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Pedestrians as Floating Life

- *On the reinvention of the pedestrian city*

Paper submitted to *Emotion, Space & Society*

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Highlights

- Sustainable mobility must include more sensitivity to the ontological dimension of walking.
- Our focus is on walking as a 'mode of being' and quality of mobility.
- We explore pedestrianism as transitory, 'floating life' across space and time.
- We conceptualise walking as a multi-sensorial, effective, and mobile engagement with the material environment.
- Our paper encourages a more holistic picture of pedestrians in planning policy and urban design.

Abstract

Walking with its average speed of 5 km/h was for a very long period the primary mode of moving and engaging with the immediate material environment for humans. However, over the past half-century, the socio-technical systems of automobility as well as other forms of non-human powered mobility have changed the ways in which cities are experienced. Most recently, however, the pedestrian mode has been reprioritised resulting in a shift of emphasis, particularly in European cities, toward recognising the destructive forces of automobility. This shift has been accompanied by a variety of pedestrian reprioritisation strategies including the pedestrianisation of city streets as well as restricted vehicular access to particular inner city zones at prescribed times. The challenge for many cities is how to legitimately change mindsets, from automobility to walking. This paper explores the reprioritisation of urban walking not as 'infrastructure' or an 'intervention' but as transitory, 'floating life' across space and time. We conceptualise walking as a multi-sensorial, effective, and mobile engagement with the material environment. In doing so, we ask how the 'floating life' of pedestrianism may be reflected upon as part of the so-called 'mobilities turn' and in particular how theories of materiality, embodiment, design and experience interlink with walking. In this paper walking as a pedestrian is therefore a particular quality of mobility. The way in which we 'inhabit' the city is significant when we walk, and turning to walking as 'floating life' pays attention to this underemphasised ontological dimension.

Introduction

Contemporary urban policies across the world are 'rethinking' relationships to muscular modes of Mobilities (walking, cycling etc.). These policies are part of the 'travelling ideas' that circulate the globe, filtering and mediating through local policy frameworks and government planning offices (Tait & Jensen, 2007). As cities expel cars from their centres, there is a need for alternatives, both in terms of high-quality public transport (e.g. bus-rapid-transit, light rails, busses, etc.) and, increasingly, to encourage people to walk. Ideas drawn upon from areas such as 'behavioural design' and 'nudging' are becoming common governance tools in urban planning in an attempt to get people to accept longer walking distances and new routes of movement within the urban fabric (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008). Some of these tactics can be described as a proactive attempt to change well established, car-orientated mindsets and habits by positively reinforcing the multifarious benefits of 'everyday' walking. Most recently, in response to COVID-19, cities internationally are radically reprioritising active mobility to help facilitate social distancing (see Deas et al., 2021). These measures reflect changed priorities regarding urban infrastructure and provide new global evidence of the emancipatory potential of pedestrian movement in cities (Deas et al., 2021).

There exists a historical tradition of concerns with urban walking within discussions relating to the emancipatory potential of city spaces (Middleton, 2011). Seminal scholars include Jacobs (1961), Rudofsky (1969), Gehl (1987/2011), Whyte (1988) and Lynch (1990). For example, Jacobs (1961), who described the four conditions for dynamic urban life: multifunctional neighbourhoods; short blocks and connected street systems; varied age residential areas; and a high concentration of people, articulated the intrinsic value of a walkable city – despite not studying 'walkability' (Dovey and Pafka, 2020). Others, such as Gehl (1987/2011), have spent several decades focusing on how the built urban form in cities can create more usable and walkable spaces for people (Werner et al., 2018).

Sensitivity to human behaviour in urban design and planning were a direct response to the car-oriented values of modernist urbanism (Forsyth and Southworth, 2008). In challenging modernist planning practices, walkability was "identified as an important component of efficient, accessible, equitable, sustainable and livable communities" (Lo, 2009: 147). Here, automobile-dependent transportation systems were replaced with a relative increase in attention to non-motorised transportation, which in turn necessitated a more nuanced understanding of

walking (Lo, 2009). Notable early examples of pedestrianisation initiatives included the Dutch concept of a *woonerf* and the US *complete streets* initiative. A corpus of global literature has appeared in the last decade to discuss the significance of pedestrian-oriented planning and design. Building on the seminal works of Jacobs (1961), Gehl (1987) and Lynch (1990), contemporary scholarship has expanded considerations of walking, "to a multitude of broader issues, including public health, climate change, economic productivity and social equity" (Dovey and Pafka, 2020: 93).

Walkable cities have thus "become a catch-cry in both popular and academic discourses about the future of cities" (Dovey and Pafka, 2020: 94). The revitalisation of urban cores through the promotion of density and mix in combination with amendments and changes to street-level design are pressing concerns for contemporary city planning (Forsyth and Southworth, 2008; Lo, 2009; Lusk et al., 2018). To date, a multi-disciplinary literature has explored the complexities of walking and 'walkability' via an array of empirically tested cases across a variety of spatial scales (see Monheim, 2003; Southworth, 2005; Wunderlich, 2008; Kärrholm, 2017 and Bass and Livingstone, 2018). Representing a popular but nebulous term, walkability encompasses a broad array of pedestrian-orientated scholarship focused on aggregating complex factors on the possibilities for and contingents of walking including: distance, negotiability, sense of place, density, functional mix, access networks, personal space and safety (Lo, 2009; Dovey and Pafka, 2020). However, the limits to prove or disprove aggregated factors of walkability are well recognised by most scholars in this field (Dovey and Pafka, 2020).

One critique of metric based approaches is the loss of the social experience of walking (Rudofsky, 1969; Seamon, 1980; Careri, 2002; Wunderlich, 2008). Street design, counts of street users, temporal variation in use, parking retrofits or other walkability factors (Lo, 2009; Brookfield, 2017; Werner et al., 2018; Bass and Livingston, 2018) tend to overlook the significance of 'walkscapes' (Careri, 2002), walking as an embodied practice (Wunderlich, 2008), walking as an expression of rights (Barber, 2020: 7), and walking as an everyday 'lifeworld' activity (Seamon, 1980). The emphasis placed on the extent to which the built environment supports and encourages walking (i.e. 'walkability') is somewhat detached from walking as a 'lifeworld' practice (or what we here term 'floating life'), i.e. an ordinary activity in our everyday life. Jacobs (1961), railed against planners who sought to reduce urban principles to numeric formulae, arguing that the city was far too complex for such reductionism,

rather the task was one of understanding the city as 'organised complexity' (Dovey and Pafka, 2020). In this paper, we consider how walking may be reflected upon as a 'mode of being' and quality of mobility. We focus on walking as an underemphasised ontological dimension (in planning and policy making) and consider how walking may be better conceptualised as a multi-sensorial, effectual and mobile engagement with the material environment supported by an accompanying conceptual framework.

To understand the pedestrian as a particular quality of mobility we propose to see it through the notion of 'floating'. On its own the term may evoke connotations of movement, freedom, frictionlessness, and unrestrained action. However, opposite valorisations can also be found in reflections on directionlessness, unruliness, and aimlessness, both are relevant. The concepts of change, transformation and transition are relevant too, as 'that which floats' must be engaged in a dynamic and temporalised process. In developing our position we find floating in the notion of 'fluid modernity' (Bauman 2000:2), "*Fluids travel easily. They 'flow', 'spill', 'run out', 'splash', 'pour over', 'leak', 'flood', 'spray', 'drip', 'ooze'; unlike solids, they are not easily stopped – they pass around obstacles, dissolve some others and vore or soak their way through'"* (Bauman, 2000: 2). We also see floating in positions on fluid ethnography (Vannini, 2015: 125), fluid as metaphor of mobility (Urry, 2000: 48), flaneurish fluidity (Adey, 2017: 92), and Archimedies' 'floating bodies' (McCormack, 2018: 48). These works emphasise the transformative and at times subversive capacity of floating as well as the processual and dynamic liveliness of the ability to float. In application to the pedestrian, floating is the transformative, ontological dimension of walking as life that flows, spills, pours, leaks, floods and oozes past, around, through and in space.

Framing pedestrianism as 'floating life' requires a focus on the temporality of walking, and in particular on the rhythms of walking (Lefebvre, 1996). This notion has also been explored by Tartia (2018) with the precise intent of understanding the rhythm of walking (and driving). Tartia's situational Mobilities research into the rhythms of walking found that:

> "As mobile practices, driving and walking are divergent in many ways, such as embodiment and perception, human-technology relations, social interactions, and law and regulation. Nonetheless, they are equally common modes in which people dwell-in-motion (Sheller and Urry, 2006) in contemporary cities, and thus warrant analytical attention. Future Mobilities design probably need to favour walking

and public transportation in its application, in order to be sustainable both ecologically and socially." (Tartia, 2018: 821).

Here, Tartia connects to the idea of 'dwelling-in-motion' as defined by Sheller & Urry (2006), this represents a key component of embodied Mobilities as 'floating life' and pedestrianism as a 'mode of being'. The next section of the paper turns to the development of our framework, before unpacking its constituent parts, focusing on mobile situations in section three, the axis of materialities and design in section four and in section five the axis of multisensorialism and embodiment. The paper terminates with concluding reflections and areas for future research.

Foundations of the conceptual framework

In line with the pragmatic research approach advocated in mobilities research (Jensen & Lanng, 2017) we begin by asking the deliberately 'naïve' question: '*What is a pedestrian?'* Further we are interested in the more complex question of: '*How one becomes a pedestrian?'* As soon as one has had time to rid themselves of the most banal ideas about the universalism of walking, we start realising that many different elements afford pedestrianism and 'putting one foot in front of the other' is less than a fulfilling answer. Lessons from science and technology studies (STS), actor-network-theory (ANT) and other forms of 'hybrid thinking' suggest that it is unhelpful to think of a pedestrian (or walking human) as an isolated subject. Here, spaces, technologies, climates and ambiences among many other dimensions shape and create the ground condition for 'assembling the pedestrian'. The situational approach (i.e. research on 'mobile situations', see Jensen, 2013) and the pragmatic question leads us to study where and how one becomes a pedestrian. Here, we argue that the metaphor of 'floating life' is a helpful heuristic tool.

FIGURE 1 HERE

So what does it mean to think about pedestrianism as 'floating life' and a 'mode of being'? It means as a minimum to turn attention to the ways in which materialities and design meet multisensorialism and embodiment in real-world mobile situations (Figure 1).

What is a pedestrian?

The ground perception of the material environment (city or not) is connected to movement and the multiple perspectives from where it makes sense. Tim Ingold (2004) makes a similar

observation through a critique of what he terms, the notion of 'destination-oriented travel', i.e. the idea that what 'really matters', is what statically takes place in important sites:

> "We have already seen how the practices of destination-oriented travel encouraged the belief that knowledge is built up not along paths of pedestrian movement but through the accumulation of observations taken from successive points of rest. Thus we tend to imagine that things are perceived from a stationary platform, as if we were sitting on a chair with our legs and feet out of action. To perceive a thing from different angles, it is supposed that we might turn it around in our hands, or perform an equivalent computational operation in our minds. But in real life, for the most part, we do not perceive things from a single vantage point, but rather by walking around them" (Ingold, 2004: 331).

Put differently; walking is perceiving. By this we refer to the embodied and affective registrations that pedestrians articulate. To walk is, in this sense, to register the world and to perceive the environment in an embodied and specific way. Hence we may say that a pedestrian is a human being, propelling her or himself through space in a bodily upright position. However, this is only one dimension of what a pedestrian is. In accordance with the floating life focus, such self-propelling human bodies are engaging with the environment in multi-sensorial and affective ways.

Accordingly, to walk under the conceptual gaze of floating life means to 'be in the world' or as a 'mode of being' (Lorimer, 2011: 27). We argue that the articulation of policies and new plans for cities, must be aware of the ontological dimensions of walking as a critical consideration in the development of strategies and walkable urban spaces (Jensen et al., 2019). With some similarity to Jacobs (1961), Gehl (1987) and Lynch (1990), we seek to encourage a more nuanced understanding of walking which goes beyond the pedestrian as a rational agent paving her/his way from A to B with a minimum of effort ('path of least resistance') or maximum efficiency, or likewise, an idle, carefree drifter open to the impressions of the city. Through the lens of pedestrianism as floating life and more broadly walking as a 'way of being' we explore what walking as a 'mobile situation' and as a particular quality of mobility might mean.

The omnipotence of walking is ubiquitous in a paradoxical sense. The mundane and ordinary dimension of walking, namely the "taken-for-granted pattern and context for everyday living

through which people conduct their day-to-day lives without having to make it an object of conscious attention" is perhaps why pedestrian planning is still addressed with far less intensity, seriousness and funding than the design of transportation space for motorised vehicular modes (Knox, 2005: 2; Lo, 2009).

The focus on Mobile Situations

As the theme of walking and the acts of pedestrians are deep and large topics we propose to focus on a particular way of exploring walking that has emerged within the Mobilities Turn – the pragmatic attention to actual mobile situations (Jensen, 2015). The perspective on mobile situations has been explored in depth by Jensen (2013; 2014) and has emerged as a viable approach to theoretically and empirically investigate contemporary urban mobilities (see, also Tartia, 2018). The mundane dimension of everyday life mobilities is key to the situational Mobilities perspective (Bissell, 2018). We are not studying the extraordinary or exotic, but rather the very essence of mundane being. In the words of Bollnow: '*as soon as he [man, sic!] walks into the street, he must take a particular direction, and thus he steps out into the world of decisions'* (2011: 68). Needless to say, many of these decisions need not conscious contemplation, since the social roles of everyday life remove the burden of 're-inventing the situation' anew (Goffman, 1959).

In developing our conceptual matrix, and building on the 'staging mobilities' framework, we recognise that mobile situations are 'staged' in two ways (Jenson, 2013). 'From above' through planning, design, regulation, politics, and stakeholder interests etc. These are the situational frame conditions that shape the actual situation 'from the outside'. However, the model also recognises the level of human autonomy and choice viewing mobile situations as simultaneously staged 'from below'. Through choices and modes of interactions humans stage their mobile presences in multiple and often quite complex ways. The staging perspective resembles, to some degree, de Certeau's notion of 'strategies' and 'tactics' (1988: 34-37). The former is related to processes of calculations, rationality, and power. In de Certeau's words it is a 'Cartesian attitude' (1988: 34). Set against this, de Certeau coins the notion of tactics which are incremental and isolated. Tactics is an 'art of the weak' (1988: 37) and hence not nested into systems and structures. For de Certaeu walking in the streets is a utopian mode of being whereas the pedestrianism seen from above the ground at 'the 110th floor of the World Trade Center' (1988: 91) allows for an abstract and detached perspective much like the instrumental rationality of transport modelling. Pedestrianism as floating life might well be seen as an 'art

of the weak', not articulated on the basis of a strategic concern to 'make people walk'. Encouraging people to walk necessities seeing walking from the 'inside' and 'below' before strategic decisions or policy delivery take place. Otherwise, strategies and policies risk becoming disconnected from the ontology of walking and overlooking phenomenological insights. It is important to notice that the 'from above' and 'below' is not a hierarchical ontological layering, but rather an analytical perspective brought in as an tool for understanding the multiple assemblages that enables floating life.

Thinkers like Bollnow (2011) tend to romanticise wandering as in direct opposition to pedestrianism, the former taking place in 'natural and pristine' environs whereas the latter is inhabited in the artificial landscapes of infrastructures and cities. Here resonance with Heidegger and the critique of turning nature into a 'resource' for human purposes suggests a limit to the understanding of how complex walking and pedestrianism as 'floating life' may be (Verbeek, 2005). It will take us nowhere to think of walking as 'more authentic' and more 'natural' than other modes of Mobilities. It is also not productive to reserve the practices of rural and authentic wandering as something more 'real' than everyday walks on well-trodden urban pavements. Moreover, walking is not normative, it is not always the same nor is it always peaceful and orderly. Leon James, a traffic psychologist developed the 'Pedestrian Aggressiveness Syndrome Scale' in order to measure 'pedestrian rage'. Accordingly, pedestrian rage exists in over-crowded urban environments and ranges from negative thinking towards direct violence (Montgomery, 2013: 230). Regardless of the affective level the conceptual framing behind the floating life perception of pedestrianism recognises that 'what looks like nothing special' actually may be the playing out of complex affective and socially dense situations (Goffman, 1972). Goffman for example showed the appreciable number of techniques and micro-practices that pedestrians utilize when passing on the street (from body turns, to gazing and interacting via gestures and facial expressions).

Goffman's analysis of the rich social interactions amongst pedestrians is very valuable, however, we should also be careful not to be misled by his overemphasis on the visual. As Adey convincingly argues in a critique of Goffman's visual emphasis: 'there is more to mobility than just what meets the eye' (Adey, 2017: 170). We see, smell, hear, and feel the city and its multiple human and non-human components as we walk it. As Ingold argues, walking is itself a form of 'circumambulatory knowing' (Ingold, 2004: 331). In other words, we are emotionally, cognitively, and sensorial engaged with the world as we move (on foot and by other modes):

'*Traffic is a sort of secret window into the inner heart of a place, a form of cultural expression as vital as language, dress, or music'* (Vanderbilt, 2008: 216). Traffic culture is, at an aggregated level, one way to capture how pedestrianism is more than just walking, however, in getting closer to the individualities of walking, Duff emphasises that:

> "To walk in the city is to be affected by the city, just as one's walking affects the city that this walking produces. The poetical of place generated in this walking is as much a function of practice, of a doing and making, as it is a function of feeling and affective modulation ... To walk is to be affected by place and to simultaneously contribute to the ongoing co-constitution of self and place" (Duff, 2010: 4 & 7).

Thus, the complex relationship between pedestrians and the material environment is comprehensible from the outset of 'the situation'. The pragmatic focus on everyday life mobilities, as performed by the pedestrian, suggests we need to overcome the dualist split between a moving, sensing subject and an inanimate, material object-world. Floating life as a holistic understanding of mobile situations determines situations as 'stretched' (Jensen, 2013: 130). As an example, this view warrants that pedestrians relate to much wider spaces and volumes than simply a few square meters of pavement. To be alive and alert to floating life means to be affected by micro-climate, smells, noise, sights, the presence of other bodies as well as vehicles in the urban spaces. This resonates with an analysis of urban marathon running by Larsen and Jensen (2021). To Larsen and Jensen, 'weathering the running body' is a matter of distributed agency between the running body and the immediate environment. There are of course key differences between (leisure) running and pedestrianism. One such thing being the carefully planned and intentional acts of 'going for a run' versus the often quite spontaneous walk. Nevertheless,, the way in which the running (or walking) body connects to wider situational properties is a matter of situational complexity involving material spaces, surfaces, volumes, technologies, and artefacts as much as mobile, sensing, and emotionally affected bodies.

The pedestrian senses this ambient and multi-dimensional urban buzz in a number of registers and we might think of this as the equivalent to the notion of the 'extended mind' within cognitive science (Clark and Chalmers, 1998). Accordingly, cognitive processes are not only 'in the brain' but rely on a number of external (to the brain) elements and objects. For example

using a calculator or pen and paper to determine distance, or wayfinding as mediated and negotiated by mobile phones and GPS data. Hence the ability 'to find one's way' may be said to be present in a network that lies 'beyond' the confined pedestrian body. In a similar way recent studies in the borderland between gerontology and disability studies prompt us to consider the significance of 'extended bodies' (Jensen, 2021):

> "'The extended body' refers to the ways in which one's body always extends into its environment, just as its environment extends into it. For example, my ability to run a five-kilometer race depends on a host of natural and social conditions, from proper running gear to navigable paths to a nontoxic environment. It also depends on the conditions of my upbringing and labor: what I was or was not exposed to as a child and the types of demands my economic situation places on my lungs and immune system. It of course also involves my particular body: circulation; central nervous system functioning; joint, ligament, and muscular strength and flexibility; the presence, absence, or particular formation of lower limbs; and so forth. But the point is that my body is just one component, and my ability to run extends far beyond it" (Reynolds, 2018: 33).

In defining the pedestrian through the lens of floating life, one must consider how the pedestrian relates to sites and materialities, as well as how these are perceived and sensed. Taking a floating life perspective of pedestrianism means that the richness of walking and its many facets are considered in more detail; this framing is a first attempt to offer such a perspective. Developing our perspective further, we dwell on the concept of 'situational mobilities', and in particular the importance of materialities and design. Representing the top axis of our framework, materiality and design are the situational frame conditions that shape the actual situation 'from the outside' and 'from above' through planning, design, regulation, politics and negotiating stakeholder interests.

Materialities and design

We cannot address the materiality of pedestrianism and the physical dimension of mobile situations without paying attention to the ways in which the urban fabric has been designed, constructed, and 'made'. Through choice of material, spatial layout and crafted morphology, the act of walking occurs within a designed 'landscape'. As emphasised by Edmund Bacon:

> "The problem of the city designer is to deal simultaneously with the different speeds of movement and different rates of perception, to create forms which are as satisfying to those in an automobile as they are to those who travel on foot" (Bacon, 1967: 35).

The city, as stated by Graham and Marvin (2001), is a 'gearbox full of speeds' and accommodating, affording, and designing for this multiplicity is a complex task. Pedestrianism, in the urban context, seems catered for if one considers the making of sidewalks and pavements as adequate to safeguard 'soft' from 'hard' Mobilities (Patton, 2007). Pedestrians may be seen as a 'soft' form of mobility compared to cars or buses as 'hard' mobilities, however, this understanding of the embodied fragility of human bodies within infrastructure systems does not go far enough to attend to the material dimension of walking. As emphasised by research in mobilities design, 'material sensitivity' is essential to appreciations of mobile situations (Jensen and Lanng, 2017). We therefore see pedestrianism as floating life in relation to materialities, meaning that things, spaces, artefacts, surface materials, and volumes meet and connect with bodies in complex situational assemblages. Hence, the 'body-thing-space nexus' of a pedestrian is essential (e.g. body, shoes, sidewalk, building facade etc.). To be sensitive to the material conditions of pedestrianism is not only to look at hard surfaces, infrastructures, and buildings. While important, they are not the only 'materials' present in walking. The sensing and emotionally attuned human body is as material as the pavement! Thus, we see the relational assemblage of 'many materials' including 'bodies as materials' as a defining feature of the floating life perspective. To comprehend pedestrianism as floating life is thus to observe both human embodied movement as well as to the environments and material spaces that 'host' such movements.

Our trips in the city make an impact and understanding the complexity of this impact reaches beyond 'predict and provide' traffic planning (Lynch, 1990). In accordance with the insights articulated in the mobilities turn, Lynch discerns that moving in the city is 'more than A to B' movement, but also that there is a deeper and affective relationship to understand:

> "It is not necessary to provide bee-straight motion; smooth irregularities can be rhythmical and give variety. The pedestrian path may be even more tortuous, as long as not confusing or frustrating (Venezia). Motion is a basic way of seeing the city, and the time sequences of pictures is a vital impression, varying with the

> speed of motion. There is a pleasure in motion over and under, in and out; in contact and breakaway from spaces and centres" (Lynch 1990: 151).

In Whyte's (1988) seminal studies of people in public spaces he suggested, with some similarity to Goffman (1972), that the pedestrian might seem to be 'doing nothing special'. Yet, Whyte disclosed that pedestrians employ a vast number of techniques in order to perform street life behaviour, aptly dubbed the 'skilled pedestrian', to acknowledge differing levels of tacit knowledge used in urban walking (Whyte, 1988: 56-67). Whyte highlights how '*people in big cities walk faster than people in small cities'* emphasising how our habitat and environment reaches deep into everyday practices and habits (Whyte, 1988: 65). Ricard Sennett strikes the same chord when he speaks of 'walking knowledge' and how walking both in its gestalt of the aimless 'flaneur' and in mundane commuting practices are much more than simply getting from A to B (Sennett, 2018: 181). Sennett, among others, argues that walking articulates 'scale' in very different ways than more mechanically afforded mobility forms. Despite a wide tradition of seeing walking as an 'unmediated' practice compared to, for example, car-driving, it is an inaccurate description of the practice (Urry, 2007). Lessons from STS, ANT and post-phenomenology suggest that there are no 'unmediated' practices (Ihde, 1990, 1993; Latour, 2005; Verbeek, 2005).

Ingold finds it significant that in contemporary urbanism the pedestrian leaves no mark, due to the materials chosen for roads, sidewalks and plazas, pedestrians hardly leave noticeable traces as they would in woods and on dirt roads (2011: 44). Accordingly, he sees the pedestrian experience as reduced to the operation of a 'stepping machine' (2011: 44). This is, however, a truth with modifications since a very busy public space (such as a subway or a public plaza) will show marks and trances of the millions of feet that have crossed it over time. So again we urge caution with narratives of nature walks as the 'authentic' and the urban pedestrian experience as artificial. The pavements and sidewalks of the contemporary city are the habitats of the contemporary urbanites – 'natural' or not. We do have sympathy for Ingold's critical understanding and his holistic attempts to capture web-of-life entanglements. His notion of 'wayfaring' to describe the embodied experience of movement (2011: 148) is worthy of particular note. The wayfarer lives by the movement, whereas 'the transported' are defined by the destination. Accordingly, we arrive at the second axis of our framework: the question of multisensorialism and embodiment. Here, we recognise the presence of human autonomy and simultaneously view mobile situations as materiality and design but also as the choices and

modes of interactions through which humans stage their mobile presences (in multiple and often quite complex ways).

Multisensorialism and embodiment

As walking is a 'muscular-powered' mode of mobility (Jensen, 2013: 40), the way we perceive and sense the world as we move through it is of fundamental importance to how we understand it, thus we introduce the significance of multisensorialism and embodiment (Jensen, 2013: 40). Movement is essential to being human and how we inhabit the world: '*We were born to move – not merely to be transported, but to use our bodies to propel us across the landscape. Our genetic forebears have been walking for four million years'* (Montgomery, 2013: 187).

We single out the dimensions of 'embodied performance' and multi-sensorial experience as two key dimensions for understanding pedestrianism. Needless to say, humans sense all the ways in which they are mobile. However, in dealing with a mode of mobility where the person and the 'vehicle' are identical, sensing and performing become most important dimensions to the understanding of pedestrianism. No mode of mobility is unmediated, but walking is in some respect the 'least mediated' and thus the one were the embodied performance and the mode of mobility are in closest association. 'Moving as feeling, and feeling as moving' are key dimensions here:

> "When I think of my body and ask what it does to earn that name, two things stand out. It moves. It feels. In fact, it does both at the same time. It moves as it feels, and it feels itself moving. Can we think of a body without this: an intrinsic connection between movement and sensation whereby each immediately summons the other?" (Massumi, 2002: IX).

The literature on embodiment and the ways in which we exist in the world through complex and open multisensorial engagements are too vast to explore in detail within this paper. However, classic phenomenology as coined by Merleau-Ponty (1945/94) as well as the phenomenological approaches of Tuan (1977) and Pallasmaa (2005) serve as partial inspiration to the development of our position. In particular, the re-thinking of phenomenology as done by Don Ihde (1993) and Peter-Paul Verbeek (2005) under the heading of 'post-phenomenology' are important correctives that bring classic phenomenology to eye level with insights from ANT, STS and Materialist thinkers (Bennett, 2010; Haraway, 2016; Latour, 2005). These

studies problematise subjective and idealist explanatory models by opening up to understanding how the subject-object dichotomy collapses. This is essential to the floating life framing that bridges human bodies with the material surroundings in pursuit of overcoming the subject-object split.

Having a quantitative understanding of how much space 'average human bodies' take up and how to build and design for them is not unimportant. For example, the quasi-positivist schemes of Buchmüller and Weidmann estimate that "the dynamic width of pedestrians has an average value of about 74 cm" (Buchmüller and Weidmann, 2006: 5). While, the quantitative distance measure might be relevant to understanding or valorising space for/between pedestrians, it is somewhat oblivious to the sensitivity of floating life and pedestrianism as a mode of being. Likewise, the detailed human-body schemes of (able) bodied humans in schematic grocery stores, kitchens, and movie theatres that we find in the manual for design proportions by Neufert and Neufert (2000) put forward universal 'standards' as all encompassing. These examples of how much space bodies 'take up', are relevant but remain 'from the outside' in relation to understandings on how pedestrians feel and what motivates them, how it feels to inhabit cities through walking, and what a pedestrian floating life may feel like (see, for example, Whyte, 1988). In considering the mobile situation of walking as complex and dynamic, we must be attentive to the 'emotionally charged zone around the body' and the 'portable territory that we all carry' (Sommer, 2007: 39, 42). Likewise, we must recognise that 'the boundaries of self extends beyond the body' (Hall, 1966: 11). Accordingly, the embodiment of moving connects not only to significant social and cultural practices and scripts, but also to affect and ways of being that are not necessarily conscious and reflective (Jensen, 2021). The mobile and multisensorial practices of pedestrians are practices of 'dwelling-in-motion' and therefore importantly 'corporeal' (Elliot and Urry, 2010: 16; Merleau-Ponty, 1945/94: 93-94).

However, we need to expand on the phenomenological dimension referenced above with insight into the collapse of the subject-object dichotomy predominant in conceptualisations of walking practices (see, for example, Lo, 2009; Brookfield, 2017; Werner et al., 2018; Bass and Livingston, 2018). The idea that 'I am walking' refers to an autonomous subject moving across a 'neutral surface' is intuitively straight forward – but also inaccurate. The complexity and the holistic relational understanding of the walking body to atmospheres, surfaces, climates, materials, spaces, and technologies present in the situation invalidates the simple idea of a detached and autonomous body transgression space as a neutral surface. Walking is therefore

not unmediated even though we may be inclined to think so. Rather, the 'naked capacities' of our bodies are rarely enough to empower and afford the mobile situation:

> "Only by using the technology is my bodily power enhanced and magnified by speed, through distance, or by any of the other ways in which technologies change my capacities. These capacities are always different from my naked capacities" (Ihde, 1990: 75, emphasis in original).

The material contextualisation of embodied situations may be unreflected as a function of habitual and routinised practices. However, with deeper consideration we readily see that we are 'connected' to the world:

> "To focus on feeling one's body is to foreground it against its environmental background, which must be somehow felt in order to constitute that experienced background. One cannot feel oneself sitting or standing without feeling that part of the environment upon which one sits or stands. Nor can one feel oneself breathing without feeling the surrounding air we inhale. Such lessons of somatic self-consciousness eventually point toward the vision of an essentially situated, relational, and symbolic self rather that the traditional concept of an autonomous self-grounded in an individual, monadic, indestructible and unchanging soul" (Schusterman, 2008: 8, our emphasis).

For Schusterman, not only is the body the nexus and mediating point between our mobile being and the material world, it is also affecting us in ways that suggests the need of more fine-grained theoretical framework. This resonates with notions of the 'extended body' and the 'stretched situation' as presented by Reynolds (2018) and Jensen (2013; 2021) as well as 'environmental awareness' and 'foregrounded cognition' put forward by Manning and Massumi (2014).

The floating life perspective sees the walking body as more than mediating and relationally connected to spaces and things. With Lefebvre, we might indeed think of the body as 'creating space' (1991: 170). Pedestrians are not entering void spaces 'as containers', but rather by their bodily presences are co-constituting and articulating spaces as an effect of their bodily practices. Seen this way, the pedestrian is co-creating the urban spaces that she or he inhabits. Not by passively 'moving into' them, but actively co-constituting them. Consequently, the body with

its sensorial, affective, and emotional 'outreach' is the nexus of foreground and background enacting what can be termed 'affective atmospheres' (Anderson and Ash, 2015). This resonates with recent explorations into 'pedestrian affect' (Calvert et al., 2019). In their study Calvert et al. (2019) found that the surrounding urban environment spurred sensations, emotions, affect, and thoughts amongst pedestrians including problem solving, day dreaming and creative thinking in space. In grouping theories on embodied performance and multi-sensorial experience with insights from Mobilities research on materiality and design, we define the four key dimensions for understanding pedestrianism as a particular quality of mobilities. We therefore recommend that site-specific and empirical studies of mobilities in situ pay specific attention to these dimensions and interrogate their relationships.

Rethinking Pedestrianism - Concluding remarks

The perspective of floating life that has been suggested in this paper is an attempt to rethink what walking might mean, and how we may transition to a more sensitive understanding of this way of moving in the world. On the theoretical and conceptual level we have suggested an increased attention to the mobile situation, and in particular how the pedestrian becomes a nexus of materialites and design as well as of embodiment and multisensorialism. The floating life framework highlights the need to be alert and attentive to detail on material engagements with the many and complex dimensions of being in the world. On aggregated levels we learn that humans are like 'particles' and can be modelled and simulated statistically in traffic models or defined via rational understandings of their behaviour in planning and policy making. However, these do not account for the floating life perspective and the ontological dimensions of how walking is planned and how designed environments feel as 'a mode of being'.

In reflecting on practice for urban design, city planning and policy, our framework raises important questions on the 'portable territory' of the body and how sensitivity toward the pedestrian mode of mobility may encourage a more nuanced appreciation of this way of moving (Sommer, 2007). Our perspective emphasises that planning material cities for pedestrians cannot be addressed through 'universal/global' attributes, rather, our journeys are unique, shape who we are and what we are able to do. Thus, for planning and planners, walking as a particular quality of mobility and as a mobile situation is to recognise the intrinsic connection between movement and sensation; the walking body relates to atmospheres, surfaces, climates, materials, spaces and technologies in unison.

Planning and designing for shared and walkable public space is recognised as "key to achieving equity between differences of social class, ethnicity, gender, age and ability" (Dovey and Pafka, 2020: 94). Seeing pedestrianism as floating life is to be assertive to this reprioritisation of inclusive 'active mobility'. But also, it suggests, to see atmospheres and ambiences in places where planning and policy discourses see instrumental acts of physical infrastructure. When seen from the vantage point of floating life, infrastructural landscapes may offer urban ambiences and stimulating experiences as well as punctual transport. As the dedication of city space and policy attention to pedestrians continues to accelerate, we encourage that the arguments made here be harvested to support policy and practice which prioritise affordances and experiences in the design of new pathway systems for urban exploration and pedestrian movement in cities.

Floating life is a first attempt to posit *Pedestrianism 2.0* – as a way to advocate for broader mindset change on walking as a quality of mobility in city planning and urban design. Through our conceptual framework we highlight how understanding the ontological dimension of walking is of critical significance to how we design and adapt cities into the future. However, further research is needed to empirically test the potentials of the framework presented in this paper. Further work could extend the 'floating life' perspective through case studies and the gathering of professional perspectives in planning and design on the (post) phenomenological dimensions of walking to begin to identify if hierarchies exist between the four components of our framework - materiality, embodiment, design and experience – as well as if/how these components feature in planning and designing for walking in specific contexts. We recommend that site-specific and empirical studies of mobilities in situ pay specific attention to these dimensions and interrogate their relationships.

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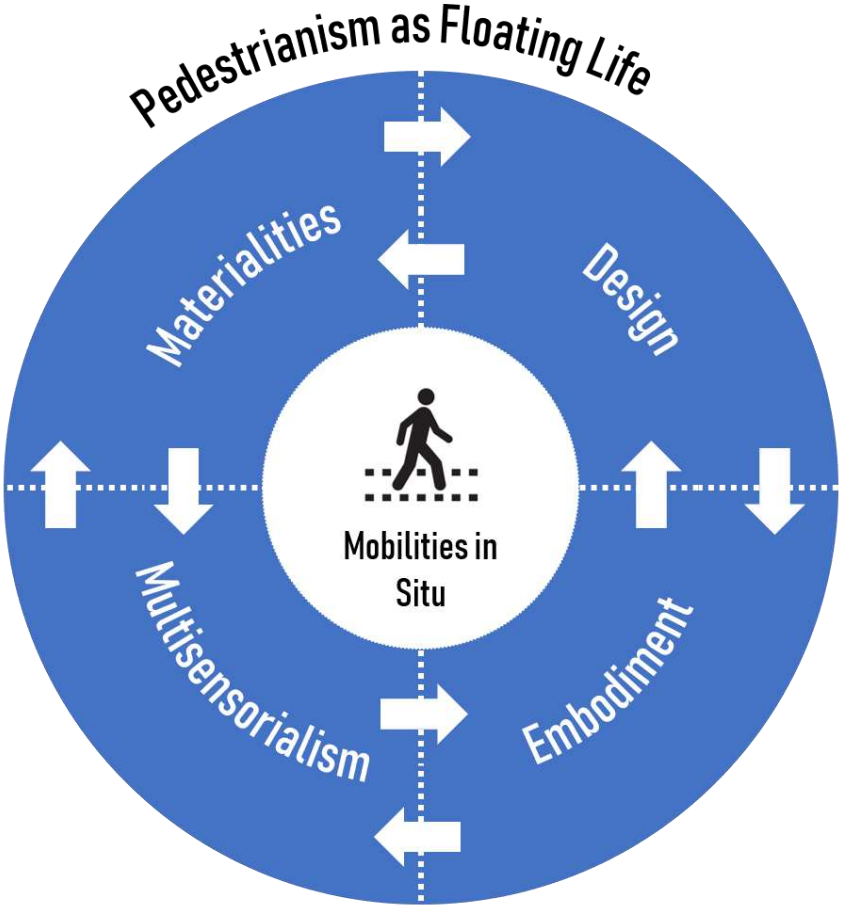

Figure 1: The conceptual framework for pedestrianism as floating life