohibitions or blockages (e.g., walls, gates, fences) and the walker actualises some of these possibilities (p. 98). Lefebvre (1991) agrees with de Certeau explicitly arguing that space is political and ideological through social and historical conditions. Wealth and authority elicit claim and control of space. When we walk we actualise the possibilities fixed by the constructed order (e.g., walking along footpaths), we may also increase the number of possibilities (e.g., through shortcuts, detours, détournements) or decrease through prohibitions (self-determined rules, restrictions). The increasing of possibilities was particularly resonant in *Walking Borders* and *The Walking Neighbourhood* for the political agenda of reappropriation of space. Critical sociologist Henri Lefebvre’s (1991) proposed a notion of détournement (drawing from the Situationist term and specifically applying to architecture and urban studies) as

reappropriation of spaces from their original intention. As a critical scholar Lefebvre saw *détournement* as the people claiming their own meaning of space as resistance to bureaucratic political construction of space that produces, imposes and reinforces social homogeneity (what he referred to as ‘abstract space’). *Détournement* is thus a political act, in which *détourneurs* are agents in the production of space, not passive followers. *Walking Borders* and *The Walking Neighbourhood* freely invited and explored reappropriation of space to construct public space as a platform to plea for the counting in of asylum seekers, and for children to define public spaces as it has meaning for them.

One of the walk hosts, Erin a ten-year-old girl, for *The Walking Neighbourhood* project in Brisbane’s Fortitude Valley in 2012, certainly relished in reappropriation of space. Erin decided that she wanted to lead her walkers to dance in the shop window of a clothing store on the corner of two main roads of Brisbane’s Fortitude Valley (see Phillips & Hickey, 2013). She purposefully chose the site for its high visibility, to increase the potential numbers for public dancing. Erin desired to *détourner* the static (fixed shop mannequins) space to a highly kinetic space. However, after weeks of the project’s artworkers contacting various levels of management of the clothing store to seek their approval and support for Erin to lead up to 12 walks across two days to their store for public dancing, the answer was “No”. The suggested *détournement* was perhaps a leap out of the store managers’ comfort zone and they had control of the space so they could stipulate the meaning ascribed to the shop front – static. Erin was noticeably disappointed but continued her search for another suitable site for street dancing.

Four days before the public event (the last rehearsal/ workshop session), an open undercover space (approximately 7 x 12 metres) in front of an unnamed (and perhaps unused) low-level office block that had reflective glass on two frontages was chosen. The space effectively provided an outdoor publicly visible dance studio. And so at the beginning of each of her walks, Erin would say “if you don’t like dancing or doing stuff in front of other people you should probably go on another walk.” Erin’s audiences danced in their own way, they followed Erin’s dance moves, they showcased their signature moves, and united to create a ‘worm’ move tracking the deflecting of waved

arm movements from one to another through the reflective glass. They united through the joy of dancing.

Figure: 6 Erin and Casey dancing in office carpark

Erin's walk highlights the capacity of children to envision new possibilities for a public space. This empty space was usually walked passed and ignored. Erin wanted people of all ages to dance with her in public. Unfortunately, dancing is not a common street behaviour or modus operandi of pedestrians. Yet, Erin made this possible, through the sharing of her interest in dance in a relaxed casual way; she inspired others to break out of the constrained social conventions of how to move in public. The experience of dancing with a group of unknown others in a public space clearly broke boundaries of what is socially acceptable, to which some audience members readily transgressed that boundary, whereas others soon warmed to the transgression. Yes, the experience generated new ways of being with unknown others in public spaces, but the détournement of space also produced much more. Erin's dance studio could be defined as what Lefebvre refers to as representational space, that is, a space changed and appropriated through imagination – it is alive – “it has an affective kernel”... “embracing the loci of passion, of action and of lived situations” (p. 42). With such energy it clearly ignites relationality.

At an urbanlab on *The Walking Neighbourhood* at the Walk21 (the international organisation supporting and promoting walking) conference in Vienna 2015, I invited three local boys (aged 12 and 13) to share their Vienna with a group of 15 international delegates of varying professions. At one point, when we walked along Stubenring toward Stadtpark, as we approached a row of arched poles for bicycle parking, the boys started to lift their bodies over them, climb them, balance across two them, step from one to the next - keen to outdo each other. The adult audience looked on anxiously as the balancing acts became more and more precarious. I invited others to follow—to also détourne the bike racks. The lawyer asked what insurance did I have. The mobility consultant asked about risk management plans. The health educator named it as ‘risky play’. And they all stood back with fear and caution fixating them. Only a French architect and I swung between poles with the boys. This moment highlighted how

straitjacketed adult movement is. As noted earlier, the years of cannons of western thought conditioning (defining how spaces are to be used, assessing the limitations, delineating adult behaviour) restrict adult movement.

If we loosen our kinetic straitjackets and embrace animic ontology we too can engage in and enjoy divergence in our urban walking, especially if we learn from children—the masters of divergence. Lefebvre (1991) suggests it may be young children’s indifference to age, sex and time that enable their representational use of space (e.g., empty car park becomes dance studio, and cycle rack becomes climbing frame). Children contribute “an imaginary of depth” (p. 11) to spaces populated with discrete objects, as Raluca and Hurducas (2015) found in their materialist sociological study of children’s imaginings for a park in decay. The ideas and wishes of children bring “radiance, sonority, and movement...the joy of dwelling and the plural times of lived space” (p. 12).

APPLICATION

It was through collaboration with artists utilising performative pedagogies of walking that these four concepts of embodied and emplaced sensorial awareness, relationality, spatial politics, and divergence and *détournement* were made visible. The provocations initiated by the artists brought divergence from the norm of walking with others in urban spaces, which alerted participants to new sensations and awakenings. I thus argue that these divergences brought great attention to ethicality and relationality at play producing richer deeper learning encounters that imprinted lasting bodily sensory memories that have been shared above.

Walking in urban streets, parks, malls, and plazas is where we are confronted with how to co-exist with unknown others. Formal education is typically removed from society in concrete boxes (aka schools, colleges, universities). I thereby question the isolating practice of institutionalised education, in that, without physical engagement with the public sphere through walking, opportunities for ethico-politico learning are missed. Bairner (2011) also argues that young people “have greater ownership of the reality that they create whilst walking than of the ‘realities’ that are produced for them by the media and culture industries” (p. 382). Recent trends in the rise of digital teaching and learning cannot replace the capacities of the lived emplaced embodied

experience of walking as pedagogy. In fact, Bairner even proclaims “walking teaches us more than any other activity about the places where we live and the places that we visit.” (p. 382). Yet, Bairner is referring to everyday walking alone. When walking is combined with participatory art, attention to ethicality is further enhanced. Through engaging performative means, participatory artist-led provocations invite rethinking of who is counted, who isn’t, and how relationality can be fostered between unknown others.

To further the ripple effect of the learning potential of walking pedagogy, I encourage educational institutions to look beyond imparting the responsibility of education solely on teachers. Instead, I would encourage them to consider collaborative teaching and learning with multi-disciplinary teams, including other professionals such as artists, architects, urban planners, community workers to facilitate participatory projects that break out from institutional walls into local places of meaning for students. Walking as pedagogy responds to the recent spatial turn in education most notably applied through place-based pedagogies (e.g., Gruenewald, 2003; Massey, 2005; Somerville & Green, 2015) and participatory art responds to the ethical turn in art. I see great potential in attention to ethicality in spatiality nurturing empathetic co-existence, as we attend to emplaced interpersonal interactions with others of all forms with post-humanist sensibilities, in which there is no hierarchy of beings. As quoted earlier from Barad (2010): “Only in this ongoing responsibility to the entangled other, without dismissal (without ‘enough already!’), is there the possibility of justice-to-come” (p. 264-5). That is, by placing ourselves in the public sphere in movement with others, noting the intra-actions of matter (plants, objects, structures, animals etc.) we are more aware of sensation and affect, so that we respond with political awareness and ethicality.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I argue that if we engage with embodied and emplaced sensorial awareness, relationality, spatial politics and divergence and *détournement* in our walking encounters in shared public spaces that we can experience the transformative pedagogy of ethico-politico-urban-wonder. Through corporeal consciousness of place

and intra-actions with matter – ethics and politics cannot be denied. Humans marvelling at nature is popularly accepted and celebrated as Romanticism), yet urban walking typically switches off the sense of wonder instead privileging attention to destination. By giving self permission to attend to sensation of self in place with others (regardless of form) waves of affect wash back and forth over and around us. Through being viscerally affected, awakenings of injustices are felt and possibilities for living justly imagined that may feed knowledge creation relevant to a broad range of disciplines including philosophy, human geography, sociology, social anthropology, urban studies and public pedagogy. This is not pedagogy for the public or of the public, but rather as Biesta (2014) advocates a pedagogy in the interest of publicness: “a concern for the public quality of human togetherness and thus for the possibility of actors and events to become *public*” (p. 23), through experimental ways of knowing and doing for freedom. I invite others to attend further to the transformative pedagogical possibilities of ethico-politico-urban-wonder in urban design, policy and development, in community development, community arts, health, tourism and in education across all sectors.

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Author biography

Louise Phillips is a professional storyteller and a lecturer in the School of Education at The University of Queensland, where she teaches early years, arts and literacy education. Her research interest in walking grew from empirical research of children's citizenship and collaborating with social practice artists through the participatory arts project *The Walking Neighbourhood hosted by Children*. Louise researched *The Walking Neighbourhood* in Brisbane (2012, 2014) and Chiang-Mai (2013) and has published and presented nationally and internationally on the spatial, relational and corporeal insights gleaned from sensory ethnography of the project. The innovation of this arts-research collaboration was recognised through the awarding of The University of Queensland Faculty of Social & Behavioural Sciences Innovation Award (2013) and internationally through a Walk21 Walking Visionaries Jury Prize (2015). In 2014, Louise was a successful co-applicant for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada partnership grant: *Performing Lines: Innovations in walking and sensory research methodologies*. Louise has continued to explore arts-research collaborations with walking as an arts and research method through sensory ethnographic explorations of *Walking Borders: Arts activism for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Rights*. Insights from this project were presented at the New Materialist 2015 Conference in Melbourne and forthcoming in the *Space and Culture* journal. Louise also experiments with walking as a means to present research findings through an Urban Lab at Walk21, Vienna in 2015 and performance of Walk with me at the Anywhere Festival, Brisbane, 2016. She is currently exploring collaborative ventures with urban architects and councilors to enhance community relationality.