Walking and Family Lives

Susannah Clement

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Walking and Family Lives

Susannah Clement

This thesis is presented as part of the requirements for the conferral of the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Supervisors:
Professor Gordon Waitt
Professor Ian Buchanan

University of Wollongong
School of Geography and Sustainable Communities

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This research has been conducted with the support of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.
**Declaration**

I, Susannah Clement, declare that this thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the conferral of the degree Doctor of Philosophy, from the University of Wollongong, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

Susannah Clement

10th April 2018

Parts of the following publications completed during my candidature are reproduced in this thesis:


Abstract

This thesis examines the relationship between walking and everyday family lives. Sitting at the intersection of mobility studies and children’s geographies, this thesis responds to recent calls from geographers to investigate family mobility as a relational place and identity making practice. This thesis offers the familial walking assemblage as a feminist inspired conceptual framework to reimagine how places and family are constituted on-the-move somewhere. Attention is drawn to thinking about how familial identities and places emerge through the entanglement of sensuous bodies, ideas, emotions, affects and the more-than-human. Building upon methodological arguments which advocate for sensory and mobile methods, a walking sensory ethnography was developed involving interviews, drawing activities, go-alongs, video and audio recorded walks and follow-up conversations. Sixteen families, including twenty-four parents, one grandparent and thirty children (aged 3 months to 15 years), living in Wollongong, a car-dependent regional city on the east coast of New South Wales, Australia, participated in the research. Analysis of empirical materials draws on assemblage thinking integrated with material feminist theories to highlight the challenges and complexities of walking for families which are often ignored by walkability research. For instance, the formation and upkeep of motherhood through moments of care; the affective affordances and atmospheres of pram mobilities for children and mothers; the material and expressive forces of walking with the weather; and the emotional politics of family bushwalking. By examining these more-than-human entanglements and emerging subjects this thesis highlights the less tangible, emotional and
affective moments, discourses, movements and flows which influence why, how and when families walk together. This thesis seeks to inform policy debates about what constitutes a pedestrian-friendly city for families.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Daniel (mid-40s): When I said to our friends that I was going to let our kids walk to school, when they were in primary school, same as I went to school, Ing [Daniel’s wife] and her friends and some of my friends, would say: ‘You can’t do that! They have to cross Princes Highway to go to Lindsay Park from Mount Saint Thomas. Ahhh, it’s not safe, because they are too young to cross the road’. And I said: ‘Well, I can teach them’. But, we basically didn’t send them off to walk to school.

Do families even walk anymore?

Walking is increasingly positioned as an activity that is ‘good’ for our physical health, our environment and our cities. Yet, despite the promotion of walking as an active mode of transport for healthy, sustainable and liveable cities, rates of walking as an everyday transport mode are declining for families in Australia, and indeed in many other western countries (including New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States and Canada). In Australia, there has been a 42% decline in primary school aged children walking to school since the 1970s (Active Healthy Kids Australia 2014) and almost half of children are driven to school by parents (Carver, Timperio, et al. 2013). As Amato (2004, p.18) writes: ‘walking today increasingly seems largely superfluous and antiquated, a mere adjunct activity in a sitting and riding society’. Urry (2000) similarly argues that in our fast paced modern world, the invention of the car and its ability to generate fast mobilities has reduced
the pleasures and usefulness of walking and strolling. Coupling this with the low population and housing density of many Australian cities, families often need and are expected to travel great distances daily for work and leisure. The average ‘walkable distance’ for parents and children has also decreased in recent generations and is now less than 800 meters (Moving People 2030 Taskforce 2013; Stanley et al. 2015). Furthermore, parental fear of traffic accidents and stranger danger have resulted in Australian children being less likely to walk alone (Whitzman et al. 2009; Carver, Watson, et al. 2013; Schoeppe et al. 2016).

The decline of walking has become a key concern of researchers, organisations and governments who strive to provide sustainable, safer, healthier, more inclusive and liveable cities. Countless studies explore the ‘barriers’ to walking in an effort to improve the walkability of cities (Pooley et al. 2011; Freeman et al. 2012; Speck 2012). Strategies to encourage walking are frequently framed through The International Charter of Walking. Initiated in 2006 by organisation Walk21, the Charter establishes a series of common goals for organisations and governments to appropriate in order to create more walkable cities (Walk21 2006). To date, the Charter has over 5,000 signatures and has been ratified by 500 city mayors around the world. Within this document, walking is understood as a fundamental part of human movement and key to the flourishing of urban life:

Walking is the first thing an infant wants to do and the last thing an old person wants to give up. Walking is the exercise that does not need a gym. ... What’s more, it does not pollute, consumes few natural
resources and is highly efficient. Walking is convenient, it needs no special equipment, is self-regulating and inherently safe. Walking is as natural as breathing (John Butcher [Founder of Walk21] 1999, cited in Walk21 2006, p.2).

However as Middleton (2011b) argues, the positioning of walking by Walk21 and subsequent pedestrian studies as a ‘natural’ activity people ‘just’ do is problematic. This overlooks the actual experience of walking. As Amato (2004) argues, within pedestrian studies, walking is often understood as a mundane form of mobility, while its original meaning ‘to go on a journey’ has become lost amongst the quantification of footfall and generation of comparable indexes. Lorimer (2011) similarly argues that even qualitative research tends to position walking as a functional mode of transport understood in relation to rational choice and economic demand. These approaches overlook the cultures of walking. Stripped away are the everyday details, complexities, diversities, events and bodily practices which make and shape walking. Pedestrian studies remove the pedestrian’s ability to feel, think and act for themselves (Horton et al. 2014).

Geographers have been instrumental in highlighting how walking is always a culturally mediated and embodied activity. Underpinned by the ‘mobilities turn’, geographers have asked questions not only about where and why people walk, but also how people walk. Geographers have examined walking as a place and identity making practice (Edensor 2000b; Wylie 2005; Waitt et al. 2009; Middleton 2009; 2010; 2011b; Lorimer 2011; Andrews et al. 2012; Davison and Curl 2014). As Middleton (2011b, p.100) argues, to
understand why people walk, or don’t walk, we first need to ask ‘what is a walk?’ Middleton’s focuses on the embodied ‘doing’ of walking conceived as a relational interplay between bodies, rhythms, senses, movement, discourses and materials. Hence, instead of asking why families do or don’t walk and what can be done to rectify this, a more productive first step might be to consider:

*What is walking, what is family, and how do families walk together?*

**Research aims, approach and questions**

The aim of this thesis is to better understand the everyday lives of families that walk together. Rather than assuming what walking or family is, this thesis presents the notion of the *familial walking assemblage* to explore the entanglement of material, social and embodied dimensions that sustain the notion of family on-the-move. Assemblage thinking, underpinned by the philosophies of Deleuze and Guatarri (1987), provides a way of analysing the productive set of relations under which discourses, performativities and subjectivities emerge. Hence, assemblage thinking becomes a useful framework for unpacking the politics of everyday life, including how everyday routines of walking sustain the family on-the-move (Buchanan 2017). Specifically, this thesis takes a material feminist reading of assemblage thinking drawing on the work of a number of non-representational and material feminist scholars, including: Elizabeth Grosz (1994; 2008), Sara Ahmed (2004a; 2004b; Ahmed and Stacey 2001), Robyn Longhurst (1995; 2001; 2008; Longhurst et al. 2008), Affrica Taylor (2011; 2013; Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw 2015) and Kate Boyer (2016; Boyer and
Spinney 2016). Bringing assemblage thinking into conversation with material feminist approaches, family is conceived as a *becoming* which is constantly being worked upon, maintained and reproduced through the movement of proximate bodies and their affects. A material feminist inspired assemblage approach highlights the importance of corporeality to help rethink how walking is always experienced in negotiation with how places, family, and familial subjects are constituted somewhere on-the-move.

To unpack the familial walking assemblage this thesis asks three questions:

1) How can assemblage thinking inform academic and policy debates concerned with the pedestrian-friendliness of cities for families?

2) How can research attend to the fleeting working arrangement of more-than-human bodies, materials, discourses, emotions and affects which constitute the familial walking assemblage?

3) How can assemblage thinking contribute to new understandings about how walking configures the emotional and affectual bonds that comprise families on-the-move?

In asking these questions this thesis doesn’t aim to provide an all-encompassing account of walking and family life. Rather this thesis provides a series of chapters which look at the *experience* of walking for families which is often ignored by research that adopts quantitative approaches. For instance, chapters consider the performativities and experiences the caring mother; the pram bound young child; the more-than-human forces of the weather; and the intimacies that sustain family time whilst bushwalking. The
thesis sheds light on the less tangible, emotional and affective moments, discourses, movements and flows which influence why, how and when walking together occurs. In doing so it highlights how subjectivities, places and activities emerge through the familial walking assemblage.

**Research context: walking in Wollongong**

The research context for this thesis is Wollongong; a regional city with a population of approximately 210,000 people situated in New South Wales on the east Australian coast, approximately 60-80kms south of Sydney. The Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) covers 714 square kilometres and occupies a narrow coastal strip bordered by the Royal National Park to the north, Lake Illawarra to the south, the Pacific Ocean to the east, and the Illawarra Escarpment to the west (Wollongong City Council 2016). Wollongong together with Shellharbour LGA and Kiama LGA to the south make up the Illawarra region (Figure 1).

Wollongong is situated in Dharawal (or Thurawal) Country, cared for over thousands of years by the Wodi Wodi people (Wollongong City Council 2016). Being in close proximity to Sydney, the site of British colonial invasion, European settlement of the region began in the early 1800s through the search for grazing and farming land to support the growing colony. European settlement brought the development of extractive industries. The township grew on cedar timber trade, coal mining and later steel manufacturing. The growth of the steelworks at Port Kembla from the 1920s to 1980s saw a number of European migration schemes resulting in Wollongong becoming a multicultural city (Wollongong City Council 2016).
In recent decades, the closure of local coal mines and the downsizing of the steelworks resulted in employment shifting towards information technology, health, education and tourism industries. Wollongong City Council’s branding of Wollongong as the ‘City of Innovation’ highlights the importance of these service sectors (Waitt and Gibson 2009). The University of Wollongong, public and private hospitals, and associated health services
now rival the steelworks as the major employers in the region (Wollongong City Council 2015a). Advantage Wollongong (2017), a partnership between the NSW Government, Wollongong City Council and University of Wollongong, promotes the city as one with all the services and business opportunities as nearby Sydney, but with a more liveable and relaxed beachside lifestyle.

Wollongong is a car-dependent city. Car mobility is considered the norm for most families for getting to work, school drop-offs and pick-ups, ferrying kids between after-school activities, transporting groceries and visiting friends and family. Census data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) confirms this with 73.6% of those employed (above the age of 15) travelling to work by car compared to the national rate of 68.4% (ABS 2016). In comparison, only 3% of Wollongong residents walk to work, which is lower than the national percentage of 3.5% (ABS 2016). In terms of public transport, suburbs are serviced by privatised buses and a north-south train line (the South Coast Line) connecting the Illawarra to Sydney. Since 2009, a state government funded free shuttle bus has serviced the Wollongong CBD, the university and surrounding suburbs. Recent statistics show that over 260,000 people use the Gong Shuttle services each month (Wollongong City Council 2015a). However, whilst the Gong Shuttle is a public transport success story for the inner city, the majority of residents who live in suburbs away from the city centre rely on travelling in private cars with the majority of the city’s amenities and infrastructure designed around private vehicle use (Harada 2014). The website Walk Score (2017) further highlights
Wollongong’s car-dependency. The city scores only 48 out of 100 walkability points based on the available amenities and services accessible by foot. The car’s necessity for facilitating the fast paced rhythms of daily life are ever present in the public debates. Local newspapers and radio stations routinely lament about major arterial road closures, traffic congestion and the lack of parking in the CBD, hospital and university e.g. Parking pain: UOW students shut out residents, Illawarra Mercury (Walsh 2014); When it comes to getting to work in the Illawarra, the car is king, Illawarra Mercury (Humphries 2017).

Whilst walking as transport is not the norm for most Wollongong residents, it does feature as a key leisure and exercise activity. In Wollongong City Council pedestrian planning documents, walking has been conflated with cycling as a leisure activity that occurs alongside waterfronts (Wollongong City Council 2007b). For instance, the proposed Grand Pacific Walk seeks to connect and repair existing pedestrian infrastructure to create a continuous shared pathway along the coast from the Royal National Park in north to Lake Illawarra in the south (Wollongong City Council 2013). The project’s primary aim is to encourage tourism, with the proposed route running parallel to the existing Grand Pacific Tourist Drive.

However, in the last five years, Wollongong City Council’s narrow focus on walking has begun to broaden. Walking has increasingly appeared in policy documents as a more functional mode of transport central to tackling public health, sustainability and liveability goals. For example, the Council’s ten year strategic plan Wollongong 2022 strives to make ‘walking, cycling and public transport... an accessible and well-resourced means of transport, and
the use of private cars... reduced’ (Wollongong City Council 2012, Goal 6.1, p.36). The Council further reinforced their commitment to walking in 2014 (concurrent with when this research project began) becoming a signatory to Walk21’s *International Charter of Walking*. Since then, improvements to walkability in Wollongong have been at the forefront of city centre revitalization plans and wider LGA strategies. The *Public Spaces Public Life (PSPL)* project undertaken in partnership with internationally renowned Danish consultancy firm Gehl Architects during 2014 and 2015 is a key example (Wollongong City Council 2015a). For Gehl (2001), a liveable city is one with well utilised, accessible, safe and walkable public spaces. The *PSPL* study sought to collect data about how people use the Wollongong city centre by carrying out pedestrian counts, street life observations, quality assessments of streets and buildings, analyzing traffic data, as well as reviewing urban planning, recreation, community, cultural and economic development policies (Wollongong City Council 2015a). Underpinning this study was the notion that walking is more than a mode of transport, but is ‘a way to experience the city streets and enjoy city spaces’ (Wollongong City Council 2015a, p.4).

The *PSPL* project provided important insights to the daily rhythms and number of people on-foot in the city centre. However, the project lacked an account of the lived experience of walking. The *Lively Cities* ARC Linkages project between Council and geography and humanities scholars from the University of Wollongong and University of Tasmania sought to compliment the *PSPL* research by providing more in-depth accounts of Wollongong
resident’s city centre experiences (Wollongong City Council 2015a). The Lively Cities research did this by through a mail-out survey ‘Impressions of Wollongong City Centre’ distributed to over 9,000 residents. The survey also invited respondents to participate in a semi-structured interview, walk-along, video-methods and follow-up interview (Wollongong City Council 2015a). However, like the PSPL study, this work was focused on the city centre and the experiences of individual, adult residents. A gap exists in understanding children and family’s experiences of pedestrian mobility city-wide.

This thesis compliments and extends the work done by the PSPL and Lively Cities projects by exploring the lived experiences of walking for Wollongong families in and beyond Wollongong city centre. It argues that greater attention should be given to thinking about how families moving through Wollongong on-foot create certain embodiments that make and remake the city as pedestrian-friendly or not. In doing so it shows how walkable places are embedded in socially-embodied feelings of family.

In August 2017, during the final year of this project Wollongong City Council developed and exhibited the Draft City of Wollongong Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021 (Wollongong City Council 2017). This aims to address a range of factors that deter walking and improve the city’s walkability. The Draft Pedestrian Plan sets out five goals - directly informed by the Walk21 principles - to achieve a more pedestrian-friendly Wollongong: (1) Encourage walking, (2) Create pedestrian-friendly places, (3) Make walking safe, (4) Making walking easy and convenient and (5) Work effectivity to
implement the Pedestrian Plan. This current research project contributed to the development of the plan through a presentation of preliminary findings in 2016 and a formal submission to Council during the public exhibition period. The Draft Pedestrian Plan is an important step in making Wollongong a more pedestrian-friendly city.

**Thesis structure**

In order to understand how families walk together in Wollongong, the notion of the familial walking assemblage is developed throughout the following eight chapters. This thesis doesn’t have a standalone conceptual framework chapter. Instead, each chapter provides insight into how assemblage thinking, underpinned by the work Deleuze and Guattari (1987), may be applied alongside material feminist theories to better understand the intimate, relational temporalities and spatialities of walking and family lives.

This project sits at the intersection of two bodies of literature: walking studies and children’s geographies. Structured in three parts, Chapter 2 reviews these diverse fields, identifying the approaches, overlaps and knowledge gaps. Part 1 charts the many ways walking and the subject of the pedestrian have been studied beginning with a discussion on the romanticisation of walking, before considering how walking has been used as a political and spatializing act. Part 1 concludes with a discussion about the mobilities turn and the proliferation of ‘new’ walking studies which seek to investigate the lived and everyday experiences of walking. Part 2 explores walking in relation to children’s geographies. It begins with a discussion about social studies of childhood, before providing a critique of the present
focus of children's mobility as independent. Part 2 concludes by highlighting a gap in the literature on family walking experiences. Part 3 charts how these ideas have played out in health, sustainable and liveable city policies to more recent walkability indexes measuring walking for its health and sustainability benefits. The chapter concludes by arguing that whilst walking has received enormous scholarly and policy attention, limited work looks beyond the solitary adult pedestrian or independent child. This chapter is significant as it identifies a lack of research and policy which addresses the walking experiences of families. Hence, the chapter seeks to address the first research question by highlighting the productive possibility of an assemblage approach for attending to pedestrian-friendly cities.

Chapter 3 addresses the second research question through engaging with the methodological challenges of mobilities research where ‘fleeting moments’ must somehow be captured, represented and analysed. To do so it builds upon methodological arguments that advocate for sensory ethnographies (Pink 2009). The chapter is structured in three parts: reviewing, designing and doing. Part 1 reviews the literature on walking as method and sensory ethnographies, highlighting how the mobilities turn and its non-representational theories has resulted in the need for in situ methods which attend to the ephemeral, emotional and affective dimensions of everyday life. This part ends with a discussion of three tenets of feminist inspired walking sensory ethnography which underpin the project. Part 2 recounts the process of developing a walking sensory ethnography method with sixteen families living in Wollongong. This section outlines the piloting
of mobile methods, research ethics, recruitment and sample of participating families. Part 3 outlines how a mixed-method approach was employed which involved semi-structured interviews with parents and grandparents, draw and talk activities with children, go-alongs, participant lead video and audio recordings of walks, and follow-up interviews. This section concludes with a discussion on analysis of data as never isolated from the researcher’s embodied knowing.

Chapters 4-7 provide analysis of the empirical materials and addresses the third research question drawing attention to different permutations of the familial walking assemblage and emergent familial subjectivities. For instance, Chapter 4 focuses on the experiences of mothers who walk with children. Drawing on assemblage thinking and feminist care ethics the chapter argues that entanglements with bodies and materials alongside ideas, emotions and affects shape how motherhood is felt on-the-move through ‘moments of care’. It highlights five moments where care emerges not just as a gendered practice, but as an affective force and embodiment of motherhood; these include: preparedness, togetherness, playfulness, watchfulness and attentiveness. Instead of assuming the figure of the mother is a given identity; insights are provided into how the dilemmas of becoming a ‘good’ mobile mother are felt through moments of care. This chapter seeks to build upon the work of feminist scholars who have highlighted how gendered identities are always enrolled in experiences of urban space.

Chapter 5 considers who has the ‘right to the city’, by exploring what makes a child-friendly city through examining the experiences of mothers
and children who walk with prams. The chapter develops the concept of the *mother-child-pram assemblage* to bring to the fore the corporeal dimensions of everyday pram journeys for mothers and young children whose experiences are often omitted from research and policy documents. The chapter highlights how the *affective affordances* and *affective atmospheres* of pram mobilities shape urban experience by reference to how motherhood and childhood are achieved on-the-move.

Chapter 6 looks to the weather. It unpacks how weather is more than just ‘a factor’ that shapes the walking activities of families, but is deeply intertwined in the production of families’ everyday pedestrian mobility. This chapter brings assemblage theories into conversation with material feminist theories to extend thinking around skin encounters. The chapter seeks to better understand how the weather is registered on and through the body as an affective resonance and, in turn, how this is mediated by the material and expressive forces of bodies, objects and places. Through focusing on what the weather does to bodies and what bodies do to the weather, the chapter considers how the material and expressive limits of the familial walking assemblage play out in relation to participants anticipated and actual encounters with sunshine, wind and rain.

The final empirical chapter, Chapter 7, continues to extend upon more-than-human scholarship by exploring how place, nature, child, parent and family are constituted as relational becomings which emerge through bushwalking as a territorialising process. The chapter draws upon a video and follow-up interview of one family bushwalk in the Minnamurra
Rainforest, a popular ‘family-friendly’ tourist attraction situated in Budderoo National Park, 30km south of Wollongong. The chapter brings Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concepts of assemblage and territory into conversation with material feminist approaches concerned with corporeality and the politics of emotion (Ahmed 2004). In doing so, the chapter shows how places, subjects and natures are spatially constituted between proximate moving human and non-human bodies, materials, discourses, emotions and affects. Attention is drawn to the temporality of walking in a place designated as nature as generating not only ‘family time’ but also heightened intensities that affirm familial subjectivities. This chapter provides a discussion on the constitutive politics of nature walking, specifically how nature walking helps constitute collective and individual familiar subjectivities and works to include or exclude certain plants, animals and activities.

Chapter 8 summarises the main findings, discussions and questions raised in the thesis. Specifically it outlines the significance of the thesis in how it has sought to conduct research that contributes to academic scholarship and urban policy on reshaping the pedestrian-friendliness of cities; engages with the methodological challenges of mobilities research where ‘there’ is always fleeting; and addresses a gap in the mobilities and children’s geography literature around how walking configures the emotional/affectual bonds that comprise families on-the-move. This chapter concludes with a brief outline of the ‘next steps’ for future research into walking and family lives.
Chapter 2: Progress towards walking and family lives: a theoretical and policy-related discussion

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to offer an alternative entry point to discussion of family lives on-the-move by considering what is known about walking and family mobility. To do so, the chapter is divided into three parts. Part 1 charts the many different theoretical approaches to help better understand walking and the subject of the pedestrian. It examines what it means to walk, highlighting the multiple ways of walking from aristocratic strolling, romantic countryside rambles, flâneurie, to the more political déambulations, derives, tactical and sensory engagements which can be achieved through journeying on-foot. It also charts recent proliferation of walking studies as a result of the ‘mobilities turn’. Part 2 considers children’s geographies and considers what is known about children’s walking. It outlines the growth of new social studies of childhood in recent decades; reviews the focus of children’s walking studies on declining rates of independent mobility; and examines the work of non-representational and more-than-human scholars who argue that greater focus needs to be on collective and relational everyday mobilities of families. Part 3 discusses how walking is known in the policy context. This examines and critiques the way walkability informs policy goals to deliver healthy, sustainable and liveable cities.
Part 1: Ways of walking

Numerous studies lament that walking is in decline. Only 18.7% of trips to places of work or study in Australia (less than 5km) are done on-foot (Moving People 2030 Taskforce 2013). As Pooley et al. (2011) found, walking is now understood as an unusual mode of transport in families’ fast paced modern lives. Walking is superfluous; too slow and too limited in spatial range to be of any use in today’s society. However, claims like these are presumptuous. They assume that walking is used simply to get from A to B in a timely and efficient manner. To return to the central tenant of this thesis, before we can understand why people do or don’t walk, we first need to ask ‘what is a walk?’ (Middleton 2011b, p.100). Part 1 of this chapter charts how walking has been understood within western literature, social science and humanities scholarship.

Strolling, rambling and sauntering

Walking was not always understood as an exceptional activity. Until the last few hundred years, journeying on foot was the form of transport most people were mobile in their day-to-day lives (Amato 2004). In eighteenth century pre-industrial England, walking was considered ‘tedious and commonplace’ activity for the poor; ‘a view that lingers in the residual connotations of the word ‘pedestrian’’ (Ingold 2004, p.321). Whilst walking as a mode of journeying was relegated to the commoners of the pre-industrial city, the elite partook in strolling. Strolling initially became fashionable in the Renaissance period of the fourteenth century (Amato 2004). It was an activity for those who had the time to partake in slower, non-purposive mobility. Royalty and aristocracy would spend a portion of each day
promenading with the purpose of being seen by others (Amato 2004). Dress, posture and location - how one strolled- was central to distinguishing one’s level of nobility. Amato (2004) describes how the design of parks, gardens and courts allowed for such posturing. By the nineteenth century, strolling had become a past time not only for nobility but for the burgeoning upper middle-classes. This is evident in Jane Austin’s 1813 novel *Pride and Prejudice*, where strolling and walking are the backdrop of many of the interactions between characters as well as the subject of conversation. Austin’s work provides an incidental inventory of the types of walks, landscapes and conditions suitable for walking in nineteenth century England (Solnit 2000). For example, whilst strolling around the grounds of estates is an encouraged pastime for young women, Elizabeth (the protagonist) is chastised for walking three miles through muddy fields alone on a cold morning. Elizabeth’s walking, much like her character, transgresses the bounds of her gender and class. Austin draws inspiration from the Romantic poets, who towards the end of the eighteenth century began to advocate for the liberation of the self by walking beyond the walls of manicured gardens.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the first in a long tradition of poetic pedestrianism which emerged in European and American literature from the eighteenth century (Amato 2004). Rousseau viewed walking in nature as restorative and the antidote to the constraints of urban life (Amato 2004). Rousseau’s (1992) unfinished book *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*, published posthumously in 1782, brought together his love of walking with his love of
botany, reinstating the link between walking, exploration and human's connection to nature. Ironically, his work came at a time when the majority of people still walked because they had to, not because they chose to. Hence, walking in nature offered mainly the upper-classes of society the promise of experiencing one's true self and healing humanity's broken relationship with the natural world in the face of increasing industrialisation.

Soon after Rousseau, William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (members of the Lake Poets) further idealised the romantic practice of walking in a pristine and idyllic nature (Ingold 2004). Recounting his walks in the Lake District, Northern England, Wordsworth’s positioned walking as a way of being-in-the-world away from the constraints of modern life (Solnit 2000). As Amato (2004, p.105) argues, Wordsworth’s poetry continued the ‘romantic ideology that set paths against roads, countryside against city, walker against rider’. For Wordsworth, who would often compose his poems out loud, solitary walking was a way of being with the landscape as well as a mode of landscape representation (Solnit 2000).

Almost a century later, the American, Henry David Thoreau repopularised solitary walking in a nature as a place of wilderness and thus seemingly untouched by humans (Amato 2004). Thoreau argued that walking is a self-reflective spiritual act that only occurs when away from society. Thoreau was deeply troubled by the growth of American cities as a result of the increasing mechanisation of transport. This is particularly prevalent in Walking and the Wild (published posthumously in 1862 simply as Walking) he positions walking as an essentially human trait and integral to the maintenance of
wellbeing. Instead of walking (or what he calls *sauntering*) being an activity done by the poor or inferior, Thoreau declares the walker belongs to a ‘more ancient and honourable class’ than those who ride (Thoreau 1862 cited in Amato 2004, p.148). Adams (2001, p.192) argues that for Thoreau, ‘walking is presented in opposition to urbanization, industrialization, and modernization — a response to the shock of rapid social and environmental change’. Hence Thoreau, like other Romantic writers, encouraged people to venture to remote and sublime landscapes to experience their ‘true’ self. For the natural and social sciences, like geography and anthropology, this resulted in the impetus to study the world up close, seek out ‘uncharted’ places to explore and make contact with Indigenous peoples (Amato 2004). By the turn of the twentieth century with the motorised transport revolution in full swing, walking in nature as a pleasurable and healthy activity was well entrenched in the cultural psyche of the growing middle classes. This is evidenced by the growth of ‘nature trails’ in National Parks (Palmer 2004).

Romantic affiliations with walking in places beyond the urban continue to inform ideas about the benefits of spending time outdoors in nature – a place understood as ‘wild’, ‘pristine’ and separate from ‘human culture’ (Edensor 2000b; Castree 2005). Hence, nature places are often constructed as places where people are a problem, unless they are engaged in activities like walking (Palmer 2004; Waitt et al. 2009). Walking also becomes a part of ‘doing’ nature conservation through enacting various discourses of environmental management (Mackenzie 2008; Waitt et al. 2009, see chapter 7 for discussion).
Whilst the literature of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries was influential in shaping ideas about walking beyond the city, literature from the late-nineteenth century returned to romanticising forms of urban walking. This occurred most prolifically through the figure of the flâneur. The flâneur is a man of leisure, a solitary walker and a loiterer (Tester 1994). For the flâneur the city is a source of artistic exploration and everyday inspiration. The flâneur is both a real figure that inhabits the city and a metaphor that personifies modernity. It was the twentieth century work of Walter Benjamin that cemented nineteenth century Parisian poet Charles Baudelaire as the quintessential flâneur (Solnit 2000). Benjamin argued that Baudelaire’s representations of Paris captured the essence of modernity and signalled how the intricacies of everyday urban life contradicted understandings of the urban as reductive and defined by industrialised processes. Like the documentary practices of the Romantic poets and explorers, the flâneur goes ’botanizing on the asphalt’ (Benjamin 1973, p. 36 cited in Law 1999, p.583), observing the city as he walks. But his strolling is not idle or aimless, the flâneur creates a narrative as he walks, re-representing city sights into poetry and art (Jenks and Neves 2000). Lucas (2008) argues that the flâneur inscribes himself upon the city as he walks to observe, as well as being observed by others. The flâneur is both part of the city’s identity as well as being detached from it through his ability to be reflexive. The flâneur can be thought of as a type of urban ethnographer, whose ultimate desire is to come to grips with the city (Jenks and Neves 2000). The flâneur is a key figure in contemporary imaginings of urban space.
Flâneurialism or flânerie, as a mode of experiencing and writing the city has attracted many critiques. Feminist critics argue that the structures of social patriarchy cause flânerie to be a male only endeavour (Wolff 1985; Law 1999; Solnit 2000). As a man, the flâneur has a privileged gaze of the streets (Hubbard 2006). No woman would or could be considered a flâneur because of how the city is explicitly gendered and sexed as a hetero-masculine space (Jenks and Neves 2000). Solnit (2000, p.234) highlights how the English language is rife with words that sexualise women’s walking in negative terms including, ‘streetwalkers’, ‘women of the street’, ‘women on the town’ and ‘public women’. In comparison, terms such as ‘man about town’ or ‘man of the streets’ have a more positive association. When a woman wanders or roams city streets on her own she violates sexual conventions of respectable middle-class femininity (Solnit 2000). In the nineteenth century, women were often portrayed as too frail and pure and without a specific purpose for public life. Women’s presence the public sphere was therefore legitimized through shopping; providing they were the ones purchasing and were not being purchased (Solnit 2000). Therefore, women could not be considered flâneurs because they are either interpreted as commodities or consumers while urban walking, never able to sufficiently detach themselves from the commerce of public life (Wolff 1985).

Politics and tactics of urban walking

Benjamin’s flâneur established an urban walking tradition that has gone in and out of literary fashion, highlighting the productive possibilities of walking for sensing, observing, reinscribing and subverting the social order
of city spaces (Chambers 1999; Jenks and Neves 2000). For instance, the walk became central to Surrealism in the 1920s. Surrealism regarded the city as the dwelling place of the modern unconsciousness. Walking or a *déambulation* became a way to ‘give up conscious control, submit to risk and chance and reveal the unconsciousness zones of urban life’ (Bassett 2004, p.399). For this to occur Surrealists adopted an ‘ultrareceptive posture’ to allow themselves to be in a state where ‘something’ would happen (Bassett 2004, p.399).

Surrealism was closely followed by the Situationalist movement of the late 1950s and 1960s. This was a critique of capitalism and conceived of the city as offering possibilities for a variety of political, artistic and spatial liberatory practices. Guy Debord (1967), founder of the Situationalist movement, argued that capitalism was reducing modern life to an accumulation of spectacles and a commodity of unsustainable relations. For Debord (1967), cities have a psychogeographical relief or contouring, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes which strongly encourage and discourage entry, into or exit from, certain zones. Debord’s (1967, p.215) critique also extended to modernist urban architecture and city planning, arguing that the division of the city into ‘functional zones’ represented an ‘impoverishment and negation of real life.’

Debord conceived of the *dérive* as a walking based psychogeographical method that aimed to resist and confront the norms of place (Pinder 2011). Following Debord, walking became understood within the Situationist movement as a subversive political act. Like the Surrealist’s déambulations,
in a dérive people are conceived to abandon their usual motives and create a radical re-writing of their mental map of the city. As Lucas (2008 p.171) states: ‘The dérive entails playful-constructive behaviour and awareness of psychogeographical effects, which distinguishes it from classical notions of the journey and the stroll’. The dérive was understood as a transgressive political act, with the intention of disrupting habitual ways of experiencing the urban (Bridger 2013). For example, on a dérive one tries to shed class and other social characteristics that cultivate a sense of marginality.

Psychogeography has enjoyed renewed academic interest in recent years through writings and tropes of Will Self (2007) and Ian Sinclair (2003a; 2003b; 2009). These have been of particular interest to urban geographers interested in the politics of walking and urban space. For example Pinder’s (2005; 2011) artful walking, Edensor’s (2007; 2008) walks through industrial ruins, and Garrett’s (2013a) ‘place hacking’ intends to subvert the capitalist control of urban space. However, this style of walking as method has been critiqued. First, as Merriman (2015) argues, academia’s obsession with solitary, extraordinary and transgressive wanderings is underpinned a cultural romanticisation of walking. Second, gender and class is raised in many feminist critiques of psychogeography (Mott and Roberts 2014). Psychogeographers have been argued to adopt a masculine and privileged gaze, marching around, observing and writing about the city as if it is a pre-existing wilderness there for the taking (Bassett 2004; Bridger 2013). And third, psychogeographic approaches privilege the human-centred world with attention turning to the mind over the body. This omission has been
criticised by feminist scholars who have called for geographers to consider the power relations that constitute embodied differences and urban experiences (Mott and Roberts 2014).

Urban walking can also be thought of as an everyday act of resistance. For de Certeau (1984, p.95), the city is a ‘mythical landmark for socioeconomic and political strategies’ that celebrates urban life and modernity. However, for de Certeau, the city is not just a field of programmed and regulated operations. De Certeau employs the notion of ‘tactics’ to argue that the everyday actions of people cannot be suppressed and controlled by overarching systems. For example, whilst mappable, the movement of pedestrians cannot be easily reduced to what is represented in a surveys and walking route. These miss what is essential to understanding the experience of walking – that is, ‘the act of passing by’.

They [pedestrians] cannot be counted because each unit has a qualitative character: a style of tactile appreciation and kinaesthetic appropriation. Their swarming mass is an innumerable collection of singularities. Their intertwined paths give shape to spaces. They weave places together…. They are not localized; it is rather they that spatialize. (de Certeau 1984, p.97)

De Certeau (1984, p.93) argues that city spaces are not pre-existing and that the act of walking creates spaces – walkers are ‘practitioners of the city’. Walking in the city is not merely a way of getting around or going from Point A to Point B. The route a walker takes, or their ‘pedestrian speech act’, joins origin and destination together, writing the city into being (de Certeau 1984,
Furthermore, rather than walking prescribed routes imagined by city planners, pedestrians appropriate urban space to suit their needs. Through this political practice styles or ‘rhetoric of walking’ emerge (de Certeau 1984, p.99). This rhetoric creates a knowledge base of usable routes and detours necessary for one to move through the city. Pedestrian tactics can challenge and destabilise overarching power structures. Furthermore as Solnit (2000, p.213) notes, if we follow de Certeau and understand the city as produced by walkers, then a post-pedestrian city is at risk of decay and decline. This is reiterated by Jacobs (1961) who argues that walking is what imbues a city with life; hence, an un-walked city is a dead city.

De Certeau’s work is a cornerstone of urban studies, however work does not come without its critiques. Middleton (2011b) questions whether pedestrians actually transverse the streets in such highly politicised ways. The heroisation of the ordinary walker overlooks the regimented and constrained dimensions of different pedestrian experiences (Edensor 1998). However, as Buchanan (2000) argues, what de Certeau’s work does provide is series of useful questions for thinking about the city and the walking body outside of modernist city structures. Buchanan (1996) highlights how de Certeau’s work is indebted to Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) phenomenology of the body and its movements.

Phenomenology is the study of experience and consciousness, investigating how the normally ignored sensory aspects of place shape experience. A key theorist in this field is Merleau-Ponty. Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology rejects an empiricist model that suggests people register
senses by external objects stimulating internal organs. Instead his work embraces the idea that perception begins in the body and ends in objects (Pink 2011, p. 265). Following Merleau-Ponty (1962) walking is an embodied means for not just perceiving time and space, but a way of producing the world through the reflexive and kinaesthetic acts of perception (Jensen et al. 2015). Merleau-Ponty repositions the body as central to perception and place-making. However his work is not without critique. For instance, non-representational approaches refute the desire of phenomenology to capture the ‘actual’ experience of the world (Adams St. Pierre 2013). Nevertheless, phenomenology has been key to informing the so-called ‘mobilities turn’ and ‘new’ walking studies.

**The ‘mobilities turn’ and ‘new’ walking studies**

The previous sections highlighted the ways in which walking has received different types of scholarly attention over the last few centuries. Unlike its highly romanticised and politicised predecessors, twenty-first century scholarship on walking has shifted focus to questions of subjectivity, representation and emergence. The interdisciplinary ‘mobilities turn’ has generated a new wave of walking studies that explore the heterogeneity of pedestrian experiences (Lorimer 2011; Middleton 2011b).

In their paper, The New Mobilities Paradigm, Sheller and Urry (2006) argue that much of the transport and social science research on mobility, including that on walking, has been relativity static. As Sheller and Urry (2006, p.212) write:
Transport researchers, for example, take the ‘demand’ for transport as largely given, as a black box not needing much further investigation...They tend to examine simple categories of travel, such as commuting, leisure, or business as if these were separate and self-contained.

Whilst transport studies understand mobility as a function of cost, time, distance, infrastructure and rational choice, feminist scholars argue that this approach ignores the privileges that makes mobility possible for some and not others (Law 1999; Ahmed 2004a; Skeggs 2004; Hanson 2010). As Skeggs (2004, p.49) writes: ‘Mobility is a resource that not everyone has an equal relationship.’ Hence, the new mobilities paradigm sought to unpack the uneven structures of power that operate to shape all movement that makes up everyday life.

A new mobilities paradigm delineates the context in which both sedentary and nomadic accounts of the social worlds operate, and it questions how that context in itself mobilised, or performed, through ongoing sociotechnical practices, of intermittently mobile material worlds (Sheller and Urry 2006, p.211).

Thus, social life and mobility is not static or fixed, but instead full of multiple connections, flows and disruptions. Drawing on Massey’s (2005) work on uneven geographies, mobility is mediated by local and global power-geometries, between movements of people and materials, as well as physical and symbolic cultural artefacts. The mobility of people, materials and ideas are not preconfigured but emerge through the relational and
messy constellations of power. These ‘new’ mobility studies include scholarship on the movement of humans and non-humans, material objects, goods, services, information and ideas (Cresswell 2010a; 2014; Adey et al. 2014).

For walking studies, the mobilities turn encouraged reimagining walking as a constitutive, place-making, subject-forming process, rather than a fixed activity that is inherently human. The co-constitution of bodies and spaces is a conceptual tenant that underpins much of this work. These ‘new’ walking studies, as Lorimer (2008) called them are underpinned by number of different non-representational approaches, including: phenomenology, post-phenomenology, rhythmanalysis and assemblage theories. Non-representational theories emerged as part of the post-structural and cultural shift within geography in the 1990s (Anderson and Harrison 2010). It sought to move away from thinking about bodies, practices and thing as given or representative, instead understanding these as associated with types of movement eliciting a range of embodied engagements with space (Thrift 2008). Geographers engaging with non-representational theory became interested in processes, bodies, performances and materiality (Anderson and Harrison 2010). The remainder of this section will outline some of these approaches in relation to walking looking to the contributions of Tim Ingold, John Wylie, Tim Edensor and Jennie Middleton.

Walking is a key topic for social anthropologist Tim Ingold (2004; Ingold and Vergunst 2008; 2010; 2011). Ingold takes what he defines as a phenomenological approach to explore walking, focusing on the body's
sensory perception and the formation of walking knowledge and embodied skills. Whilst phenomenology has been criticized by non-representational and feminist scholars for its propensity to emphasis the ‘transcendental nature of our experience’ (Adams St. Pierre 2013, p.651), Ingold’s work often transcends this by adopting a non-representational approach that is attentive to the subjectivity of the body (Anderson and Harrison 2010). For Ingold, walking, or wayfaring, is a mode of not only sensing the world, but being-in-the-world and producing it. Wayfaring is enfolded in the process of place-making whereby people ‘make their way through a world-information’ (Ingold 2008, p. 1802). Echoing de Certeau (1984), Ingold (2011) conceptualises place as a meshwork of human and non-human paths of movement, putting emphasis on lines created by routes and repeated movements. Many have drawn on Ingold’s notion of wayfaring and method of tracing lines of movement as a way of understanding how walking is a mode of place-making (e.g. Pink 2007; 2008; 2009; Vannini et al. 2012; Hackett 2012a; 2012b).

Taking a post-phenomenological approach, John Wylie’s (2004) autoethnographical account of walking the South West Path in the UK is underpinned by similar non-representational ideas to explore the co-production of bodies and place. Instead of falling back on Romantic ideals of walking in the countryside or walking as a given mode-of-being, Wylie (2004 p. 240) argues that walking does not inherently ‘constitute an ’embodied’ connection or immersion that is foreign or resistant to the knowledge produced by gazing, contemplating or navigation. ... Walking is not
thoughtless’. The self and landscape are always emergent, constantly connecting, shifting and dissipating through affective and kinaesthetic moments. Wylie highlights how walking, even when solitary, is a mode of relational becoming entwined with socially mediated materialities and sensibilities. The importance of place in the co-becoming of walking and place is further highlighted by Sidaway (2009). Looking at an urban section of the same South West Coast Path, Sidaway (2013) integrates Wylie’s work with other non-representational scholarship to consider the affects and geopolitics of walking.

Tim Edensor’s (2000b) work further highlights how walking produces, reproduces and interprets space and place in different ways for different people. Walking also produced distinctive forms of embodied practices and bodies. This means that the experience of the body moving through space, it’s pre-existing memories and its subjectivities (these may be social, cultural, aged, ethnic, gendered, classed, and so on) shape the body in space and shapes the space itself. As Edensor (2000b, p.82) writes:

...walking articulates a relationship between pedestrian and place, a relationship which is complex imbrication of the material organization and shape of the landscape, its symbolic meaning, and the ongoing sensual perception and experience of moving through space.

Edensor argues that to walk is always co-produced with subjectivity through his work on the ethnicity and nationality of walking bodies (Edensor 1998), walking in the British countryside (Edensor 2000b), walking in the
city (Edensor 2000a) and walking through industrial ruins (Edensor 2008). Central to Edensor's later work (2010b; 2010a; 2014) has been a consideration of the rhythms of walking, drawing on Lefebvre's (1991) concept of rhythmanalysis. For Lefebvre (1991), everyday life and its meaning, places and subjects are produced through the repetition of gestures, practices and movements. Hence, space is not only produced by the movement of bodies, but through the movement of bodies in relation to time. As Edensor (2010, p. 69) writes: 'Spaces and places thus possess distinctive characteristics according to the ensemble of rhythms that interweave in and across place to produce a particular temporal mixity of events of varying regularity.' As a result of rhythms, familiar places, routines and routes done on-foot become unquestioned and feel mundane. It is through this mundanity that walking is central to the upkeep and continual inscription of spatio-temporal experiences and subjectivities. As Edensor (2010, p.71) writes: 'places are always becoming, and a human, whether stationary or travelling, is one rhythmic constituent in a seething space pulsing with intersecting trajectories and temporalities'. Vergunst (2010) also employs rhythmanalysis as a means to sense the differing rhythms of urban spaces to highlight the geopolitics of urban planning, the socialites of city streets which require ongoing negotiations to fit in or subvert.

Jennie Middleton (2009) also adopts a rhythmanalysis approach to analyse how temporality and spatiality shapes everyday urban walking. Middleton highlights how experiences of time are not sequential or constant, but emerges in relation to the constitution of space and subjectivity. Hence,
there are multiple temporalities associated with movement which are central to the ‘doing’ of walking, place and subjectivity. Middleton’s focus is on the relational interplay between bodies, rhythms, senses, movement, discourses and materials that shape the embodied ‘doing’ of walking.

Whilst much has been written about walking in the city Middleton’s work is unique in that it brings mobilities scholarship into conversation with transport policy. Furthermore she identifies a gap in a walking studies research which overlooks the mundane everyday movements people do on-foot (Middleton 2010; 2011b). As a result Middleton (2010, p.590) examines ‘urban pedestrian movement in the context of the experiences accounted for by those who actually navigate, negotiate, and traverse the city streets in their everyday lives’. For example, Middleton (2011a) shows how the choice to walk is not one made ‘rationally’. Rather, walking is done when the city is felt to be walkable and flows of movement are uninterrupted so that walking can occur almost on ‘autopilot’.

In later work, Middleton (2010) considers the role of material objects that accompany walking. In doing so, walking is positioned as a ‘socio-technical assemblage’ made up of ‘embodied practices, sensual knowledges, affectual relations and spatio-temporal configurations’ (Middleton 2010, p.585). Drawing on Michael’s (2000) discussion mobility technologies such as walking boots; Middleton (2010, p.577) highlights how mundane technologies ‘such as shoes, clothing luggage’ are important to consider when exploring the ‘embodied, spatial and temporal rhythms of pedestrian movement’. Middleton’s use of assemblage follows the work of Latour’s
(2005) actor network theory. As Anderson and McFarlane (2011, p.124) note, assemblage is a term increasingly used in non-representational scholarship as part of the ‘general reconstitution of the social that seeks to blur divisions of social–material, near–far and structure–agency’. As a result the term assemblage is often used uncritically as a descriptor of processes or a provisional collection of different entities (Buchanan 2015; 2017; Anderson and McFarlane 2011). Anderson and McFarlane (2011, p.125) argue that once used in this way ‘assemblage may then be connected up to a potentially limitless array of concepts... literally anything comes to be described as ‘an' assemblage’. Buchanan (2017) argues that assemblage as a concept is most useful when working with reference to its philosophical roots; that being the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987).

Despite the critiques of the use of assemblage, Middleton’s work is a cornerstone of new walking studies and this thesis as it brings the experiences of everyday walking into conversation with pedestrian policy. In her most recent paper Middleton (2016) continues to explore the socialites of everyday walking to unpack New Urbanist notions that uncritically consider walking as ‘good’ through its inherent ability to promote social interaction and community cohesion. Middleton highlights moments where such understanding of walking are challenged as tensions between pedestrians, cyclists and drivers arise.

Following Middleton’s lead, Horton et al. (2014) explore the everyday pedestrian practices of young people. Horton et al. (2014) argue that ‘new’ walking studies prioritise walking-with-a-point; this point being a
destination, a thesis or to achieve a state of self-reflexivity. Horton et al. argue that such approaches are underpinned by adult-centric understandings of what is considered a meaningful walk. As a result, children and young people’s everyday mobility on-foot has been overlooked, unless it is part of their journey to school.

**Part 2: Children’s geographies**

The second part of this chapter turns to children’s geographies to review the literature on children’s walking. Whilst walking has long been a topic of academic scholarship, the focus on children’s walking has only emerged in the last 50 years with concern growing about the decline in children and young people’s physical activity and spatial range. As Roberts and Edwards (2010, p.39) lament: ‘children today walk less than ever in the history of humanity’. In part, attention to this issue was due to the emerging sub-disciplines of children’s geographies and the ‘new’ social studies of childhood. These have been influential in de-centring adult research agendas and giving voice to children’s everyday experiences.

**Children’s geographies and the ‘new’ social studies of childhood**

During the 1980s and 1990s a shift started occurring within childhood studies. There was growing dissatisfaction with the way children were being researched. This dissatisfaction was focused on psychological theories of development that positioned childhood as a ‘stage’ of life course (Prout 2005). Developmental psychologies of childhood resulted in studies exploring the adult-imposed forces of socialisation (such as family structures,
parenting norms or education systems) over children's own experiences. Childhood was ultimately a less valued and hence under researched (Valentine and Holloway 2000).

However, the cultural turn within the social sciences has challenged the notion that childhood is just part of the process of growing up and recognises the social and cultural contexts in which childhood is constructed. A 'new' approach emerged that unsettled the normative, adultist and colonial assumptions about childhood (Prout and James 1990; Mayall 1994; Jenks 1996; Matthews and Limb 1999; Holloway and Valentine 2000). For instance, work by Valentine (2001) highlighted how Greek mythology established a dichotomy whereby children are imagined as 'pure' and 'innocent' in contrast to the ugliness of the adult world. Valentine unpacked the 'vulnerable child' discourse to unsettle the notion that children should be the concern of everyone because they represent 'hope' for the future. In a similar vein, Qvortrup (1994) pointed to how understandings of childhood as a stage of human development positions children as 'human becomings' rather than 'human beings' in their own right. As 'less-than-adults' children are marked as adult's 'other' and are assumed to have the right to innocence and freedom from adult responsibilities, whilst at the same time being considered vulnerable and are in need of care and control (Valentine 1997a; 1997b; Holloway and Valentine 2000; Thomson and Philo 2004; Jones 2013). Hence, adults carry a duty to protect children from dangerous knowledge, situations and people as well as teaching them how to negotiate these risks so that they may live and develop. This is done most notably through
institutionalised schooling, but also through socialisation by family and the wider community. For example, in pedestrian studies of walkability children are almost always ignored or understood as a hindrance for the adults they accompany. For instance Wolff (1973 cited in Ingold 2004) describes children as not looking where they are going, or are described as baggage for parents being dragged along by the hand like a suitcase on wheels. Similarly, Thomsen (2004) has shown that children are described as immobilized ‘others’ dependent on adults. The ‘new’ social studies of childhood aimed to disrupt such discourses.

This paradigm shift resulted in three key ‘mantras’ about childhood, including: (1) childhood is socially constructed; (2) children and young people have agency; and (3) there is value in hearing children and young people’s ‘voices’, experiences and participation in research (see Tisdall and Punch 2012; Chapter 3 for further discussion). The recognition of children’s agency supported a concurrent movement for the development of children’s rights. Most prolifically this resulted in the ratification of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) and later the Child-Friendly City Initiative (CFCI) (UNICEF 2004; Gleeson and Sipe 2006). Whilst these mantras themselves have been interrogated (Bentley 2005; Holt 2006; Tisdall and Punch 2012), at their heart is the aim to de-centre the adultism in research and knowledge production, and provide space for children’s voices in social policies.

The sub-discipline of children’s geographies has been established to address the adult-centred writing and research within the discipline of
geography. Children’s geographies place children as the subjects of research rather than the objects. Conceptualising children as active producers of space, rather than future adults acknowledges children as active participants in their own and others life-worlds. This aims to break down dichotomies of adult/child. Hence, rather than being seemingly ‘controlled’ by adults, or independent from them, children are part of complex relationships with adults and social, economic and cultural structures. As Valentine and Holloway (2000, p.151) argue children are ‘locked in a series of interdependent and asymmetrical or relatively powerless relationships with adults within the context of the household, school or wider society’.

Mirroring the theoretical shifts occurring in broader discipline of human geography since the turn of the century, children’s geographies have also begun to employ non-representational, post-human and material feminist approaches, drawing on a range of post-modern theorists (e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Latour 2005; Barad 2007; Braidotti 2013). This scholarship seeks to move beyond normative discourses of childhood development and highlight the relationality of childhood. For instance, Prout (2005, p. 144) draws on Latour (2005) and Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to emphasise the relationality of childhood through the notion of the hybrid assemblage:

Children should be seen as neither 'natural' nor 'cultural' but a multiplicity of 'nature-cultures', that is a verity of complex hybrids constituted from heterogeneous materials and emergent through time. It is cultural biological, social, individual, historical, technological, spatial, material, discursive ... and more. Childhood is
not seen as a unitary phenomenon but a multiple set of constructions emergent from the connection and disconnection, fusion and separation of these heterogeneous materials.

From this standpoint, childhood is an open-ended process through which different social, biological and technological elements are constituted, ordered and enacted. Childhood is not understood in opposition to adulthood, but is part of it’s becoming as well. Other scholars have sought to disrupt traditional research methods with children (Woodyer 2008), pedagogies of education (Rautio 2013a), play (Skelton 2009; Russell et al. 2017), and biological notions of development, gender and sexuality (Blaise 2005) and children’s relationship with nature (Taylor 2011; Nxumalo 2014; Malone 2016a). What is also termed ‘post-developmental’ childhood studies have blossomed over the course of the last decade with environmental education scholarship being particularly productive (e.g Rautio 2013b; Pacini-Ketchabaw and Nxumalo 2015; Gannon 2017; Rooney 2018). However, as the next section shows, such approaches have only recently begun to inform children’s mobility studies.

**The decline of children’s independent mobility**

One of the most prolific areas of study within children’s geographies is that which explores children's declining spatial range and independent mobility (Skelton 2009; Ansell 2009). Independent mobility is defined as the freedom a child has to move about their neighbourhood without adult supervision (Shaw et al. 2013). For young children independent mobility usually involves active modes of travel such as walking and cycling,
sometimes combined with public transport use (Schoeppe et al. 2016). The term came into use following Hillman et al.’s (1990) comparative study of children’s mobility in England and Germany. Their findings demonstrated a marked reduction in primary school aged children’s independent travel to and from school over the previous 20 years. This trend was largely attributed to parental concern about traffic risk as well as increasing fears about crime and ‘stranger danger’. Such trends had been identified by Colin Ward (1978, p.118) who argued two decades earlier that the rise of traffic in cities deprived children the freedom to explore the city on-foot as previous generations once did:

The assumption that the car-driver has a natural right to take his vehicle anywhere in the city has, quite apart from the threat to life, gradually attenuated many of the aspects of the city that made it an exciting and useable environment for children.

Ward (1978) identified a sense of nostalgia for the ‘free’ childhood of yesteryear, where children played unsupervised until the street lights came on and were called in for dinner. As a result, today’s children are perceived to be missing out on this freedom, labelled as the ‘bubble wrapped’ (Malone 2007) or ‘backseat’ generation (Karsten 2005).

Ward’s (1978) and Hillman et al.’s (1990) analysis struck a chord with many academic scholars and policy-makers, setting the scene for a flurry of research into the decline of children’s independent mobility (Shaw et al. 2013; Carver, Watson, et al. 2013; Trapp et al. 2013; Badland et al. 2015). Children’s independent mobility has become a key indicator of children’s
physical activity and the ‘walkability’ and ‘child-friendliness’ of urban environments (see Tranter and Pawson 2001; Kytta 2004; Whitzman et al. 2010; Villanueva et al. 2014; Chapter 5 for further discussion). Studies have found that children are becoming less active (Fyhri et al. 2011; Schoeppe et al. 2016), are more likely to be driven places by parents (McDonald and Aalborg 2009; Carver, Timperio, et al. 2013) and that their opportunities for unsupervised journeys and play are diminishing (Whitzman et al. 2010). Studies have also found that children’s spatial range differ according to age, gender, socio-economic status and country (Porter et al. 2011; Carver, Watson, et al. 2013; Villanueva et al. 2014; Cordovil et al. 2015). For example, boys tend to have more independent mobility than girls (Schoeppe et al. 2016). In comparison to other western countries, Australian children have some of the lowest rates of independent mobility (Carver, Watson, et al. 2013).

The influence of changing parenting norms and increased fear of risk for children’s safety was identified as central to changing children’s independent mobility. As Kearns and Collins (2003, p.198) explain, parents have ‘traded off the promotion of well-being (through walking and independent environmental exploration) in favour of protecting children from harm.’ However, quite ironically, Hillman et al. (1990) found that whilst roads are getting more dangerous for pedestrians (higher volumes travelling at faster speeds), incidents and accidents where children are being hit by cars are decreasing. This may well be a result of parents chauffeuring their children and reducing the opportunity for traffic incidents to occur (Shaw et al. 2013).
Unpacking this further, Holt et al. (2015) argues that cultures of independent mobility within communities inform whether or not parents allow children ‘mobility licences’; a term used by Hillman et al. (1990) to describe at what age, where and how far children can go by themselves. Holt et al. (2015) examines how a diminishing ‘sense of community’ and a decreased feeling of ‘safety in numbers’ has reduced the opportunities that parents and children feel they have for safe active free play and travel. Many have discussed the changing norms of parenting in relation to mobility, with notions of ‘risk’ being central to parent’s perceptions of children’s safety (Collins and Kearns 2001; Jenkins 2006; Pain 2006; Murray 2009). Hence, the decision to let children walk (either accompanied or unaccompanied) is shaped by neighbourhood norms and socio-cultural ideas about ‘good’ parenting. As Barker et al. (2009) reflects, independent mobility research has made important contributions in examining the social and cultural aspects that influence parenting and adult–child power relations.

**From independent to collective family mobility**

Research into children’s mobility has been a key player in the growth of children’s geographies as a sub-discipline. Yet this work does not escape criticism. This section outlines four key main critiques of children’s mobility literature which argue for research to move from studying children’s independent mobility to the collective mobility of the family.

First, much of the focus of children’s mobility research has been on journeys to and from school (Collins and Kearns 2001; 2005; 2010; Ross 2007; Thommen et al. 2010; Romero 2011; Stanley et al. 2015). This is
because the school journey is one that children undertake daily and hence is an important target for children's active travel campaigns (Stanley et al. 2015). As a result initiative which aim to foster community ties and encourage walking to school, such as the Walking School Buses, have been a key focus of research (Collins and Kearns 2005; 2010). Yet whilst the school journey is an important moment in children’s everyday mobility, Hillman (2006) argues that this focus is a rather simplistic approach and has resulted in a lack of knowledge about children’s other journeys on-foot. More research is needed about children's mobility in and around their neighbourhoods (Fyhri et al. 2011; Carver, Watson, et al. 2013).

Second, independent mobility is a taken-for-granted notion that has an inherently ‘positive’ value (Mikkelsen and Christensen 2009). The concept views children’s mobility in relation to adult’s understandings of it, rather than children’s own experiences. As Horton et al. (2014) states, much of the scholarship on children’s mobility uncritically positions walking as a ‘good’ or ‘healthy’ activity that children should do, with little attention given to how journeys on-foot actually unfold. Furthermore, framing children and young people’s life-worlds in terms of their ‘welfare’ and ‘risk’ is particularly problematic as it perpetuates the idea that children are ‘vulnerable’ (Holloway and Valentine 2000).

Third, the focus on independence jars with the recent theoretical shifts within geography which to consider the relationality of childhood and mobility. As Cortés-Morales and Christensen (2014, p.12) argue:
Studying children’s mobility with an emphasis on children ‘on their own’ has, as a consequence, advocated an understanding of children as isolated beings whose lives are not analytically connected to wider social, economic and cultural processes that take place at not necessarily immediate scales but to which children are connected through more complex forms of circulation and mobilities.

Likewise Nansen et al. (2015) argues for an alternative way of conceptualising children’s mobility that places focus on interdependency rather than independence. By thinking about children’s mobility beyond the dichotomies of child/adult, active/passive or dependence/independence we can begin to understand the ways that children establish, maintain and negotiate their everyday mobility alongside that of the adults in their lives. For example, children may travel with visible human companions such as friends, or they may travel with invisible/distant companions through the use of mobile phones blurring the boundaries parental supervision (Strandell 2014). Kullman (2010, p.830) extends this point arguing that ‘neither adults nor children are entirely independent from their environments. Instead they constantly alter their capacities to act by playing with multiple attachments to people, technologies and spaces.’

The fourth and final critique argues that the study of mobility through singular events, such as the journey to school, has reinforced a static or immobile reading of the child and family (Holdsworth 2013; 2014). Holdsworth (2013, p.3) argues that mobility scholarship that has ‘tended to prioritise the individual mobile body’ and ignored the family. This lack of
scholarly attention has led to the idea that the family is under attack by the fast mobilities of modern life. As Harker and Martin (2012) argue, whilst families are consistently the target of various wellbeing interventions, families and their everyday practices under researched. ‘The family’ is often presumed to be a conceptual ‘black box’ which consistently remains uncritically presented as the building block of a functional society (Harker and Martin 2012). Furthermore as Holdsworth (2013, p.2) writes:

...the assumption that family life has changed through mobility is rarely contested and is frequently alluded to in public commentary on social change.

Holdsworth (2013) understands family as not a predefined unit but a subjectivity which emerges relationally. Taking this approach, she brings together the sociological literature which positions family as always political and embedded within social norms (Gillis 1996; Shaw and Dawson 2001; Valentine 2008; Morgan 2011) with non-representational mobilities scholarship that foregrounds heterogeneity, emergence, rhythms and flows of meanings, doings and emotions (Sheller and Urry 2006; Cresswell 2010a; 2010b; 2011). Holdsworth (2013, p8) argues that family, family practices and familial identities are constituted through mobility and highlights the necessity of ‘recognise[ing] both the complexity and the less tangible qualities of intimate and family lives’ with specific reference to the embodied and corporeal ways of being and becoming. Whilst family is a well-known term, family isn’t a given entity. Family doesn’t pre-exist its relatings.
Recent work from mobilities studies have similarly drawn on a range of non-representational theories to reconceptualise family mobility it as a spatially situated and emerging through interactions within collectives (Kullman 2009; 2010; 2014; Goodman et al. 2014; McIlvenny et al. 2014; 2015; Nansen et al. 2015; Hall and Holdsworth 2016). For example, taking an phenomenological approach Jensen et al. (2014) considers how mobility is filtered through the spatial affordances, affective ambiences and the temporalities of life courses to influence families everyday transport choices (driving, cycling, bussing, walking) and routes. Continuing to explore how mobility is embodied and relational Cortés-Morales and Christensen (2014) draw on Actor Network Theory to consider the more-than-human elements (pushchairs, pavements, weather, public transport) that shape a mother and child’s mundane journeying with a pram.

Material feminist scholars have also re-framed family mobility by bringing to the fore how mobility is always gendered, sexed, classed and aged. Feminist scholars have highlighted how familial subjectivities are inextricably linked to gendered notions of care (Luzia 2010; Murray 2008; 2010; Waitt and Harada 2016; Boyer and Spinney 2016). Integrating this lens with post-humanist (Braidotti 2013) and corporeal feminist theories (Grosz 1994; Longhurst 2001), geographers have sought to bring ‘discourse-based ways of understanding the world into communication with more materially and affectively based ways’ (Boyer and Spinney 2016, p.1115). For example, Waitt and Harada (2016) highlight how families are re-assembled and re-organised through car mobility, with mothers and fathers care for and about
children lived and felt through the sociality of driving together. They argue that driving becomes an ‘embodied means for orientating, and becoming orientated in the world through the reflexive and kinaesthetic act of mobile practices of care’ (Waitt and Harada 2016, p.1082). Boyer and Spinney (2016) adopt a similar approach, examining the familial subjectivity of motherhood as an accomplishment realised through mobile, affective and discursive encounters between mothers, babies and the more-than-human entanglements with prams, slings, public transport systems and state policies. Central to Boyer and Spinney’s work is Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) notion of ‘assemblage’. The focus on the assemblage of materials, emotions and affects that create bodies in motion together, provides a lens for insights into how places, people and mobilities are configured and reconfigured through fleeting moments as they unfold.

However, whilst there is a growing interest in the ‘negotiations in motion’ (Jensen et al. 2015, p.367) that occur when families journey together, few studies specifically examine how family members move together on-foot and how this is constitutive of familial identities, practices and experiences. As Holdsworth (2013, p.31) notes ‘a missing piece of family practices is the mobility of the self through time as well as space, and that this corporeal mobility is a way of managing emotions’. This thesis aims to fill this gap, by attending to the experience of walking for families.
Part 3: Pathways to policy

The two previous parts of this chapter outlined how walking and childhood have been understood and researched within the academic literatures. For geographers, social scientists and humanities scholars walking has been conceptualised as: a mode of experiencing the self, a political act, a spatializing practice, and as a marker of independence. More recent mobilities scholarship has conceived walking as a highly relational activity constitutive of individual and collective subjectivities, affects and meanings. Many of these ideas have also influenced how walking is understood in the urban policy realm. The final part of this chapter charts how the key concepts from the academic literatures have been applied to urban policies that aim to create walkable cities that are healthy, sustainable and liveable for children and their families. The chapter then turns to the critiques of walkability and the present gaps in pedestrian planning policies.

The healthy, sustainable, liveable and walkable city

In recent years policy-makers in the western world have focused their attention on ways to encourage walking in cities to address sedentarism (Cavill 2001; Frank et al. 2006; Ogilvie et al. 2007; Mackett and Paskins 2008). Australian health guidelines recommend that adults do 150 to 300 minutes (2 ½ to 5 hours) of moderate intensity physical activity each week (Department of Health 2014). However, many adults do not achieve this level of physical activity. For example in 2011-12, 60% of Australian adults did less than the then recommended amount of 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per day (ABS 2013). The same disparity is seen in Australian children, with only one-third of children (5-12 years) and one in ten young
people (13-17 years) undertaking the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity every day (ABS 2013). In western countries, including Australia, increasing sedentary lifestyles have resulted in health problems such as cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, increased risk of cancer (Department of Health 2014) and increased rates of depression (National Heart Foundation of Australia 2007). Highlighting the link between walking and health, Bassett et al. (2008) found that countries with the highest levels of active transportation (i.e. walking and cycling), such as those in Europe, generally had lower obesity rates, whereas countries with the highest rates of car use, such as America and Australia, had higher rates of obesity.

In light of these health issues, policies and programs to encourage walking are being pursued by governments and NGOs. Walking is promoted as a mode of ‘active travel’ and an important form of incidental daily exercise. For example, the Department of Health (2014, p.7) encourages people to walk for short trips or combine walking with day-to-day tasks: ‘Organise walking meetings. ... Catch up with friends for a walk, instead of sitting to chat’. Similarly, the National Heart Foundation of Australia (n.d.) prioritises walking as a key way individuals and communities can become more physically active and promotes ways to ‘walk yourself happy and healthy’.

The NSW Government’s Office of Preventive Health (2014) specifically aims to encourage walking by children and families through the NSW Active Travel Charter for Children. Strategies laid out in this document acknowledge many of the key challenges highlighted in the children’s geography literature around parental fears of children’s safety, increased time pressures and
insufficient pedestrian infrastructure. This and other policy documents cite the decline in children’s independent mobility and declining rates of walking to school as a key concern. However, as notes in Part 2 of this chapter, independent mobility and the school journey should not be the only focus for policy-makers concerned with the walking practices of children and their families.

Alongside the health benefits, walking is also promoted as a ‘green’ mode of transport and integral to sustainable city policies (Banister 2008; 2011; Tight and Givoni 2010; Pooley et al. 2011). The rise in automobile use has not only reduced walking rates and made populations sedentary but increased human impact on the environment. Daily car mobility is one of biggest contributors to the carbon footprint for individuals living in the western countries and is a key driver of anthropogenic climate change (Dennis and Urry 2009; Speck 2012). Sprawling cities have increased the time, distance and fossil fuels spent on daily journeys (Dennis and Urry 2009; Speck 2012). Walking for short trips instead of driving is promoted as an alternative mobility and a way to reduce carbon-emissions (Bean et al. 2008). Walking is also positioned as an integral accompaniment to catching public transport (Transport NSW 2013). Policy-makers are conscious of the necessity for both inviting and accessible public transport hubs for those on-foot (Transport NSW 2013).

Challenges for achieving this shift from automobilities to foot mobilities are evident, with many short trips in cities still being undertaken in cars (Pooley et al. 2011). As Dennis and Urry (2009, p.42) argue, the system of
automobility is hard to beat, with cars being ‘a major ‘convenience device’ of contemporary society’. Research from the UK found that walking is often not regarded by many urban residents as a mode of transport but instead as a form of leisure or exercise (Pooley et al. 2014). In Australia, reducing car mobility and encouraging walking is arguably even more challenging. As Waitt et al. (2016, p.68) note Australian cities are ‘configured by the automobile through distinctive modes of suburban dwelling and sociality’.

Whilst the centres of major cities are characterised by high-density housing and urban consolidation, the majority of the Australian urban population live in low-density and sprawling suburbs (Godfrey et al. 2015). This car-dependency increases in regional areas where urban density is lower, distances travelled are greater and transport services are less frequent or non-existent. For families living in the suburbs, driving is often not a choice, but a necessity, intertwined within an assemblage of automobility through which family lives and identities are constituted (Waitt and Harada 2016).

The liveable city emerges in the work of New Urbanist scholars and discussion about how urban form influences transport decisions of individuals and communities As Middleton (2016, p.4) explains, New Urbanism is an interdisciplinary movement that emerged in North America in the 1980s as an ‘antidote to automobile-dominated, residential suburban sprawl’. Here the automobile and how it has shaped urban design is pitted against the pedestrian as the culprit of unsafe and unfriendly streets (Forsyth and Southworth 2008; Short and Pinet-Peralta 2010). According to architect Jan Gehl, compact cities and neighbourhoods built at the ‘human scale’ with
amenities accessible on-foot or by bicycle creates new forms of sociality that are beneficial for a range of positive health, environmental and social outcomes for individuals and communities (Gehl 2001; 2010). New Urbanism and the notion of the liveable city has been greatly influenced by the seminal work of Jane Jacobs (1961). Jacobs highlights the importance of walking for encouraging an active street life through creating a personal and communal sense of safety. Hence, hand-in-hand with the liveable city is one which is walkable. Urban planner Jeff Speck (2012) defines a walkable environment as one where walking is useful, safe, comfortable and interesting for the pedestrian. He argues that these principles can be achieved through reducing the reliance on cars through providing effective transport systems. However, Speck also recognises, like many New Urbanist’s do, that creating walkable cities requires thinking about urban design as a whole, not simply transport and infrastructure provision (Toit et al. 2007; Tight and Givoni 2010; Gehl 2010).

Walkability indexes have been developed by urban planners and researchers in order to assess and plan for walkable cities. Walkability measures the extent in which the built environment facilitates or hinders walking for purposes of daily living (Andrews et al. 2012). For instance, studies have explored the interactions between walkability variables, including: the scale of buildings (Ewing and Handy 2009), land use mix, street connectivity, net residential density, proximity to retail and commercial destinations and public transport amenities (Frank et al. 2006; Owen et al. 2007), the presence of green space (Lwin and Murayama 2011).
and footpath width quality and linkages (Kelly et al. 2011). In creating quantifiable and comparable indexes, walkability is a useful tool for organisations and governments to plan for and create more healthy, sustainable and liveable cities. For instance, measures of walkability have been statically correlated against health outcomes of communities (Cavill 2001; Frank et al. 2006; Frank et al. 2010; Doyle et al. 2007; Freeman et al. 2012). The walkability of places is also shown to have economic benefits. A report prepared for the NSW Government showed that a 1% shift from driving to walking for trips of less than 1km was estimated to save $2.8 million for the state economy (PwC 2010). Walkability has entered into mainstream public consciousness through the development of interactive websites such as Walk Score (2017), which uses an algorithm to measure the distance to amenities within a 5 minute walk (e.g. shops, restaurants, schools, parks) and grades suburbs on a scale of one to one-hundred. As Speck (2012) highlights, Walk Score has become a value-adding tool for real estate, with walkable places receiving higher house prices.

Walkability has also become a key marker of the child-friendliness of cities (Whitzman et al. 2009; 2010; Christian et al. 2012; Villanueva et al. 2014). As outlined in Part 2 of this chapter, walkable streets, with less traffic, slower speed limits and places for people to move through and spend time in are also considered safer for children and young people (Gleeson and Sipe 2006). A recent study by Garrard (2017) found that 85% young people (aged 15-20) surveyed prefer to live in walkable neighbourhoods with safe access to shops, entertainment, places of work and study. As a result, making and
planning for walkable cities has become an important way to tackle the declining rates of children’s independent mobility, increasing sedentarism and enact children and young people’s right the city (see Chapter 5 for further discussion).

**Gaps in walkability research and policy**

Despite the uptake of walkability by policy-makers to improve health, sustainable transport, liveability and indeed the child-friendliness of cities, the concept has not been without critiques. In a review of the walkability literature, Andrews et al. (2012) identifies three main critiques highlighting how policy-makers preoccupation with walkability has resulted in a number of gaps in pedestrian policy.

First, many walkability studies reinscribe a neo-environment deterministic relationship, where people's propensity to walk or not is determined by the environment (Andrews et al. 2012; Colls and Evans 2013). Herrick (2009, p.2451) argues that the rise in ‘active design’ principles positions walking as a ‘panacea for an increasingly wide array of society’s social ills’. Herrick argues that understanding urban space as purely instrumental is limiting. Davison and Curl (2014, p.343) make a similar argument, stating: ‘It cannot be assumed that simply by developing a “walkable” (or “cyclable”) environment, public health goals will be achieved; the relationships are more complex than this.’

Second, the favouring of quantitative and positivist methodologies by policy-makers to justify, plan for and encourage investment in walking ignores the socio-cultural discourses that shape walking practices (Andrews
et al. 2012; Evans and Colls 2013). For instance, emphasis is placed on variables such as land use and street connectivity as objective’ measures of walkability. Andrews et al. (2012) notes that when qualitative methods are employed and accounts of resident experiences, such as feelings of safety, are incorporated in research, these are often considered less reliable and non-transferable sources of information for policy-makers.

Third, walkability studies fail to recognise the multiple ways of walking and different people’s embodied experiences (Andrews et al. 2012). Studies of walkability are shaped by discussions of pedestrian’s economic choices, constraints and environmental preferences as largely disembodied; with pedestrian movements counted, mapped, modelled and categorised in terms of their ‘purpose’. Lorimer (2011) makes a similar claim arguing that walking is viewed largely by policy as a ‘functional’ mode of transport. For these studies walking is already a pre-figured and essentialised ‘human’ activity which occurs when people make a ‘choice’ to walk. As a result, much of the research focuses on particular factors seen as ‘barriers’ to walking including cost, time, distance, weather or lack of infrastructure. For instance, advocates of walkability, assert that walking is a ‘socially equitable mode of transport that is available to a majority of the population, across classes, including children and seniors’ (Forsyth and Southworth’s 2008, p.1). Yet this downplays the embodied experiences of different bodies felt across different socio-geographical contexts. As Gatrell (2013) highlights the walking body is understood as an active body, and in turn an inherently healthy body. Yet, not all bodies that walk regularly are healthy and well, not all walking is the
same and not all walking is pleasurable or easy (Davison and Curl 2014). It is often the lowest socio-economic percentile of the population that walk the most because of poor access to private or affordable public transport (Andrews et al. 2012). For the elderly, the impaired or low-income earners without access to a car, walking in many cases may not be uplifting or enjoyable, but slow and hard work. As feminist scholars have highlighted, for young mothers who don’t drive, walking with children can be a particularly laborious task (see Tivers 1985; Bostock 2001; Chapters 4 and 5 for further discussion).

These critiques of walkability aim to integrate urban planning policy with the mobilities turn. In doing so, scholars like Andrews et al. (2012) highlight that alongside the design of the built environment, walking is always embedded in socio-cultural, economic and political discourses, and the corporeality of movement. The mobilities turn repositioned walking as a constitutive, place-making, subject-forming process, rather than a fixed activity that is inherently human. As Wylie’s (2005, p.235) argues:

...there is no such thing as ‘walking-in-itself’, no certain physical motion which is, as it were, elementary, universal and pure. There are only varieties of walking, whether these be discursive registers (pilgrimage, courtship, therapy, exercise, protest), or particular modes of engagement (strolling, hiking, promenading, pacing, herding, guiding, marching).

However despite the plethora of ‘new’ walking studies, urban policy-makers still assume that walking is homogenous and a largely function
means of getting from one place to another (Middleton 2011b). Pedestrian policies are still pronominally informed by disembodied approaches. Furthermore, as Parts 1 and 2 of this chapter highlighted, urban policy-makers and scholars alike, are yet to consider lived experiences of walking beyond the figures of solitary adults and ‘independent’ children. Despite some child-focused research, which links together the notions of walkability, independent mobility and the child-friendly city, there is a resounding lack of research and policy focus on the walking practices and experiences of families.

**Chapter summary**

Structured in three parts, this chapter charted the literatures in walking studies and children’s geographies, before providing an analysis of current approaches to developing pedestrian policy.

Part 1 explored the multiple ways that walking has been discussed in western literature and academic scholarship. The first section charted the literary influences that position walking as mode of moving through and experiencing the world, from romantic poetry of the countryside, to the wanderings of the flâneur. The second section considered walking as a political act that subverts and recreates city spaces and subjects. The final section of Part 1 explored how ‘new’ walking studies have proliferated as a result of the twenty-first century ‘mobilities turn’. This section reviewed the key approaches that position walking as relationally constitutive, place-making, subject-forming process. In particular it sought to highlight the work of Middleton (2009; 2010; 2011a; 2011b; 2016), who’s work on the everyday
practices and socialites of walking in the city offers important considerations for urban policy-makers.

Part 2 focussed on the sub-discipline of children’s geography. Structured in three sections, this part of the chapter began with a discussion of the ‘new’ social studies of childhood, which in emerged in the 1990s to critique the childhood studies’ preoccupation with positivist and objective approaches that frame ‘the child’ in terms of age and developmental capacities (Holloway and Valentine 2000). Here the work of non-representational and more-than-human scholars were identified as influential in reconfiguring the child as a socially constructed and relational subject. The next section outlined the literature on children’s mobility, focusing on the debates around children’s declining independence and limited spatial range. Drawing on material feminist and non-representational scholarship, the next section offered critiques of independent mobility and outlined calls for a more relational approach to studying family life on-the-move (Holdsworth 2013). Specifically, this section highlighted the important work of Boyer and Spinney (2016) who drew on assemblage thinking to reshape the family and familial identities as relational achievements made through the politics of everyday interactions and movements.

Working across these two bodies of literature, Part 3 explored how walking is positioned as a fix for health and environmental challenges arising from living in cities. The notion of walkability was identified as a key instrument for policy-makers to address these challenges. The discussion then moved to consider some of the shortcomings of the present policy focus
on walkability as a qualitative measurement of urban environments. It highlighted the need for policy-makers to embrace the theoretical progress evident in mobilities and children’s geography to consider what different modes of transport and journeys enables people to achieve in their everyday lives.

Overall this chapter has shown that whilst there is a depth of research into walking, children’s mobility, and a small but growing interest in the family-in-motion, no research is yet to specifically examine what family members achieve while walking together and how this is constitutive of familial identities, practices and experiences. Hence, the remaining chapters of this thesis work to fill this gap by considering the relationships made through walking and everyday family life.
Chapter 3: Walking sensory ethnographies

Introduction
This chapter outlines the walking sensory ethnography methodology developed and used in this research. To do so, the chapter is structured in three parts: ‘reviewing’, ‘designing’ and ‘doing’ walking sensory ethnographies. Part 1 reviews the literature on mobile and sensory methods. It charting walking as a key method in qualitative research, discusses the literature on sensory ethnography, and outlines three tenets of walking sensory ethnographies that underpin the research. Part 2 discusses how the walking sensory ethnography was designed, through the piloting of methods, formal and informal ethical considerations and targeted recruitment underpinned by the research aims. This section ends with a discussion of the participating families. Part 3 focuses on ‘doing’ walking sensory ethnographies, reflecting on the design, purpose and effectiveness of interviews, draw and tell activities, go-alongs, video and sound recordings, and follow-up interviews. This section ends with a discussion of the analysis. By conceptualising analysis as embedded, embodied and ongoing, this section reflects on how the decisions made across the exploratory, design and doing stages of the research are central to production and making sense of empirical data.
Part 1: Reviewing

Walking as method

As outlined in Chapter 2, walking has long been a topic within western literature and academic scholarship. As well as the topic of scholarship, walking is also a key method for qualitative researchers who want to better understand how urban space is experienced, spatialized, and structured (Middleton 2011b; Low 2015). In their paradigm setting article, Sheller and Urry (2006) highlight walking as a key method for doing mobilities research as it entails co-present immersion. As a result, many researchers stress the importance of ‘being there’ in situ to interrogate what actually happens on-the-move (Hein et al. 2008; Fincham et al. 2010; Merriman 2014). Pink et al. (2010) also draw attention to how the fleeting, sensory and emotional aspects of being on-the-move are accessible through walking as method; dimensions often neglected from interview and survey methods.

Drawing on its literary roots, walking as method is well-established within the creative arts. For instance, artists draw on the flâneur’s urban wanderings as a way of reading city spaces and noting the alienating features of urban life (Jenks and Neves, 2000). Similarly, walking as Dadaist events, Situationalist déambulations and psychogeographic dérives seek to map the hidden ambiences of cities (Bassett 2004; Wrights and Sites 2006; Smith 2010; Hancox 2012; Bridger 2014). Other artistic engagements utilise walking as a way to disrupt masculine narratives of mobility (Heddon and Turner 2012); to explore the creative links between movement, writing and reading (Heddon and Myers 2014); as a mode of critically seeing place.
(Phillips 2005); offer insights to the poetics and politics of urban space (Pinder 2001; 2005; 2011); and present more-than-human methodologies (Truman and Springgay 2015; Springgay and Truman 2017; Taylor and Rooney 2017; Bunt et al. 2017; Rooney 2018). Yet, Edensor (2010, p.70) notes that there is an irony within this fixation on walking as an arts practice method: 'While much walking literature and art focuses upon certain exceptional walking experiences, most walking is mundane and habitual'. In response to this critique, walking as method has turned to better understand the unexceptional and everydayness of pedestrian practices and engagements with place.

A number of different qualitative walking methods are used to explore everyday life (Ricketts Hein et al. 2008). These include: walking interviews (Anderson 2004; Myers 2010; Evans and Jones 2011; Dawney 2011; Kelly et al. 2011; Hodgson 2012), go-alongs (Kusenbach 2003; Carpiano 2009; Degen and Rose 2012; Horton et al. 2014) and walking tours (Butler 2006; Phillips and Hickey 2013). Evans and Jones (2011) differentiate between these methods in terms of their design and purpose. For example, walking interviews might occur along a route planned in advance as a way to focusing the interview on specific places that are relevant to the project goals. For example, Kelly et al. (2011) undertook semi-structured walking interviews with participants on a predetermined route to assess urban walkability. Go-alongs or guided walks adopt an observational approach allowing the location of the walk to be set by the participant, and questions to arise in the moment (Kusenbach 2003). In their research on young people's walking
experiences, Horton et al. (2014) utilised participant lead guided walks and recorded their conversations along the way. Walking tours sit between these two methods, with a combination of planned questions or routes. For example, Phillips and Hickey (2013) used walking tours led by children as a way to explore children's relationship to city places as well as a means of social activism. Anderson's (2004) 'bimbling', on the other hand, is a more aimless wandering done with participants to facilitate reflexive conversation. Anderson (2004, p.254) articulated that the benefits of “talking whilst walking’ can harness place as an active trigger to prompt knowledge recollection and production’.

Walking ethnographies employ a combination of these, and other methods (Pink 2007; Ingold and Vergunst 2008; Hall 2009; Pink et al. 2010; Yi’En 2014). For example, Hall (2009, p.583) develops ‘footwork’ as a method of ‘itinerant ethnography’ for the study of people’s everyday lives. Pink (2007) combines video methods with walking interviews with participants in and around their homes. Walking methods can also be auto-ethnographic. For example, Wylie (2005) employs a self-reflective walking method to illustrate how the self and world are folded together. Looking to urban walking ethnographies, Yi’En (2014, p.212) explores ‘how “walking” is a practice that orientates the “walker” through different dimensions of “ordinary” and “everyday” urban life.’ Yi’En highlights how leisurely walking, strolling or wandering in conjunction with photography and video becomes a way to bring the researcher’s body into conversation with the urban environment.
A key engagement with walking ethnographies is Ingold and Vergunst’s (2008) edited book, *Ways of Walking: Ethnography and Practice on Foot*, which explores phenomenological, non-representational and post-colonial approaches to walking as method and practice. Ingold and Vergunst (2008, p.3) set this work apart from previous walking ethnographies noting that whilst ethnographers are ‘accustomed to carrying out much of their work on foot ...it is rare to find ethnography that reflects on walking itself.’ For each chapter, walking is both the method for and subject of inquiry. This attention to exploring the practice of walking through walking itself is continued in a special issue of *Visual Studies, Walking across disciplines: from ethnography to arts practice* (2010 vol. 25, iss. 1). In the introduction to the special issue guest editors Pink et al. (2010, p.3) note that while the legacy of walking as artistic practice is long established, the ‘connections between fieldwork and walking in the field [only just] beginning to be usefully teased out’.

Contributions include: Radley et al. (2010) use of photographic and walking explore the lives of homeless people; Myers (2010) guided walks as a mode of generating a more convivial sense place; and Edensor’s (2010b) engagement with Lefebvre to explore how the rhythms of walking co-produce time-spaces. Despite different topics and theoretical approaches, each of these papers brings to the fore how walking is always a multisensory, embodied and emplaced activity. They share Pink et al.’s (2009) argument that a consideration of walking must always acknowledge the interconnectedness of the senses (see Part 2 of this chapter for further discussion).
Whilst advocating for walking as method, Middleton (2016, p.8) also warns of romanticising walking methods:

...mobile methods literature has a tendency to present walking methods as a means of producing superior knowledge or data to that of the static interview ... which echoes the privileged and romanticised notions associated with walking and the wanderings of the flâneur.

At the crux of Middleton’s argument is the issue of ignoring the mundaneness of everyday walking, as well as the multiple ways walking is done, gendered, sexed, aged, classed, racialized, and spatialized. Walking as method, just like walking as a mode of journeying, is never a given activity, but is always unfolding. The use of walking as method, whether it be walking interviews, go-alongs, or walking tours, like any methodology must remain alive to pre-existing and emergent geopolitics that circulate between bodies, field sites and the technologies being used (Germann Molz 2014). Mobile ethnographic methods utilised to work within the paradigm of ethnographic thought that understands the ethnographic field as fluid rather than static. As Dewsbury (2010, p.324) writes:

...methodology is so much more than a choice of method (video camera, interviews, ethnography, etc.) and the standard of carrying out these methods, and much more about questioning how we are going to configure the world...
Middleton (2009; 2010; 2011a; 2016) also raises the issue of privileging any one type of methodology over another. Pink et al. (2010, p.3) highlight this warning, stating:

... there is a danger that people ... would think of walking as ethnographic practice that involves just another novel method or attempted short cut to understanding other people's everyday experiences.

All methods have their limitations. For Nairn (2002), doing rigorous qualitative research is about acknowledging how knowledge is produced through methods and choosing a combination of methods that complement the knowledge each other produces. Hence, rather than relying solely on in situ walking methods, Middleton uses a mixed method approach which alongside experiential walking photo-diaries, included a postal survey and in-depth interviews. For Middleton (2009, p.1944), a mixed method approach enables the ‘multiple temporalities and spatialities of walking ... [to be] made visible’. A mixed method approach provides what Dewsbury (2010, p.327) calls a ‘portfolio of ethnographic ‘exposures’ in which the discourses, practices, experiences and movements, sensory and affective encounters that emerge when walking can be mapped through bodies.

Walking methods are integral part of the social scientists qualitative research tool-kit. The mobilities turn helps to explain the shift to mobile methods that offer insights to understanding life on-the-move, including the lived experiences of pedestrians (Middleton 2011). Hence, walking methods are an important part of the mixed method used in this thesis. In adopting walking
as method, it is important to acknowledge how methods configure what we know about the world in a particular way. The next section will explore this issue further.

**What is sensory ethnography?**

Sensory ethnography is a term for an array of qualitative research practices that aim to go beyond descriptive and discursive explanations of participant behaviours to explore embodied and multisensory ways of knowing. Pink (2009) notes that there is no one single model of sensory ethnography, but rather it is a developing field of practice underpinned by various philosophical ‘turns’. This section will explore these turns.

**Beyond observation – sensory geography**

The senses have always been part of doing ethnography (Stoller 1997). However, the bias of western thought gave primacy to visual observation methods originating through notions of modernity and Enlightenment (Pink 2009). Theoretical attempts to highlight the senses from humanistic geographers, anthropologists and sociologists across the twentieth century explored the body’s sensory experience as central to the construction of space (Longhurst 2001; Pink 2009). For instance, Simmel (1950 [1903]) argued that senses are central to all human interaction and that urban stimuli affect those who inhabit city spaces. Whereas, Rodaway’s (1994) *Sensuous Geographies* drew on Gibson’s (1986) ecological theory of perception to explore sensuous encounters with the environment. Similarly, space as sensory was key to geographer Yi-Fu Tuan’s notion of topophilia or ‘sense of place’. As Tuan (1974, p.218) wrote: ‘Body implicates space; space
co-exists with the sentient body’. However, such approaches have been critiqued for reinscribing the Cartesian separation between the body and the mind. As Pink (2009) highlights, Taun’s work understood sensory perception existing at two levels, the body as ‘a fact of nature or an unplanned property of the built environment’; and the mind as ‘more or less a deliberative creation’ (Tuan 1993, p.166).

**Beyond mind/body dualisms – multisensory**

The notion of embodiment, engaged in extensively by post-structural and some phenomenological scholars, worked to break down the Cartesian dualisms of mind and body (Pink 2009). For example, Merleau-Ponty’s (1992, p.253 cited in Paterson 2009) phenomenology of the body identifies the ‘tactile perception of space’. For Merleau-Ponty (1962) this didn’t mean separating vision from touch, but was a way to appreciate the multiple interrelations between the senses. Ingold (2000, p.261) draws on such understandings to argue that:

> ...perceptual systems not only overlap in their function, but as also subsumed under a total system of bodily orientation ... Looking listening and touching, therefore are not separates activities, they are just different facets of the same activity: that of the whole organism in its environment.

Pink (2009, p.28) also draws on this approach to encourage ethnographic researchers to comprehend the ‘social, material and intangible elements of our environments’ as not one sensory modality.
Beyond reflexivity – bodies as research tools

Post-structural feminist geographers offer critiques of the tenets of humanistic phenomenology for its failure to acknowledge the specificity of bodies; including their gender, sex, skin colour, shapes and abilities (Longhurst 2001). Instead of being a vessel waiting to be filled with the sensory affects of place, post-structural feminist approaches understand the body as never pre-discursive, but always constituted through the interaction with place (Nast and Pile 2005). Central to feminist methods is recognition of the emplaced, sensuous and performative dimensions of bodies. As Crang (2003) recounts, this thinking has resulted in post-structural feminist geographers including bodies in their research, through acknowledging their presence through positionality statements (see Box 1 p.76), being reflexive, considering uneven power relations and the ethics of doing qualitative research (Narin 2002; Dyck 2002; Falconer Al-Hindi and Kawabata 2002; Nast and Pile 2005).

However, post-structural feminist methods have not always gone far enough in recognising the sensuality of research encounters (Crang 2003; Longhurst et al. 2008). Longhurst et al. (2008, p.208) argue, that whilst researchers often position themselves in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, other aspects of encounters such as ‘smells, tastes, gestures, reactions, clothing, glances and touches often slip away unnoticed and/or undocumented’. Drawing on Anderson and Smith (2001) they argue that this marginalization of emotion is part of a gender politics where objectivity and rationality are valued and implicitly masculinized, whilst passions, desires and feelings are still very much feminized and pushed aside within
qualitative research. Following Crang’s (2003) call to consider the ‘touchy-feely’ aspects of doing research, Longhurst et al. (2008, p.208) reposition the body as a ‘primary tool through which all interactions and emotions filter in accessing research subjects and their geographies.’ Rather than uncovering the ‘truths’ grounded within research, they examine the embodied experiences of doing research, in their case sharing food with participants. This adds a particular kind of understanding of the relationships between people and place.

**Beyond representation – processes of assembling and arranging**

Debates about the kinds of knowledge privileged and created through doing ethnographic research are echoed in recent calls from non-representational geographers to attend to the gaps between theory and empirical practice. As Thrift (2000, p.3) explains:

> Cultural geographers have, over time, allied themselves with a number of qualitative methods, and most notably in-depth interviews and ethnographic ‘procedures’. But what is surprising is how narrow this range of skills is, how wedded they still are to the notion of bringing back the ‘data’, and then re-presenting it (nicely packaged up as a few supposedly illustrative quotations), and the narrow realms of sensate life they register.

Here, Thrift highlights the tensions between ‘representational’ research methods and increasing focus on the ‘non-representational’ aspects of everyday life (see also Dewsbury 2010). Central to this debate is the idea that all knowledge is situated and emergent; meaning a new methodological
repertoire was required to attend to the processes through which people achieved a sense of order in their lives. Sensory ethnography evolved as part of this move shift away from discussions of discourse to considering the ephemeral and ineffable moments of everyday life, including embodiments, emotions and affects.

In an attempt to move beyond discourse, Woodyer (2008) draws on the work of feminist scholar Judith Butler (1990) to frame research as a mode of performance or a way of ‘doing’. Similar to Longhurst et al. (2008), Woodyer uses her body as a research tool to shift the theorisation of research performances away from a purely discursive account to understand ethnographic research as always material, unfolding and emergent. Pink (2009, p.25) also highlights this performativity in describing how sensory ethnography is always emplaced:

Ethnographic practice entails our multisensorial embodied engagements with others... and with their social, material, discursive and sensory environments. It also requires us to reflect on these engagements...

Non-representational scholar Dewsbury (2010) also develops a performative methodology, drawing on the work Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and Massumi (2002). For Dewsbury (2010, p.327), qualitative research is always a means of partially understanding and sensing the ‘nervous energies, amplitudes and thresholds’ enacted by participants and researcher, with the somatic and sensory experiences central to interpretation.
New materialist scholars Fox and Alldred (2015) also draw on Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to consider research as an assemblage comprising researcher, data, methods and contexts. Through the notion of 'research-assemblage', Fox and Alldred (2015, p.400) explore how the 'bodies, things and abstractions that get caught up in social inquiry.' From this perspective, sensory ethnography is a method that provides insights to the processes by which the discursive and non-discursive, the material and the social, come together in a working order to generate particular kinds of meanings. Understanding sensory ethnography as an assemblage of embodied practices, performances and affects emphasises that research methods are always subjective, co-constituted and part of the creation of new kinds of knowledges. It is this approach which this thesis employs.

**Three tenets of a material feminist walking sensory ethnography**

Reviewing the use of walking and sensory ethnography methods, the preceding discussion has highlighted the need for walking research to use *in situ*, multisensory methods which attend to the embodied, emotional and affective moments of life assembled on-the-move. To conclude Part 1, this final section brings these two discussions together outlining three tenets of doing walking sensory ethnography that underpin this research:

1. *Our experience of the world is always multisensory and sensory ethnographies should reflect this.*

Sensory ethnography ‘does not privilege any one type of data or research methods’; rather, sensory ethnographies include the use of multiple in situ, reflexive, visual, auditory, digital, tactile, mobile, static, virtual and material
engagements as research encounters (Pink 2009, p.8). This means that a suite of methods are used in order to best explore the research questions at hand. Hence, in line with the attention of this thesis on bodies and the affective dimensions of mobility on-foot, this project developed a walking sensory ethnography that incorporated interviews, drawing activities, go-along walks, research diaries, sound and video recorded walks and follow-up video elicitation style interviews.

2. *Ethnographic research is messy and plans will change.*

Sensory ethnography requires the researcher to be open to the ‘impossibility of being completely prepared or knowing precisely how the ethnography will be conducted before starting’ (Pink 2009, p.44). This does not, however, mean that the research is unplanned. Rather, it means there is openness to doing research that recognises that what is planned to occur might not work out, or might unfold differently. As the next section of this chapter will highlight, this is particularly important to acknowledge within the early stages of research design, formal ethics processes and recruitment, as well as, reflecting on the experience of doing research with families.

3. *Research encounters occur throughout the research.*

Research encounters don’t just happen when an interview is conducted or when a video or sound is recorded. Rather, research encounters occur at all stages of the research: in the design, recruitment, collecting and analysis of the ethnographic materials, as well as in the ‘writing up’ (Pink 2009).

Dewsbury (2010, p.323) makes a similar argument noting that ‘one has
always already begun researching by implicitly setting up the research questions in relation to an economy of knowledge.’ There are of course moments of the research where encounters or ‘research performances’ (Woodyer 2008) might be felt more intensely, such as during fieldwork (Pink 2009). It’s important to acknowledge how the researchers own positionality shapes analysis (see Box 1). However, following a material feminist reading of assemblage all research is understood as a series of heterogeneous events that shape and inform each other. This final tenet will be addressed more closely in the final section of this chapter on analysis.
Box 1. Personal Reflections

‘Hold your hand and walk quickly and smartly across the road.’ As a child, this is what my Mum used to say to me and my brothers as we were about to cross a busy road. I always through this was a silly saying, but I also loved hearing it – it made me feel safe.

I grew up in Albury, a regional city in inland NSW. Like Wollongong, it is very much a car-dependent city. We lived in a suburb about 15 minutes’ drive out of town. Getting into town relied on having a car, busses would only come once an hour. Despite this, walking was always a part of our everyday life; mostly for leisure but also to get places.

I went to the neighbourhood primary school about 2km from our house on-foot. Dad would drive me most of the way, park at the football oval next to the school (so there were no roads to cross) and let me walk the rest of the way myself. I remember walking or cycling to the whole way to school on my own from about age 10 with friends. I was also tasked with walking home with my brother who is 3 years younger than me. Later, I went to high school in town, so I caught the school bus which picked me up and dropped me off 100 meters from our house. Walking to get places became relegated to the weekends; which is pretty much indicative of current statistics around children’s mobility in Australia.

Walking was a big part of our family leisure time. We lived beside a golf course and in the evenings, particularly in summer during daylight savings, I’d go with Mum for walks around it. I really enjoyed the time to talk one-on-one.

My parents were and still are keen bushwalkers. Almost every family holiday or weekend outing involved a bushwalk. As a teenager I didn’t really enjoy this too much. I remember having lots of tantrums and refusing to go. Now, funnily enough, I quite like bushwalking.

All these memories and experiences shape this research in subtle and not so sublet ways.
Part 2: Designing

Piloting

In late 2014, a pilot study was devised to determine the most suitable methods for doing research with families. The pilot project centred on Wollongong City Council’s annual cultural festival *Viva la Gong*. The project was pitched as wanting to explore how parents attending the festival with children shaped their experience the city. Following ethics approval (HE14/405) (see Appendix L) a call for participants asking for parents or carers of children who were planning to attend the *Viva la Gong* festival on Saturday 8th November 2014 was placed on social media sites and university mailing lists. Recruitment posters were pinned to community notice boards and in waiting-areas of dance, martial arts and gymnastic studios where parents dropping off children could see them. In total six participants were recruited; four mothers and two fathers, aged between their late-20s and early-40s. Participants’ children were aged 2-13 years.

Participants were invited to take part in a semi-structured interview before attending the festival to share their past experiences and expectations of the upcoming event. Although not a pre-requisite for participation in the project, every participant had attended the festival in previous years. Participants were then invited to document their family’s time at the festival using cameras, smart phones, and audio recorders. These photographs, videos or audio recordings were then shared, viewed and discussed with the researcher in a follow-up interview in the weeks after the event.
The pilot study was useful for two reasons. First, piloting highlighted the richness of sound and video methods over still photography. The videos and sounds recorded by participants had a more profound affective quality and allowed for the rhythms and routes of movement to be shared, replayed and reflected on. As Spinney (2011, p.167) notes, unlike photographic methods video ‘opens up movement for analysis in a way which would be impossible with a static image’. Dicks et al. (2006, p. 88 cited in Pink 2011, p. 263) makes a similar argument, noting that whilst ‘photographs allow us to see modes that are visual: colour, shape, size, position, light. What they do not show us are modes that operate through the other senses – of touch, smell, hearing and taste – such as bodily movement, texture, three-dimensional shape, sounds’. As a result of these qualities the subsequent project using video and sound methods.

Second, the pilot project highlighted the challenges of recording mobility with parents and children. Some participants found it difficult to take photos or record video and sounds as they needed to have their ‘hands-free’ to push prams, hold children’s hands and carry bags. This challenge is identified by Evans and Jones (2011) who note that one of the downfalls of using video methods is the distraction that comes with having to hold the video camera. To overcome this, the main project used hands free devices, including a GoPro video camera and an audio recorder which could be affixed to bodies, bags or prams.
**Ethical research**

Ethics are central to post-modern social science research including childhood studies, feminist studies, human geography and anthropology. These disciplines aim to position participants as subjects rather than 'objects' of research enquiry. This is done by theorising about the openness, dynamism and diversity of experience, place and identity. For example, Christensen and James (2008) explore how the ‘new’ social studies of childhood have shifted the way children’s research is being conceptualised and carried out. Children are no longer objects of research; instead of ‘studying children’, research is now being done ‘with children’. Methods seeks to position child participants as experts in their own lives (Barker 2003; Greig et al. 2007; Christensen and James 2008; Beazley et al. 2009). In this project, the way children and their adult family members were provided time to voice their opinions, create research materials and encounters was vital to ensuring that the project was ethical.

Alongside the ethics of doing feminist and childhood studies research, formalised ethical considerations for this project were documented through the University of Wollongong’s Human Research Ethics process. Following a review process, permission to carry out the research was granted by the full Social Science Ethics Committee in February 2015 (HE15/031) (see Appendix B). The ethics application outlined how the project’s design considered and addressed the legal requirements of informed consent; minimized harm or burden to participants and maintained participant’s privacy and confidentiality.
Informed consent was gained primarily using Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms. Potential adult participants were given a set of Participant Information Sheets (PIS) which explained the project’s aims, objectives, what participants were requested to do, freedom of consent and data use. Two versions of PIS were designed; one for adult and one for child participants (see Appendix D and E). The practice of providing children and adults with age specific leaflets, information sheets and consent forms follows the work of Christensen and James (2008). Parents were instructed to read the child PIS to their child or help them read it.

Consent for adults and their child’s predication was obtained in writing via a signed Consent Form (see Appendix F). It was assumed that adult participants should be relatively familiar with the concept of consent and the process of signing a document. Nevertheless, the importance of consent and what they were consenting to, and their freedom to withdraw from the research, was gone over with the participant before they signed the form.

Child Consent Form’s stating similar clauses, but in more child-friendly language, were also used to gain the consent from children, allowing them more autonomy within the research (see Appendix G). Although parents have legal rights to consent on behalf of their child, childhood scholars argue that it’s important to seek consent from children themselves. As Flewitt (2005, p.555) explains, some researchers prefer to use the term ‘assent’ rather than ‘consent’, arguing that minors are unable to give legal consent. However as Flewitt notes, ‘valid consent’ as recognised by the common law of many countries is defined as having sufficient understanding and intelligence.
about what is being proposed. Drawing on her research with young children, Flewitt (2005) argues that even at 3 years old, children were competent and confident enough to grant or withdraw consent. Hence, following Flewitt, children aged 5 years and over were invited to read (or have the consent form read to them) and sign their own consent form, and consent from younger children was gained verbally.

The formal ethics process also ensured that the research project was designed in such a way so that any risk or safety concerns for the participants and researcher were minimal. It was stipulated that interviews would occur at a time and place chosen by the adult participant in order to give them control over where and when they are meeting the researcher. Furthermore all fieldwork interactions with children were to occur in the presence of their parent or guardian. The greatest burden for participants was anticipated to be the expenditure of time. To help minimise the burden of time interview schedules were designed so that they should run for no longer than an hour (half an hour for children’s interviews) and participants were reminded they should record walks that are only part of regular routines. In compliance with university policy on conducting fieldwork alone, a fieldwork risk assessment and fieldwork emergency communication plan listing relevant emergency contact numbers was developed to address researcher safety.

The Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form also outlined how Participants’ identity would remain strictly confidential and protected through all stages of the project. Participants were able ‘opt into’ various
stages of the research through ticking the appropriate boxes on the Consent Form to dictate how research materials about them would be used. For example, participant’s names were changes to pseudonyms; video and video stills with participant’s faces would not be used in published or presented material or identifying featured blurred; and participants were able to request interview transcripts for checking (see Appendix F and G).

**Recruitment**

Recruitment was targeted at families with children between 3 to 12 years of age who lived in Wollongong LGA. Focusing on Wollongong LGA residents was done in order to connect the research with the Wollongong City Council’s renewed focus on making the city pedestrian-friendly. Furthermore, whilst the term *family* is an open-ended term which this research seeks to examine (see Chapter 1), for recruitment sake *family* came to mean children and the adult guardian (parents, grandparents) who they live with. The choice to target recruitment of families with children aged between 3 and 12 years was based on the aim of the research to explore the experiences of children and parents when they walk together. As statistics show, children over the age of 12 are more likely walk unaccompanied by parents, spending more time with friends, siblings or by themselves (Schoeppe et al. 2016). Hence, it was decided that families with children under the age of 12 would be targeted. Second, it was anticipated that children under the age of 3 mightn’t be able to verbally communicate their feelings about walking. These targeted ages didn’t stop older or younger children participating, particularly if they had siblings who were the
preferred ages for the project. For instance, children up to 15 years of age were interviewed and children as young as three months participated in the research through being present on the go-alongs and recorded walks.

Recruitment occurred through a range of targeted strategies. Recruitment posters (see Appendix C) inviting families to participate in the project entitled ‘Let’s go for a walk’ were placed on noticeboards in public libraries, community halls, three preschools, two sports centres and an indoor play centres across Wollongong suburbs. These passive forms of recruitment were generally unsuccessful with only one person making contact about the project after seeing a flyer. This person was someone already known and seeing a familiar name on the flyer prompted them to offer to participate.

Recruitment was found to be easier if given the opportunity to speak to potential participants directly about the project. With permission of a manager at Playball Wollongong (children’s indoor sports centre in North Wollongong) flyers were placed around the centre and parents watching their children in the waiting area were approached and invited to take part in the project. This resulted in two families being recruited for the project. Recruitment through personal networks was also successful, with five families agreeing to participate.

Calls for participants were posted on online ‘public’ Facebook groups (Illawarra Buy and Sell, UOW Students Buy and Sell, Northern Illawarra Community Notice Board), on a university research centre’s blog (Conversations with AUSCCER) and were included in staff email newsletters.
for the University of Wollongong and Bluescope Steel (two of the largest employers in the Illawarra). This strategy worked reasonably well gaining four participating families.

In April 2015, a newspaper article about the research and call for participants was published in the *Illawarra Mercury* and again a week later in the free *Wollongong Advertiser* (*UOW student studying why we walk* (Savage 2015)). Following the article's publication eleven people made contact interested in the project. This resulted in five families agreeing to participate.

**Sample**

Sixteen families were recruited to participate in the research which took place between February 2015 and March 2016. In total fifty-five family members were interviewed, went on go-along walks, made video and sound recordings or participated in follow-up interviews. This consisted of twenty-five adults (nineteen women and six men) aged from early-30s to early-70s, and thirty children (sixteen girls and fourteen boys) aged between 3 months and 15 years (see Appendix A for full list of participants).

Thirteen out of the sixteen families were parented by heterosexual married couples (one of these was a blended family). The other three remaining households were single parent households: one was a mother of two who was divorced; one was a grandmother who was divorced and was a carer for her grandson; and the other was mother of one who was married but her husband lived overseas for work commitments. The majority of participants were of white European ancestry, five families were of non-western ethnicity (non-descript Asian, Malaysian, Indonesian, Bengali and
Egyptian). All but two households owned a car, and all but three of the adult participants had learnt to drive. The majority of the participating families lived in northern (Helensburgh, Thirroul, Bulli, Towradgi, Tarrawanna) and central suburbs (Fairy Meadow, Keiraville, Gwynneville (2), Wollongong (3), Figtree (2), Mangerton, Mount Saint Thomas), with no families living in the southern suburbs. This geographical spread is important to note, as the northern suburbs of Wollongong are generally more affluent than those in the south of the LGA. Yet whilst the sample of participating families is generally white and middle class, there were a number of differences across the households.

Despite the research aims to explore the walking practices and experiences of all family members, overwhelming, it was mothers and children who engaged in the research. Only four fathers participated in interviews, three recorded walks and none participated in go-alongs. There were no videos or sound recordings of walks made with just fathers and their children. This gender imbalance may be because women were the main contact or ‘gatekeeper’ for the research. This resulted in interviews and go-alongs being scheduled at times that suited the gatekeeper best, as well as instructions for recording walks being communicated to this person. Women tended to have more flexibility than their husbands and partners due to less paid work commitments. Of the nineteen participating women, seven worked part-time (including two who were self-employed), four worked full-time (including one who was on maternity leave), three were studying full-time, one was retired and one was unemployed. To compare, in all but two of the
thirteen heterosexually parented families fathers worked full-time. This imbalance reflects the gendered cultures of parenting in Australia and other western countries that position mothers as primary carers for children and are more likely to be mobile with children than fathers (see Barker 2003; Collins and Kearns 2010; McLaren and Parusel 2015). This gendered sample means that most of the empirical chapters of this thesis focus on the experiences of mothers and children. Whilst this focuses on only part of family mobility on-foot, it is nevertheless important to consider.

**Part 3: Doing**

**Stage 1: Initial interviews**

Participation in the research was broken up into two stages: initial interviews and mobile methods. Stage 1 involved semi-interviews with adult participants and a draw and talk activity with child participants. The purpose of these initial interviews was to build rapport and gain a sense of each family’s regular walking routines. Stage 1 was conducted in participants’ homes, parks, cafes, workplaces, sport centres and children’s play centres. It was encouraged that adult interviews and children’s drawing activities were done separately so that adults and children could each have the opportunity to share their experiences. However, finding multiple times to initially meet with families for initial interviews was not always possible and in some instances interviews and draw and talk activities occurred together.
Semi-structured interviews with adults

Adult participants were invited to participate in a semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews have been widely used in geographical research (Dunn 2010; Hitchings 2012). Hitching (2012) highlights the value of interviews as a means of coming to understand people's lives and their everyday practices. Interviews were structured in two parts: (1) walking over the life course and (2) everyday walks with children (see Appendix H). The first part asked participants to reflect on their experiences walking as a child, as well as their experiences and walking routines before having children. The second part focused on their present day walking experiences and included questions about the joys and frictions of walking, preparing bodies for walking, walking as a special time, and walking in nature places, the city centre and the suburbs. A drawing and word bubble exercise was also used in some interviews to facilitate discussion and reflection.

Interviews varied in length from 20-60 minutes and all were transcribed verbatim. In total twenty adults (sixteen women and four men) participated in Stage 1 semi-structured interviews.

Draw and talk activities with children

Child participants were invited to take part in a 'draw and talk' activity, where they were asked to draw a picture of them and their family going for a walk and participate in a follow-up conversation. Drawing and storytelling activities are widely used in social science research with children as a way to facilitate discussion (Hill et al. 1996; Horstman et al. 2008; Towers 2012; Angell et al. 2015). The exact phrasing of the instruction for the drawing activity and follow-up questions differed depending on the age of the child.
following guidelines set out by Greig et al. (2007) (see Appendix I). In total twenty-seven children (fifteen girls and twelve boys) took part in draw and talk activities; seven were 4 years and under, thirteen were aged 5-11 years and seven were aged 12-15 years.

Draw and talk activities took from 15-30 minutes, were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Before beginning, the purpose of the activity was explained; children were asked if they would like to participate and asked for their permission for the conversation to be audio recorded. A feminist research ethic recognises that consent isn’t a once off thing. As Flewitt (2005, p.556) writes: ‘ongoing consent cannot be assumed, but is negotiated in situated contexts on a minute-by-minute basis’. This is particularly the case for sensory ethnographic research which involves over multiple research encounters and methods. Conversely, as Matthews (1998, p.318) argues, it is important to be flexible when doing research with children:

Children have many things to do in their busy lives. You cannot expect a group of children to give up all of these other activities and immerse themselves fully in your project. Anticipate some lack of interest.

In some instances planned draw and talk activities were abandoned as children became disinterested. This was not taken as a withdrawal of consent for the whole project, but rather children opting not to participate in this particular activity. Furthermore, as Matthews (1998) notes whilst interviews are useful for giving children a ‘voice’ in research, relying on such conversational methods neglects the many other ways children express
themselves. Stage 2 of the research which employed mobile methods offered alternative means for children to share their walking experiences.

**Stage 2: Mobile methods**

Aware that interview based accounts often miss the fleeting moments, chance encounters and unwilled affective arousals that emerge when moving together on-foot (Lorimer 2010; Harada and Waitt 2013), Stage 2 of the project embraced a range of mobile methods. These included: go-alongs and video and sound recordings and follow-up interviews.

**Go-alongs**

To gain a better understanding of the families’ everyday mobility, families were then encouraged to take the researcher along on one of their regular family walks. As highlighted previously, go-alongs are used widely in mobilities research allowing participants to show the unexplainable and provides the researcher an opportunity to observe in family's walks through participation (Kusenbach 2003; Evans and Jones 2011). Throughout the go-alongs questions were asked about the route, usual routines, noise, weather, safety, pavement quality, the fun bits and hard bits. Go-alongs ranged from walking to and from school, walking to the local swimming pool, or just going for a walk to get out of the house. Most of these were recorded using a GoPro video camera or audio recorder (see next section for further discussion). For go-alongs not recorded observational notes were made in a research diary immediately after the walk. This auto-ethnographic method is used by Spinney (2011) in his cycling research. These notes were incorporated into the analysis of the data.
Organising go-alongs was sometimes challenging. Of the sixteen families involved in the project, seven participated in go-alongs. Although the project planned to do go-alongs during participant’s usual walking routines and in their usual walking places, the happenstance nature of many families’ walking routines made it difficult to identify a convenient time or regular walk to join them. Hence, many go-alongs ended up being organised for the purpose of research. In some cases these walks may not have occurred otherwise. Regardless of this, the go-alongs, like any sensory ethnographic method should never be viewed as ‘authentic’. Rather, go-alongs and the ethnographic materials collected should always be understood as a product of the research. Furthermore, these walks are still valuable to the research in how they enable the researcher to gain a sense of family member’s interpersonal relationships and insight into the joys and challenges of walking together.

**Video and sound recordings**

Aware of the challenges of doing and organising go-alongs, families were also invited to make video and sound recordings of at least four regular family walks over a two-week period. Video methods are used extensively within mobilities research as they allow exploration of the sensual rhythms of everyday life beyond the purely ‘visual’ register (Garrett 2010; Lorimer 2010; Yi’En 2014). As Spinney (2011, p.161) notes, such methods are a way of ‘feeling there’ when the researcher can’t physically be there. Using video can offer a way to reconnect with the non-verbalised ways of experiencing and knowing the research encounter and analysis (Pink 2009). Sound recordings methods are also widely utilised to explore the sensory aspects of
everyday life (see Duffy and Waitt 2011; Bull 2013; O’Keeffe 2015). Gallagher and Prior (2013) argue that sound-based methods provide researchers access to the more-than-representational, the immaterial and the taken-for-granted atmosphere of a place. A combination of these methods was chosen to allow insight into everyday walking without the researcher having to be present, enabling the participants the autonomy to create their own research encounters on the move.

Fourteen families took up the invitation to record their walks over a fortnight. These families were loaned one GoPro Hero3; an assortment of GoPro attachments, including head strap, chest strap, child’s chest strap, pole attachment or clip; and an audio recorder on a lanyard (see Figure 2). Both adults and children were encouraged to share the recording responsibilities (see Appendix J).

Figure 2. GoPro Hero3 and attachments. Source: Author’s own photographs, September 2017
GoPro is a brand name synonymous with small but relatively high powered, versatile and durable action cameras. Whilst designed for action sports, they have been increasingly used as tools for ethnographic research (Kinsley et al. 2016; Evers 2016; Vannini and Stewart 2017). The camera itself weighs between 80 to 100 grams (depending on the version) but is then fitted with a plastic dust and waterproof cover which allows it to be mounted using various attachments to bodies, vehicles or equipment. The GoPro’s light weight and versatility in being able to attach to bodies and equipment made it a useful tool for this research. The added benefit of being hands free also meant that continuous recording could be achieved so that walks could be recorded from start to finish.

The GoPro attachments given to each family varied depending on the age of the child. For example, families who walked with prams were provided with a pole attachment so the camera could be affixed to the handlebars of the pram. These differences mean that each family’s recordings and each recording of a walk are created and co-produced in accordance with the decision of the researcher to provide the family with certain equipment, the decision of the family members to record using a certain medium, their choice of where to wear it on their body (or not if attaching it to a pram), and how they moved their bodies.

The purpose of having both video and audio recorder was two-fold. First, the protective casing on the GoPro reduced the sound quality of the videos. Accompanying audio recordings helped provide further richness to the sensory data. Second, participants were able to choose the recording method
they felt most comfortable with. Whilst the GoPro was affixed to bodies, the audio recorder could be worn more discreetly on a lanyard around the participant’s neck, held in their hand or placed in a pocket. This aimed to mitigate participants concerns about recording in public places. Harada and Waitt (2013) utilise a similar combination of video and audio recordings to help inform their sensory ethnography of car use to allow participants to create research encounters on their own terms and in their own time. However, as discussed in Box 2, the GoPro was far from a neutral recording device. Through its presence routes, practices and routines changed.
Box 2. A note on representation: GoProing

When using video and sound methods it is important to understand the context of their production. As Garrett (2013b) explains the videoed world is seen through glass, filtered through a physical lens and a social/cultural one. Garrett’s literal and figurative lens metaphor explains how creating a video is a way of being and doing as well as a process of engaging and interacting with the world around us in ways that meld and blur representations and practice. Hence, the GoPro is not just a recording device that non-intrusively ‘captures’ everyday life. Rather, the GoPro’s agency, in particular its affective capacity to shift relations between bodies and places, means careful consideration must be given to its role in ethnographic research encounters.

The recorded walk as a research encounter becomes most clear when participants refer to the devices they are using. For example during a walk where he is wearing the GoPro via a chest strap attachment, Tim (5 years) exclaims that he is ‘being a researcher!’, paraphrasing a line from the Participant Information Sheet for Children (see Appendix E). In another family’s recording Jacky (6 years) talks about how they are making a movie and asks for clarification from her mum about whether or not her voice recorded by the GoPro attached to her chest. Upon realising that her voice is being recorded she is shocked. As well as being present in their consciousness the GoPro was affixed to bodies, making them felt and immediately an apparent extra. Jacky exclaims: ‘Mum I’m not going to forget about it just because it’s right on my chest and I can feel it!’ For Jacky the GoPro pressed against her body leaving a physical reminder of its presence. During a follow-up interview I question Jacky about what she means by this statement. She’s not sure but her mum, Alicia (early-50s), interjects to say she noticed Jacky was acting funnier than usual and she told her to ‘Stop performing for the camera’.

Despite being instructed to go about their everyday walking routines participants tried to helpfully capture the ‘most interesting’, ‘most normal’ or ‘right’ types of data for the research, changing when they walked, the way they moved and engaged with the spaces around them. The GoPro could never simply be ‘not there’. Likewise, the researcher was never really absent, instead substituted by the GoPro. GoPros caused fascination, excitement, confusion, discomfort and argument amongst adults and children. Hence, whilst I was interested in recording walking what was really being recorded was ‘GoProing’; a more unfamiliar way of journeying on-foot.
**Follow-up interviews**

At the end of the fortnight the recording devices, video and sound files were collected from participants and a follow-up interview schedule was created. Follow-up sound and video-elicitation style interviews were designed so that participants could reflect on their walking experiences and co-analyse the video and sound recordings. Sound and video-elicitation is a method widely used by geographers analysing mobilities (Laurier 2010; Murray and Mand 2013; Harada and Waitt 2013). Reflecting on the use of video methods in cycling research Spinney (2011, p.161) highlights how video-elicitation enables participants the ability to extend their ‘sensory vocabularies’. Re-watching videos with participations can help them articulate their experiences of fleeting sensations as it allows videos to be replayed in a non-linear manner (Spinney 2011). This means that practices and moments ‘previously deemed non-representational because of their inability to be verbalised, articulated and associated’ (Spinney 2011, p.171) may now be somewhat represented. Spinney also highlights how follow-up interviews enabled him to ask participants about moments as they were ‘done’ in a way that was impossible whilst they were initially being performed. Similarly, while being aware that watching the video or listening to the sound recording may no longer be an immersive experience, the altered representation of the photo, video or soundscape provides a space for reflection and a new set of emotional responses about it to be told (Murray 2010).

In preparation for the follow-up interviews the videos and sounds were watched and listened to and descriptive notes were taken. From these notes
a viewing and listening schedule with questions relating to specific part of videos and sound recordings was designed for each individual participant. The viewing and listening schedules aimed to explore participant’s rhythms, routines, practices, and interaction with each other as well as non-human-things, such as the weather, footpaths, children’s toys, plants, clothes, bags and strollers (see Appendix K for example of viewing and listening schedule). To aid conversation in some instances a printed Google Map of the participant’s neighbourhood was brought along so that the route of walks could be traced onto the map.

The purpose of making a schedule was also to limit the length of the interview and reduce any burden of participant’s time caused by playing back the video and sound recordings in their entirety. Follow-up interviews lasted between 20-90 minutes depending on the number of recordings made by participants. In saying this, the schedule was not fixed and in many instances participants requested what they felt where the ‘important bits’ of the recorded walks to be replayed. Take for example Tim (5 years), who was particularly excited to replay a ‘funny part’ of one recorded walk:

Tim: *Can I show you something? Here and then that. It’s fun, I just want that to go down there. That’s funny*

Susannah: *What’s funny?*

Tim: *No not that, I can I go back?*

Follow-up interviews usually occurred in the same places as the previous interviews, such as in participants homes, in meeting rooms in the university.
library, café’s or outside in parks. To ensure flexibility of the interview setting videos and sounds were played back on a tablet device. However, background noise when interviews were conducted in public or outdoor places was a challenge when playing back sound recordings of walks.

Effort was made to ensure follow-up interviews occurred within two weeks from when the videos and sounds were recorded so that participant’s memories of recorded walks would be ‘fresh’ in their minds. However, finding a convenient time for the interview proved difficult for some families and as a result some follow-up interviews occurred a few weeks later. Furthermore, whilst it was encouraged that each participating family member would take part in a separate follow-up interview, the available time of families meant that in many cases participants were interviewed together. In some cases, this resulted in children becoming bored or distracted by siblings. However, for most part, group interviews facilitated lively, rich discussions and reflections.

**Analysis**

Analysis is commonly understood as a way of making sense of research materials by linking patterns, similarities and differences with theory. Pink (2009) notes that analysis is commonly considered as separate to data collection in research. For example, data collection happens ‘out there’ (i.e. during fieldwork) whilst analysis occurs afterwards and in a different time and place (i.e. in the space of a lab or academic office). However Pink (2009) argues that in sensory ethnographic research analysis is implicit in the research process and knowledge production. Pink (2009) suggests that doing
analysing in sensory ethnography could be understood as points in the research where intense, systematic treatment and ordering of research materials occurs. Longhurst (2001) makes a similar argument noting that the process of reducing data cannot be separated out from analysis. Hence, rather than occurring post data collection, analysis occurred at all stages of the research. For example, analysis began at the genesis of the project; tied to the researcher’s positionality (see Box 1 p.76). Analysis is evident in the decisions made about the research aims. Following piloting, more specific decisions were made about how the research would be carried out. Including which recording technologies would be used. By doing a formal ethics application, decisions were made about who would be targeted for the research and how the project would be pitched, shaping the sample of participants. The interview schedule focused on a specific set of questions, resulting in the type of responses. In preparing for the follow-up interview viewing and listening schedule, choices were made about ‘which bits’ of the recorded walks would be played back to participants. This initial cutting and sorting of video and sound recordings was underpinned by the aim of the aim to understand the embodied, sensual and more-than-human entanglements of family’s walking experiences. At later stages, a different kind of systematic analysis occurred when transcripts, notes, videos and sounds were uploaded, sorted and coded with the qualitative analysis software NVivo 11. As Longhurst (2001) notes, such programs do not do the analysis for the researcher, but rather aid the process of analysis. Using NVivo 11 descriptive ‘nodes’ were created so that transcript text and
moments in video and sound recordings could be coded and congruent themes across texts could be linked together.

Doing analysis is as much an embodied experience as doing fieldwork. For non-representational and material feminist scholar’s analysis is not an activity isolated from ‘experience’ or from the researcher’s embodied knowing (Longhurst 2001; Woodyer 2008). Hence, the researcher’s body is a tool for analysis – sensing, feeling, empathetically understanding and experiencing the recorded walks of participants, remembering the go-alongs and interviews (Longhurst 2001; Woodyer 2008). Even away from ‘the field’ the researcher’s body and its responses to interpret the empirical materials. It is a layering of the researchers own sensory reactions to walking in conjunction with knowledge of material feminist theory that give the empirical material meaning.

Chapter summary

This chapter aimed to do more than just outline and justify the methods used in the research. This chapter sought to retrace the analytical decisions made throughout the project and the process by which the walking sensory ethnography method generated specific knowledges about family lives on-the-move. The chapter was structured in three parts. Part 1 reviewed how walking has gained traction as a useful in situ method for qualitative research since the mobilities turn, before turning attention to the development of sensory ethnography as a methodology which attends to the embodied, emotional and affective elements of everyday life. The section then outlined three tenets of doing walking sensory ethnographies which underpinned the
research. Part 2 charted the *design* of the project through the piloting of methods, formal and informal ethical considerations, participant recruitment and participant sample. Part 3 focused on *doing* walking sensory ethnographies, reflecting on the design, purpose and effectiveness of interviews with adults, draw and talk activities with children, go-alongs, video and sound recordings, and follow-up interviews. This section ends with a discussion of analysis. In conceptualising analysis as embedded, embodied and ongoing, the section reflects on how the decisions made across the exploratory, design and doing stages of the research are central to production and making sense of empirical data. Following Dewsbury (2010, p.323) there is quite a lot at stake when doing qualitative research. The ‘choice of mode of speech, and [what] we deem to be worthy of visibility, maintains existing, or produced alternative, intelligibilities’ is always political.
Chapter 4: Walking, mothering and care

Rachel (mid-40s): ... my son is a runner and he always has been, so it’s always... When you hear my recording of us walking, it’s probably [me] yelling at him because he just takes off, so it's always quite stressful. It’s not a pleasant thing and that’s why, I think, that's my habit of... I didn’t want to go for a walk because it was just too stressful for me. But now, I’m trying to make a conscious effort that we have to go out.

Introduction

Walking in increasingly positioned as a cornerstone of healthy and sustainable city campaigns, anticipated as somethings able-bodies can easily do for the good of themselves, their families and the planet. Consequently, urban planners have argued for the compact liveable city, with shorter distances and travel times between origins and destinations to encourage walking (Godfrey et al. 2015). However, there some problematic inferences embedded this urban model and view of walking. As the opening quote suggests, there is more at play than time and distance when it comes to walking that getting from A to B; especially when walking with children. Describing her 5 year old son Mike as ‘a runner’, Rachel highlights the substantial emotional work and watchful practices mothers endure and enact when walking with children in a car-dependent city such as Wollongong. Yet despite walking being ‘stressful’ and involving lots of yelling, Rachel still makes the effort to go for walks with her children. Rachel’s choice to walk with her children highlights the importance of considering the
complexity of embodied and affective moments of care for children which shape motherhood on-the-move.

Feminist perspectives on mobility have brought to fore the gendered dimensions of family life on-the-move (Uteng and Cresswell 2008; Murray 2008; Hanson 2010). Questions of who cares for and travels with children are central to shaping family mobility (Barker 2011; Waitt and Harada 2016). A substantial body of work explores the gendered mobility ‘burden’ that women face escorting children (see Tivers 1985; Bostock 2001; Uteng and Cresswell 2008). Another strand discusses how chauffeuring children in cars is underpinned by discourses of ‘good’ mothering (Dowling 2000; Goodwin and Huuptaz 2010; Barker 2011). In contrast, limited work examines how such gendered care practices manifest in embodied and material ways when mothers walk with children (for exception see Boyer and Spinney 2016). The aim of this chapter is to help address this gap in the literature.

To do so, this chapter addresses four questions. First, how is motherhood felt on-the-move when walking somewhere with children in car-dependent cities? Second, what dilemmas of becoming a ‘good’ mother are encountered on-foot? Third, how are resolutions to these dilemmas addressed? Fourth and finally, how might understanding walking as an embodiment of gendered care provide insights into the sorts of changes needed to make cities more walkable for families?

To answer these questions this chapter focuses on the experiences of mothers who walk with children. The chapter builds upon recent material feminist scholarship interested in the spatial dynamics of parenting and
maternal bodies (Murray 2008; Longhurst 2008; Morrison et al. 2013; Boyer and Spinney 2016). It employs Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concept of assemblage to conceptualise how motherhood emerges while walking somewhere. Mindful of the current debates surrounding assemblage thinking in geography (Anderson and McFarlane 2011), here the notion of assemblage highlights the kinds of working arrangements comprised of material and social entities that enable women to achieve motherhood. This theoretical approach enables an understanding of motherhood as a performative and embodied becoming (Boyer and Spinney 2016; Boyer 2016). What constitutes and legitimates a version of motherhood is the felt force or affective resonance that circulates between and through bodies walking together and is comprised of discursive (gender, class, family, motherhood, exercise, leisure) and material entanglements (traffic, weather, sunlight, hilliness, pavements, ocean views).

The chapter is structured in four parts. The first section positions the chapter at the intersection of two strands of literature; gendered mobility and a feminist care ethics. The next section briefly outlines the choice to focus on mothers and the analysis of the walking sensory ethnographic materials. The third section examines the tensions that emerge through five ‘moments of care’ (preparedness, togetherness, playfulness, watchfulness, and attentiveness). The focus here is on the dilemmas of becoming a mother on-foot through the entangled relations between differently-mobile walking bodies, routes and objects. In offering the concept of mother-child walking assemblage insights are provided to the dilemmas of becoming a ‘good’
mother journeying on-foot with children, alongside how these dilemmas are resolved. The conclusion highlights the challenges and opportunities of becoming ‘good’ mothers when walking different routes, rhythms, times, places and styles with children. In doing so the chapter illuminates that for mothers, to go for a walk with children in a car-dependent city can be pleasurable, felt as intensely important, but is also often far from easy with feelings of stress and danger a constant companion.

**Assembling mothering and care on-the-move**

In articulating a material feminist perspective, this chapter works at the intersection of two bodies of geographical writing: gendered mobility and a feminist care ethics. Feminist mobility scholarship alerts us to the differentiated experiences of journeys for different sorts of bodies, including gender (McDowell 1993; Law 1999). As Hanson (2010, p.6) writes, gender and mobility are ‘completely bound up with each other, to the point of almost being inseparable’. A review of the literature illustrates this, with walking often mediated through power-laden social networks that Hubbard (2006) recognises as central to how gendered and sexed bodies access the city at different times of day. Considering the different experiences of men and women journeying by any mode of transport, anywhere, quickly reveals why gender is at the fore of current mobility analysis and writing (Uteng and Cresswell 2008). Today in Australia, like in the United Kingdom and North America, women’s historically gendered position as carers for children continues to play out in present parenting practices. Unlike Nordic countries, where both parents receive paid leave (see Lilius 2016), in Australia,
mothers are more likely than fathers to be mobile with children (see Barker 2003; 2011; Collins and Kearns 2010; McLaren and Parusel 2015).

Literature on the gendered provisioning of family mobility is linked to feminist geographers’ broader engagement with the dilemmas that shape care. For Milligan and Wiles (2010, p.737): ‘[c]are is the provision of practical and emotional support’. From this perspective, care is conceived as a practice, and aligned with subjectivity. Important here is how gendered ideas about who cares for children is central in shaping practices, routes, transport modes, and objects brought along. For example, Dowling (2000) draws on the concept of performativity to illustrate how white affluent mothers in Sydney, Australia, perform ‘good’ motherhood by driving their children to school and extra-curricular activities (see also Goodwin and Huupatz 2010). In Dowling’s (2000, p.350) words: ‘The car enabled women to access what they defined as the best quality care/activities for their children’. Dowling’s work is important as it shows how provisioning child mobility relates to parenting cultures, historically and geographically constituted discourses of risk and preparedness, and the doing of parenting through enactments of care (see also Barker 2011; Murray 2008). Conversely, McLaren and Parusel (2015) highlight how parental care is enacted as gendered and classed performances through resistance to driving and the immobilisation of children in cars, by establishing walking routines with children along streets devoid of traffic.

Although such work is important and very useful for thinking about mothering and mobility, the focus on representations and discourses tends
to gloss over the embodied dimensions of journeys. Following the recent work in mobilities scholarship to consider the corporeality of journeying, this chapter turns towards thinking how bodies, through their movement, are entangled in places (see Thrift 2004; Edensor 2010; Jensen et al. 2015; Boyer and Spinney 2016). For example, Boyer and Spinney's (2016) work on mothering and journey-making explores the embodied geographies of care. They conceptualise motherhood from a fleshy perspective to think about how bodily movement powerfully intersects with aesthetic orientations, kinaesthetic dispositions, and material engagements. From this perspective, care does not only occur between bodies, but happens in conjunction with urban spaces as sites of care. Following the lead of Boyer and Spinney (2016), this chapter argues that walking together is a way in which mothering is not only ‘done’, but is a process by which the capacities to ‘become a mother’ are simultaneously discursive and material. Importantly, this foregrounds the idea that becoming a mother is always ‘distributed’ through the entanglement of bodies and materials in place.

Like Boyer and Spinney (2016), this chapter draws on Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) work to develop a relational ontology of the walking body, in which motherhood is theorised as part of a mobile mother-child walking assemblage. From this perspective, a person who walks with children may derive legitimacy about their sense of self as a mother through momentary conjunctions of kinaesthetic, material, visceral and social forces that establish connections between discursive and material entities. A walking assemblage can be conceived as the working arrangement that takes shape
through ‘the productive intersection of a form of content (actions, bodies and things) and a form of expression (affect, words and ideas)’ to enable mothering on-the-move (Buchanan 2015, p.390). Hence, going places on-foot as a mother-child walking assemblage to achieve motherhood involves mobile bodies adopting an abstract plan of organising domestic life on-the-move. Offering an assemblage reading of motherhood explores how care is an affective resonance that circulates between and through proximate bodies and objects. Thus, ‘moments of care’ are felt through the body and are thought of as the coming together of material and social entities that work towards and against achieving motherhood.

As feminist scholars highlight, care should not be conceived solely in terms of ‘doing’, but a ‘care ethics also demands attention to emotions and affective relations (of love, concern, and connection) because of the complex ways in which power is embedded within them’ (Lawson 2007, p.3). Following Ahmed (2004b), affect and emotion are not separate sensations, but are pre- and post-cognitive (see also Bondi 2005; Morrison et al. 2013; Boyer and Spinney 2016). A ‘feminist care ethics’ resonates with the imperative to examine the gendered aspects of who, where and what constitutes the provisioning of care. At one level, this brings to the fore the labour of care (i.e. the practices) to critique how feminised care work often goes unnoticed, unpaid or underpaid (Lawson 2007). At another level, a feminist care ethics highlights the moral obligations and responsibilities. Hence, attention turns to ‘caringscapes’ and how the dilemmas of care might play out for different bodies in different times and spaces (Bowlby 2012).
Here, ‘caring is not so much an activity [but] a way of relating to others’ (McEwan and Goodman 2010, p.103). Consequently, people’s lived experiences are privileged over reciprocal obligations or universal rules/laws (Held 2006).

Assemblage thinking sees care is neither a practice nor emotion. Instead, care is conceived as a distributive affective resonance, force or intensity made through connections and engagements. As an affective resonance, care is conceived to flow between and through bodies and objects. Here, the mother-child assemblage is a working arrangement of social and material elements that enables motherhood. It is through these interrelations, or ‘moments of care’, that entanglements, continuous comings-together of social and material elements, and flows between bodies work to make and remake motherhood and mother-child walking assemblages. This chapter argues that by taking an assemblage approach and being alive to the affective resonances that attach to and are produced by walking bodies to make sense of motherhood, offers fertile ground for feminist geographers to shed light on ways car-dependent cities can be made more walkable for families.

**A focus on mothers**

Important methodological considerations arise from the relational conceptualisation of ‘becoming mother’ through walking. To attend to the body unfolding in-the-middle-of-things, the project followed the lead of Pink (2007) and employed a walking sensory ethnography with sixteen families in Wollongong. These methods, outlined in detail in Chapter 3, sought to
provide an empathetic sense of what it felt like for participants’ bodies to dwell together while on-the-move somewhere on-foot.

Whilst everyone in the family was encouraged to participate in the project, overwhelmingly it was mothers and children who engaged in the research; only four fathers participated in interviews, three recorded walks, and none attended go-alongs. This gender imbalance reflects the gendered cultures of parenting in Australia, and elsewhere, that position mothers as primary care providers (see Aitken 2000; Barker 2003; 2011; Collins and Kearns 2010; McLaren and Parusel 2015). Hence, the focus of this chapter is on how this gendered care work played out and emerged on-the-move for mothers who walked with their children. By focusing the chapter on the experience of mothers, it doesn’t aim to argue that only mothers walk with children, but it instead highlights how experiences of place are highly enrolled in the constitution of diverse gendered parenting subjects.

For this chapter, attention was given to empirical data where care emerged. Such moments provide insights into the dilemmas of the arrangements put in place to ‘become mother’ while walking with children. Sensory ethnographic analysis demands paying attention to how social and material entities become expressive, not simply by paying attention to semiotic meaning, but also through how they acquire a performative function. Alive to the importance of the performative function of both ideas (expression) and material things (content), transcripts, videos and audio recordings were systematically coded under five emerging thematic categories that illustrate ‘moments of care’: preparedness, togetherness,
playfulness, watchfulness and attentiveness. These are moments where care is enacted, felt, embodied and emerges as a force between bodies moving together on-foot to work towards or against motherhood.

The following section present the analysis through these five ‘moments of care’ using vignettes of seven mothers’ experiences. Vignettes allow provide a way of writing up and analysing data that attends to individual walking experiences in a way that recognises the context in which emergent subjects are embedded (Waitt and Clement 2015). The selected vignettes illustrate ‘moments of care’ common across the sample of women participants whilst showing specific instances of how motherhood was assembled while journeying with children on-foot.

**Moments of care**

**Preparedness**

*Alicia: On a school walk; getting ready for school getting dressed,*

*making sure you have the right stuff in the bag for the day. Making sure Ethan’s [son (3 years)] dressed, making sure everyone’s been to the toilet, so you don’t get an emergency toilet request halfway there.*

As Alicia, a mother of two, married and in her early-50s, explains, much of the ‘work’ involved in walking with children occurs before departure. Like Alicia, many mothers described a range of ways they achieved a state of ‘preparedness’ for their journeys on-foot, which linked up with their maternal identities. This was often done through ordering things to bring
along, including: prams, bags packed with food, water, hats and changes of clothes and sunscreen. Piper (mid-30s), a married mother of two on maternity leave, similarly illustrates how the affective resonance of care circulates within a mother-child walking assemblage comprised of a range of discursive and material entities; including her daughters Melody (3 years) and Amy (3 months), a double-stroller and ‘things’ stored in a ready-to-hand ‘baby-backpack’:

*Piper: That’s the baby-backpack. … So it’s got nappies and wipes and maybe some food.*

*Susannah: But you didn’t take that on any of your other walks?*

*Piper: No but again it’s down to the purpose of the walks, so this, after music [class] we go to the park and we hang out, and I don’t know if Amy’s going to do a poo or something, and we stop at ‘Music Time’ for an hour or whatever.*

The double-stroller and backpack’s presence relates to sets of ideas about mothers ‘being prepared’ through the bringing along of specific items. Preparedness not only enables caring for children on-the-move, but also enables mothers to care for themselves through mitigating against future stress. In being prepared, carrying baby-stuff confirms sets of ideas around participants’ ideas of being and becoming a ‘good’ mother being able to cope in times of crisis in public i.e. dirty nappies or hungry children: *Piper: ‘… my baby-backpack’s ready to go, so if I do use something I replace it straight away.’*

As Murray (2008) discusses, the subject of mother is relational to the subject of the child, with the bodily needs of dependents central to the construction
of motherhood. Critically, the types of things brought along are contingent on
the anticipated style of walking (exercise, leisure, commute), including its
duration, destination, predicted needs of children and adult bodies, and the
kinds of assemblages that result. For example, while appreciating its utility,
the baby-backpack was often deemed unnecessary on Piper’s routine
morning exercise walk (sometimes combined with dropping Melody at
childcare) from home, to the beach, along a paved coastal footpath, and
returning via neighbourhood shops:

    Piper: ...it’s about an hour and I’m gone for about an hour and a
    half and Amy stays in the stroller, and so I don’t take nappies
    sometimes because by the time I get home... ... But I do take phone
    and keys and wallet and stuff...

    With her body dressed in ‘active wear’, the cumbersome backpacked and
double-strollered bodies of the mother-children walking assemblage creates
a moment of dilemma. While marking her out as a well prepared mum
anticipating the needs of her children, it also has the potential to mask the
‘other-than parent’ (Boyer and Spinney 2016, p.1120) aspect of herself as a
fit, slim, active person, out on a fast-paced walk. For this walk, Piper chooses
to leave the baby-backpack and nappies at home. Yet, her subjectivity as a
‘good’ mother is not undone without these things. In accordance with
medicalised discourses of walking as beneficial for new mother’s health and
wellbeing (see Currie and Develin 2002), Piper senses herself as a ‘good’
mother in her tendons and lungs as she walks up hills, in the touch of
morning sunlight on her skin, in the smell of the sea air and the sight of the
beach:

Piper: ...I try to walk everyday, because that's the easiest exercise that you get done.... Seeing the water [at the beach]... And the sun just makes me happy.

Togetherness

Marge: Umm, its nice weather, and we’re conscious that daylight savings is about the end, and we like to yeah have time outside and yeah and hopefully, when Jack [husband (early-40s)] had been at work all day. Sometimes it just breaks up the evening routine a bit, you know, like doing all the dishes and then getting them [Belle (7 years), Tim (5 years)] ready for bed...

Here, Marge (early-40s) describes how at the end of a dry and warm summer day, a short walk around their neighbourhood helps fatigued adult and child bodies to unwind, break up the domestic routine and spend time with each other. Marge was not alone in speaking about walking as enabling a sense of ‘togetherness’ and she draws our attention to the places where bodies are exposed to the material and affective intensities (seasons, weather, sunlight) that allow families to help fashion ‘family time’ out of hectic schedules. For example, Rachel (mid-40s) illustrates how the affective intensities of different material contexts help to differentiate between walks to the shops and walks to a beachside park:

Rachel: ... ...we walk to walk the shops, or at the shops. It’s a regular walk that we do; and for me, this is what the family does on a day to
day basis. But ... for me the walk at the [beachside] park is different.
The four of us together... Normally it’s just kids and I so for me, yeah all four of us.

Walks to the beachside park are bundled with driving to avoid crossing ‘unsafe’ busy roads on-foot and arriving with tired legs as a result of hilly streets. In contrast, the flat paved beachside footpath enables bodies to move together with more ease, catering for mothers to fulfil white middle-class moralities of the ‘good family life’ that incorporates the ritualization of ‘family time’ (see Gillis 1996; Hallman and Benbow 2007). Here, the importance of walking along the beachside path is not about getting from point A to point B in a specific time to undertake a practical activity. Instead, it is designed for material-corporeal engagements that favour slowness, relaxation and playfulness; reproducing a classed understanding of the family. Such moments of ‘planned’ togetherness as a family highlight the way familial care emerges as a constitutive affective force that circulates and moves between bodies, ideas and proximate objects while on-the-move.

**Playfulness**

*Ashleigh: We’ll decide, we make a concerted effort to say ‘let’s go to the park’, we’ll all get our joggers on and off we go. It’s about enjoying getting your feet into the grass and the boys will race each other and Derek [husband] will race the boys [Christopher (6 years), Corey (4 years)] or whatever, or race the dog, which is difficult. But yeah, that’s it, that’s about having fun as a family.*
As Ashleigh’s (late-40s) quote highlights, the scheduling of ‘family walks’ was also an important way mothers cared for children by providing valued opportunities for fun. Mothers often justified the appropriateness of play while journeying on-foot drawing by on discourses of maternal competency relating to improving children’s social, emotional, cognitive and physical learning and development (Woodyer 2012). Yet, opportunities for play often created moments of dilemmas about what constitutes ‘good’ mothering whilst journeying together, through the ways affects, emotions, ideas and materialities intermingle. For example, Aria (mid-40s) outlines one such moment of maternal competency relating to why she chose to allow her children, Kathy (7 years) and Tom (4 years), to play on a ‘dangerous’ looking log suspended between two sand dunes whilst on a weekend ‘family walk’ at the beach:

*Susannah:* And what are you guys doing on the beach?

*Aria:* Just watching. It’s the balance of saying don’t do it because it’s dangerous, or do you let them go do it and try it.

*Susannah:* Is it dangerous?

*Aria:* From where we are. Ahh it looks reasonably high, because it’s up at the level of the sand dunes, but then I could see it could be really fun.

Aria, her two children and husband, Steven, drove from home to the beach specifically for this walk, foreshadowing moments of anticipated togetherness and fun. The chance encounter with this log facilitates playfulness, but also disrupts dominant idea of mothers as carers, generating
a moment of anxiety. Watching the video, Aria picks up on visual cues that question the ‘appropriateness’ of playing on a log suspended between two sand dunes. The juxtaposition of the height of the log and its potential as a balancing beam illustrates the dilemma for Aria of the capacity of the log as both risk and fun. Allowing her children to play on this log may bring into question her maternal competency as relating to her ability to care for kin. As Harker (2005) argues, play is not just an activity which occurs without social and cultural grounding. This moment of playfulness is in part constituted through an extensive set of material relations (sunshine, logs, ocean, sand) that are specific to the time-spaces in which a specific judgement occurs. In this sense, moments of playfulness are shifting, haphazard and unpredictable. That said, participants appreciated how things encountered on a walk that enabled risky play could allow them to extend the capacity of the mother-child assemblage and at the same time call into question their maternal competency relating to their ability as caregivers.

**Watchfulness**

Moments of playfulness were not only confined to organised ‘family time’ walks in leisure settings such as beaches and parks. Playfulness occurred in different mother-child walking assemblages as part of everyday task-centred walks to school, to the shops or to visit family and friends. As Horton et al. (2014) argue there is a slippage between ‘walking’ and ‘playing’, with everyday walking often turning into moments of play. Likewise, for families in our research, walking became play and play became walking during even the most mundane and routine trips. However, play on these journeys was often more spatially and temporally constrained, especially with heightened
intensities of anticipated arrival times and foot-unfriendly busy streets; generating moments of watchfulness.

Figure 3. A moment of watchfulness when walking to the shops. Source: Stills from Jacky’s video shot on GoPro with chest strap attachment.

Figure 3 illustrates a moment of intensity, playfulness and watchfulness engendered by Alicia, her children, Jacky (6 years) and Ethan (3 years), and traffic during a routine journey from home on-foot to the shops. Alicia’s actions and embodied reactions illustrate a ‘disciplined, embodied knowledge and watchfulness’ (McLaren and Parusel 2015, p.1436). Such moments are characteristics of ‘good’ mobile mothering that keep children safe while still enabling opportunities for play. This unfolding moment shows how Alicia’s disciplined body is attuned to the shifting ideas, affects, emotions and bodies of the street. Ethan’s jumping body only felt to ‘become’ at risk when he runs ahead. No longer is the mother-child walking
assemblage felt as safe. This shift along with the traffic noise and kinaesthetic intensity of nearby moving cars combine to produce a striking affective force felt by Alicia, moving her body to react. Her tone of voice conveys the affect and emotion of the street becoming felt as ‘dangerous’ in this moment. As Alicia explained while watching this video clip in a follow-up interview:

*Alicia: It’s probably not even conscious; it’s just ‘danger!’ He can run and keep running ... it’s the main street of Wollongong and he should know to stop before the road but he’s three.*

For Alicia, the dilemmas of becoming a ‘good’ mother are felt through experiencing the limitations of city infrastructure when walking with children not immobilised near busy roads. As Gibson-Graham (2006) argue, western cities are planned for the logics of capitalism that prioritise speed and efficiency over paternal care. The infrastructure of central Wollongong like many western cities elsewhere does not accommodate for the unpredictable playful mobility of children and mothers on-foot with fast moving cars, narrow or poorly maintained footpaths. Some participants resorted to driving to achieve motherhood because of the felt dangers of journeying on-foot. For example, as Rachel explains: ‘*We’ll drive down [to the shops]...we could walk down the hill, that’s not a problem, it’s still not the safest walk.*’ However, mothers like Alicia, who don’t drive, negotiate a city designed for cars through taking-up-space on the footpath. In Alicia’s words: ‘...*with a stroller we are a substantial obstacle ... People just get out of our way, we’re pretty loud and obvious I guess.*’ Evident in these examples is the high intensity of the mother-child assemblage in streets unfriendly for
pedestrians. To achieve motherhood while on-foot with children requires watchfulness and a specific style of walking.

**Attentiveness**

As Bartos (2012) highlights, being attentive to others needs is an important way care is enacted. Mother-child walking assemblages enabled women to perform gendered care work to fulfil their roles and responsibilities as mothers. In doing so they were attentive to not only their children’s physical needs, but emotional ones as well. This is in large part due to how the pace and rhythm of foot mobility facilitates doing care on-the-move through sharing intimate stories and approaching sensitive topics.

Take for example, when Billie (late-40s) is joined by her daughter, Ellie (11 years), on her regular late-evening walk from home to a nearby beach to exercise the family’s two dogs (Figure 4).

The video stills illustrate how the material context shapes the way mother and daughter relate. The spatial and temporal organisation of this regular walk, with the motion of walking and talking on-foot together allows for a private moment of attentiveness and emotional support without the interruption of younger children/siblings. The mother-child walking assemblage facilitates a conversation about the family’s upcoming relocation to Adelaide and the euthanizing of the family’s pet chickens.
In the follow-up interview Billie describes this journey on-foot as a ‘teachable moment’ that enabled the opportunity to discuss a sensitive topic. Billie goes onto explain how walking together in pedestrian-friendly places such as parks and beaches creates moments to engage with her daughter, enabling her to come know herself as an ‘attentive’ mother through the practice of listening:

*Billie: I try to [listen], because it’s important to. Sometimes I’m not as attentive enough as I should be. But it is an attentive interaction in between us, because I’m sure you’ve heard in the audio at times that the interactions at times aren’t quite positive. So, having her actually walk with me is important in terms of our relationship.*
Talking and listening are important practices for women to become mothers who care (Barker 2011). Within the mother-child walking assemblage to the beach to exercise the dog, Billie derives significant benefits as the care-giver from learning about her daughter’s perspectives – and becoming the ‘attentive’ mother. Ellie, as the recipient of care, is given personal attention, time and space in which her voice may be heard.

Yet, a common theme across walks with children – as hinted by Billie – is that becoming mother on-the-move often shifts between care and frustration. Parenting in public on-foot with children involves the experience of children crying, shouting, running away, touching dog poo, or picking up ‘yucky’, ‘dirty’ rubbish. These events have the power to create extreme intensive discomfort for mothers, causing fear, frustration and even anger. As Morrison et al. (2013, p.516) argue, caring relationships are highly complex: ‘where there is love there is also hate, shame, fighting and emotionally charged discussions.’ An example of the emotional complexity of mother-daughter caring relationships is heard in the audio recording of Billie and Ellie on a different beach walk with the family dogs:

*Billie*: You carry, dog poo, that’s the alternative! You pick it up [a *Spooner Board* - a toy designed to ride sand dunes] or you carry the dog poo.

*Ellie*: You’re the only one who’s dry, you carry it!

*Billie*: You...

*Ellie*: I am not carrying something when I am numb!
Billie: Ellie! You’re not going to get any less numb if you can’t pick that up so we can get home! Just pick it up!

For Billie, this intense moment raises the dilemma of Ellie failing to live-up to her ideal of a well-behaved daughter within the mother-child assemblage of expectations, emotions, dog faeces, water, ambient temperature, bodies, sand, wind and other things brought along. At the same time, this moment raises the dilemma of Billie becoming a ‘good’ mother who is attentive to her daughter’s needs and expectations, whilst maintaining a state of decorum on the public beach.

Chapter summary

In contemporary policy thinking walking is an iconic form of healthy and low-carbon living central to the transformation of cities into compact, liveable and family-friendly places. Yet this utopian vision of the walkable city ignores the actual experience of walking. Indeed, few studies examine how family members move together on-foot. Hence, this chapter responded to calls for geographers to take seriously mobile bodies when investigating the notion of family (Holdsworth 2013). It examined the journeys of mothers who walked with their children in a city made to accommodate automobilised lives.

In this chapter, bodies were conceived through moving together on-foot as an assemblage to uncover how taken-for-granted everyday practices, feelings and affects constitute mothering subjects and urban places. The concept of the mother-child walking assemblage enabled an interpretation of
how bodies, spaces, discourses and materials are orchestrated together in a process that assigns identity value to who and what belongs through interrelated ‘moments of care’. The chapter discussed five kinds of moments where care emerges not just as a gendered practice, but an embodied distributive force between mobile mother and child bodies; these include: preparedness, togetherness, playfulness, watchfulness, and attentiveness. In doing so the chapter argued that it is through these affective moments of care that women walking with children make sense of their maternal subjectivities on-the-move.

Illustrating the affective capacities of the mother-child walking assemblage the chapter also points to the importance of Boyer and Spinney’s (2016, p.1127) argument that proposes ‘reconceptualising the public sphere as a space of care’ (emphasis original). When traversing the city is conceived as mother-child assemblage, the discursive and material environment exerts a significant amount of agency over modes of transport choice. Here, transport choice is understood not just through the distance between two points. As the results suggest shortening the distance between origins and destinations may not be enough to break the demand for motorised transport. Instead, assemblage thinking encourages geographers to conceptualise transport choice in terms of how bodies, sets of ideas and material contexts are entangled together by the arrangements that people put together to make sense of themselves and their lives. Women who walk with their children are entangled in cultures of mothering, the presence of others, moods and material attributes (the weather, pavements, traffic,
buildings, hilliness, trees, grass, sand, ocean), including objects brought along (sunscreen, backpacks, toys, hats, prams). This chapter argues that interventions aimed at improving city access on-foot for mothers travelling with children must pay close attention to the objects and ideas through which motherhood is attained.

Participant's experiences illustrate how the walkability of cities must be understood through how moving bodies experience the materiality of place (noisy/quiet streets, speeding cars, pavements, parks) in relation to the felt affects of mothering. Paying closer attention to how subjectivities and family lives are constituted on-the-move helps explain why design features - connected pavements, lighting and greenspace - can only sometimes support walkability (Wells and Yang 2008). This chapter provides a snapshot of some of the challenges and opportunities for generating walkable cities for relatively affluent white women becoming mobile-mothers on-foot. There is much work to do that promotes walkable cities by attending to corporeal geographies.
Chapter 5: Walking with prams

... It was really busy; the peak hour traffic was building up as it was a Friday afternoon. The pavement was also a bit bumpy in parts and hard to push the double pram. At one point in Bulli, near the picture frame shop, there was barely enough room to move the pram through, all the pavers were uneven, making it almost impossible to get past. ... The walk was noisy with the traffic flying past and idling at the numerous traffic lights. I mentioned that it was loud and that I was shouting to have a conversation – Piper agreed with me, saying she was shouting to be heard too. I noticed that Melody didn’t like the noise of a particularly loud motorbike that went past, as she held her hands over her ears. Piper also commented on Amy not liking the noise, she was ‘grizzly’ on the way back, crying out as we walked along.

Piper: ... No, I don’t like this walk, it’s horrible.

Susannah: I agree. I feel like I’m yelling at you to talk to you.

Piper: I’m yelling at you. ...This is horrible.

Susannah: Do you think it’s the noise?

Piper: The noise and the traffic. And you know how you said before; do you think it makes me more stressed?

Susannah: Yeah.

Piper: I don’t think consciously it does, I think subconsciously it probably does, you know what I mean? You know I’ve just got this feeling of ... I don’t know.

Fieldwork notes and transcribed audio recording of go-along with Piper (mid-30s), Melody (3 years) and Amy (now 6 months) walking from home to Bulli Woolworths and back with the double pram.
Pram mobilities and the child-friendly city

This chapter explores the role of the pram in constituting childhood and motherhood to help rethink ‘child-friendly city’ policy. The child-friendly city has been a key concept within children’s geography and urban studies over the last thirty years. Underpinned by the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)*, the child-friendly city taps into long standing ‘right to the city’ debates (Fenster 2005; Harvey 2008; Whitzman et al. 2010; Cushing and van Vliet 2017); striving to improve children’s access, participation and governance in urban life (UNICEF 2004; Gleeson and Sipe 2006). Since 1996 (UNICEF 2017) this has been institutionalised through UNICEF’s Child Friendly City Initiative (CFCI) which provides guidelines for municipal authorities to actualise children’s rights to decision making in their communities.

Wollongong is a candidate city for UNICEF’s CFCI with the Wollongong City Council working to adhere to the CFCI framework for over a decade (Wollongong City Council 2007a). In Wollongong, the child-friendly city fulfils an important political and moral objective that involves: ‘keeping children and young people at the centre of the city’s vision for development. We believe that a city that is good for children is a city that is good for everyone’ (Wollongong City Council 2015b). Council illustrates how UNICEF’s CFCI framework operates in practice through the recent adoption of the *Play Wollongong Strategy 2014-2024* (Wollongong City Council, 2014). The strategy was designed following a child-led consultation process and highlights the importance of child-designed play spaces. The document also emphasises the importance of children’s mobility, arguing that play spaces
should be ‘easily accessed by walking and encourage healthy living and independent access by children’ (Wollongong City Council, 2014, Principle 2, p.10). Yet as Woolcock et al. (2010) highlight, addressing children’s right to the city through the CFCI requires more than just designing accessible play spaces for children, but involves shifting the material and social constraints placed on their everyday lives in a broader way.

Addressing the decline in children’s independent mobility has been a key starting point for those advocating for children’s right to the city (Hillman et al. 1990; Carver, Watson, et al. 2013; Schoeppe et al. 2016). The rise of the accompanied child is partly attributed to the changing cultures of parenting (Karsten 2005; Talbot 2013; Woolley and Griffin 2015), increased auto-mobility (McDonald and Aalborg 2009; Carver, Timperio, et al. 2013) and unwalkable cities (Kytta 2004; Whitzman et al. 2009; Villanueva et al. 2014). Much of this work orients around improving children’s independent mobility as necessary to achieve the child-friendly city (Collins and Freeman 2005; Whitzman et al. 2009; 2010).

However, recent scholarship from children’s geographies questions the focus on children’s independent mobility raising three main critiques. First, insufficient attention is paid to how children often journey with parents, grandparents and friends (Mikkelsen and Christensen 2009; Holdsworth 2013). Second, the transport needs of younger children (those aged under 4 years of age) are overlooked or, at best, considered as incidental to those of adults accompanying them (Grant-Smith et al. 2012). For instance in the context of Wollongong, whilst attempts to observe child-friendly city
principles note the importance of mobility; policies and actions continue to focus on play-based forms of movement that typify older, 'independent' children’s journeys (Wollongong City Council 2014). Third and finally, a humanist legacy frames the notion of independent mobility. As Nansen et al. (2015) remind us, mobility is never independent, but always accompanied, influenced and negotiated alongside an array of (non)human actors, including the mode of transport.

This chapter addresses these critiques by shifting the analytical gaze to the recent embodied and affective geographies of mobilities. Absent from this research is a consideration of the everyday lived experiences of children who journey with prams. This chapter proceeds from the starting point that subjectivities and spaces of mobility are relationally constituted. Hence this chapter explores how children and mothers (who in this research most often accompanied children with prams) experience pram mobility. To do it asks: how is motherhood, childhood and the city felt and constituted by those who journey with prams?

To understand the subjectivities and spaces of pram mobility for mothers and children the chapter is structured in six parts. The first section will briefly outline the origins of the pram and the existing academic literature, highlighting the need for research into children’s experiences journeying with prams. Second, after Boyer and Spinney (2016), this chapter outlines a material feminist approach to investigate the processes of becoming a mother-child-pram assemblage in order to achieve mobility. This approach enables the right to the city to be rethought as co-constituted through the
relationships between spaces, prams, routines, routes, subjectivities and (non)humans encountered when out and about. To interpret the embodied and performative dimensions of pram mobilities the chapter draws on the notions of affective affordance (Jensen et al. 2015) and affective atmospheres (McCormack 2008; Anderson 2009). Third, the chapter discusses how the walking sensory ethnography method enabled insight into the ways in which pram mobility produces bodies and spaces with certain capacities, emotions and affects. Fourth, the chapter outlines how the affective affordances of pram mobility work to modify the bodily capacity to act and become mother and child on-the-move somewhere. Fifth, to shed light on the constitution of childhood and motherhood on-the-move the analysis turns to the notion of affective atmosphere in order to interpret the choreographies of bodily interactions, connections and disruptions of pram mobilities. To conclude, the chapter invites further scholarship to engage with the diverse corporealities of pram mobility to explore how policy-makers might achieve child-friendly cities.

**Pram origins**

The pram is a taken-for-granted object central to the everyday mobility for most Australian families with children under 4 years of age. Yet the pram was not always a device used by parents or even affordable for the masses until after WWI. The first ‘baby carriage’ was designed by William Kent for the Duke of Devonshire in 1733 and was a shell-like carriage on wheels made to be pulled by a dog or small pony (Amato 2004). It wasn’t until much later that the perambulator – a baby carriage designed with handles so nannies
hired by wealthy families could take children out for fresh air – was patented by American Charles Burton in 1848 (King 2013). Burton’s first clients included Queen Victoria and Isabelle II of Spain, cementing the device as a technology for the elite. As time progressed the pram changed from a wicker to lightweight aluminium and foldable frame and became mass produced. Today, ‘pram’ refers broadly to a range of mobility technologies (including strollers, buggies and pushchairs) actively marketed as part of wider parenting cultures for their light-weight, flexibility, manoeuvrability and capacity to assist adults in safely transporting younger less mobile bodies anywhere in the city and beyond (What to Expect 2016).

The academic literature on prams and parenting is substantial. Most notably the literature highlights the historical gendering of pram mobility and the continuation of this into contemporary western world societies (King 2013). For instance, marketing and consumption literature has shown how brands of prams are bound up with the production of maternal identities (Clarke 2004; Thomsen and Sørensen 2006). The pram as a signifier of a heteronormative maternal identity and ‘good motherhood’ is reiterated in popular media and ‘Mummy blogs’ e.g. From the Bugaboo to the Maclaren, here’s what your pram says about you (The Motherish, 2016); Choosing The BEST Pram or Stroller for your baby (The Baby Consultant 2016). Public health literature sees the pram as an assistive technology that enables parents – again, most often mothers with responsibilities for domestic work – to do everyday family life with younger children. Prams allow mothers to exercise (Develin and Currie 2000), facilitate inter-modal transport, carry
shopping, get children to sleep, do leisure and task-centred walks with young children (Birken et al. 2015). Currie and Develin (2002) emphasised prams as therapeutic technology for mothers, arguing that the pram allowed some new mothers to stroll against the onset of postnatal depression through the sociality facilitated by participation in pram walking groups. However, whilst highlighting some of the benefits of pram use, Birken et al. (2011; 2015) also noted how the device’s ability to immobilise younger children may in turn mask the pram as a site of potential early childhood obesity. Conversely, occupational, health and safety literature warns of the potential dangers of pram use noting the occurrence of pram related injuries (Powell et al. 2002; Martínez et al. 2015). Transport and mobilities literature explores prams through issues of accessibility, the need for wheel-friendly infrastructure and tensions between residents (Hillman et al. 1976; Alcalá et al. 2011; Sawchuck 2014; Middleton 2016).

Work of feminist geographers has extended the discussions of pram accessibility by integrating it with politics of identity. Feminist scholarship highlights how the gendered and classed politics of care sit alongside mobility (MATRIX 1984; Tivers 1985; Bostock 2001; Fritze 2007; Layne et al. 2010; Grant-Smith et al. 2012). Feminist geographers illustrate how prams not only extend but also restrict a mother’s capacity to go places on-foot with children in the city. McDowell (1993, p.166) captures this mobility ‘burden’ succinctly, stating ‘the stolid figures of urban commuters were never encumbered by a baby, a stroller and the week’s shopping’. Feminist scholarship emphasises how the challenges of pram mobility become even
more pronounced for mothers from disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly when travelling on public transport (Fritze 2007). Looking to both mothers and fathers experiences, McLaren and Parusel (2015) have explored the gendered care practices which work to normalise parent’s restriction of young children’s movements through the use of prams to keep children safe in busy traffic areas.

Yet within feminist scholarship, the perspectives of children themselves are usually absent. Feminist geographers have been slow to engage children in their research on prams. The absence of children’s voices in pram mobility research is a significant knowledge gap given repeated calls by children’s geographers to unsettle adult-centric ways of viewing the world (Holloway and Valentine 2000; Horton and Kraftl 2005; Tisdall and Punch 2012). Work by Cortés-Morales and Christensen (2014) has begun to address this gap, shifting the debates away from children’s geographies preoccupation of independent mobility by highlighting how children are not ‘passive’ passengers ‘stuck’ in prams. Cortés-Morales and Christensen (2014) argue that children have influence on the pace, direct and rhythm of pram journeys. They also highlight the more-than-human entanglements that shape pram mobilities, such as the agency of the pram and its interaction with the pavement, the weather and the public transport systems. However, this work is yet to attend to the affective encounters which shape pram mobility and experiences of the city through the constitution of familial subjectivities. Hence, the remainder of this chapter turns to the work of material feminist
scholars, such as Boyer and Spinney (2016), who attend to the working arrangement of capacities, emotions and affects that maintain pram mobility.

**Mother-child-pram assemblages**

Assemblage thinking conceives mobility as the outcome of a process, rather than the movement from point A to point B. Following Deleuze and Guattarri’s (1987) concept of assemblage, individual and collective subjectivities, alongside mobility practices become relatively enduring over time and space via the interaction, intertwining energies and flows that establish connections and disconnections between norms, things and bodily routines. From this approach, motherhood and childhood may be conceived as a provisional assemblage or working arrangement which ‘in its multiplicity necessarily acts on semiotic flows, material flows and social flows simultaneously’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, p.22).

Extending Boyer and Spinney’s (2016) work on the materialities of mobile mothering, the idea of *mother-child-pram assemblage* becomes a useful way to attend to how things come together in a provisional working arrangement that functions as mechanism of inclusion and exclusion to achieve a particular kind of mobility. In the familial household, working arrangements of pram mobility are provisional in two senses: (1) they involve routinized practices and routes that are always subject to revision, change or innovation and (2) they are about making something available (exercise, fresh-air, transport, relaxation or company) (Boyer and Spinney 2016). Pram mobility is subjected to change not only because of the weather, transport services or technologies involved but also in the context of
changing social norms of mothering. For example, exercising with a specific branded pram is promoted as a hallmark of ‘good’ mothering. Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) notion of assemblage insists that pram mobility is always more than meanings. Therefore, attention turns to processes in which the pram works alongside emotions, affect, ideas, routines, weather, sidewalks, traffic and presence of children to enable mothers to exercise and feel fit. Hence, the pram mobility achieved within this working arrangement or assemblage becomes taken-for-granted in how it comprises the non-human and human interactions and connections that are always shifting to achieve a specific goal.

Understanding spaces and subjectivities of pram mobilities through an assemblage approach facilitates rethinking journey-making with children as the emotional and affective potentialities of bodies and the material affordance of prams, including their light weight, solid-feel, manoeuvrable, storable, portable and flexible qualities. After Ahmed (2004b), emotion and affect can be thought of as working together in and through bodies and spaces to connect people with place and create certain vibes or moods. This is instead of separating out emotion as an expression of individual subjective identity or considering affect as precognitive bodily intensity or simply the capacity to act.

The concept of affordance, as coined by environmental psychologist Gibson (1986, p.140), refers to how the perceptual properties of an object can provide ‘benefit or injury’ to the body. Transporting children in a pram to achieve mobility might both increase and decrease the experience of
encumbrance when moving through the city. As Michael (2000, p.112) reminds us: ‘the affordances of any technology are always, at least potentially ambiguous’. The concept of affective affordances (Jensen et al. 2015) extends this thinking, opening up the understandings of how more-than-human actants might support or work against pram mobility and the becoming of a ‘good’ mother, father, child or family. The affective affordances of a pram are said to mediate the affective and emotional relationships between human and non-human bodies, increasing or decreasing their bodily capacity to act. Echoing Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987, p.256) discussion of affect as constitutive of ‘becomings’; bodies become understood in how they are drawn together and apart by their ability to affect and be affected. From this perspective, the affective affordances of pram mobilities help make sense of the working arrangement known as motherhood or childhood.

Alongside affective affordances, affective atmospheres provide a further consideration of the important spatial dimension of the mobility achieved by mother-child-pram assemblages. Affect is ‘the relational potential for things to act or change in a particular space’ (Bissell 2010, p.273). Place and certain routes are understood to offer a distinctive propensity; a pull, force or energy that may, or may not, emerge in a specific space to generate actions, events and emotions, such as a heightened or reduced capacity to feel relaxed, energised or exhausted. McCormack (2008, p.413) articulates, an affective atmosphere is as ‘something distributed yet palpable, a quality of environmental immersion that registers in and through sensing bodies whilst also remaining diffuse, in the air, ethereal’. Or as Anderson (2009,
suggests, ‘affective atmospheres are a class of experience that occur before and alongside the formation of subjectivity, across human and nonhuman materialities, and in-between subject/object distinctions’ (emphasis in original). Affective atmospheres are forceful moments that modulate a body's capacity to affect and be affected in specific places. This is, alongside the discourses of mothering or childhood; it is the sensed and intangible qualities of routes and routines (sound, smell, sight, velocity, frictions, pace, rhythm) registered on the mobile body as affect or moments of intensity that may be articulated as an emotion. These affects are central to how people inhabit those spaces of pram mobility. As such it is argued that the subjectivities of mother and child emerge through the ebb and flow of the affective atmospheres to generate specific actions, emotions and understandings of places as either pram-friendly or not.

**Who walked with prams?**

Out of the total sixteen participating families, eight made regular journeys on-foot with prams. Child participants who journeyed with prams were aged between 3 months and 4 years. Adult participants who journeyed with prams were usually mothers aged in their early-30s to early-50s. Fathers walked with prams on only two occasions during recorded walks and mothers were present on both of these journeys. This gender imbalance illustrates the cultural norms that continue to shape hetero-patriarchal middle-class nuclear family life in Australia which positions childcare and the mobility challenges it brings as women's work (Dowling 2000; Waitt et al. 2016). Like Barker (2011) found in his research on gendered parenting practices of
mobility care, in this research women did most of the work of journeying with children transported in prams. Furthermore, it was primarily women and their children who gave up their time to participate in our walking sensory ethnography (see Chapter’s 3 and 4 for further discussion of this). Hence, this chapter focuses on the experiences of five families (six mothers and seven children) who walked with prams.

The use of the term ‘pram’ in this chapter is one of simplicity. Many participants used the term pram, stroller, pushchair or buggy interchangeably. Hence, whilst being alert to the technical differences between devices and the geographical origins of their names (e.g. in Australia, ‘pram’ denotes a device for an infant whilst stroller more commonly describes a device used by toddlers and preschool aged children) this chapter focuses on what the device can do and how it is used, rather than what it is called. The specific type of ‘pram’ walked with is noted alongside the empirical material.

The focus on pram mobility for mothers and children was not initially anticipated, but emerged as an important theme through the course of the project during interviews, go-alongs and recorded walks. The audio and video recordings were particularly useful as they provided a way to discern how city spaces were felt as pram-friendly or not; not just through discourses alone but embodied in routine practices and the potentiality of place. The benefits of video methods are ‘that the researcher can begin to explore how people use space and their bodies, how people interact with space, understand where and how they look, and ultimately gain a far more
nuanced idea of how participants derive meanings through movement’ (Spinney 2009, p.828). Video methods also provided insights into pram experiences of those child participants’ who were too young to take part in write and draw activities and follow-up interviews. Yet even using this method, it is important to note Salamon’s (2015) concern about misinterpreting young children’s experiences by imposing parents’ or researchers’ own interpretations of events. Hence, this chapter acknowledges that analysis is only ever a partial representation of events, feelings and affects co-produced between researcher, recording devices and participant (see Chapter 3 for further discussion). Analysis is guided by Duffy et al.’s (2016) discussion of emotional and affective mapping, which brings together five interconnected registers of discourses (motherhood, childhood), materiality (including the body of the researcher and recording devices), the spatial, movement (pace, rhythm, speed), as well as affect and emotion. Following this approach interpretation of empirical materials is framed through the notions of affective affordances and affective atmospheres to offer insights into how motherhood and childhood emerge through the spaces of pram mobilities.

Affective affordances

Controlling bodies

Mayra: Yeah, [I’m] always worried, that’s why I all the time use [the] pram; just to keep her [Aiyana (4 years)] [close] ...

Mayra (early-30s) is full-time university student who recently moved to Wollongong from Bangladesh. Mayra is married, however, her husband still
lives and works in Bangladesh; meaning day-to-day she is the sole parent for her 4 year old daughter, Aiyana. Mayra does not drive; therefore, she travels on-foot or uses public buses to get around. Mayra describes how car-dependent Wollongong is not child-friendly. In Mayra’s words, she is ‘always worried’. Hence, her use of a lightweight four-wheeled foldable pram affords less stressful journeys with Aiyana by immobilising her daughter’s body to keep her close. Mayra highlights Talbot’s (2013) argument that motherhood is completely bound up in discourses of risk and emotional investment in children’s welfare. As McLaren and Parsuel (2015) highlight, prams are important tools for parents to control children’s bodies around busy roads and manage this risk. The affordances of the pram to restrain may operate to confirm ideas of ‘good’ mothers being in control of children’s bodies. Simultaneously, it reduces the intensity of affective forces, such as physiological stress.

Being and becoming an ‘in control’ mother emerges through specific pram technologies, bodies and their collective affective affordances. For example, Ashleigh (late-40s), a married mother of three, describes how the affordance of her well-worn yet manoeuvrable three-wheeled pram enables her to do mothering-on-the-move:

Ashleigh: ... Ummm this stroller is incredibly easy to manoeuvre, so if she’s [Milly (2 years)] calling out or whatever, I just swing it around and see what she’s up to. But if the hood’s back like that I can just bend over and see. It’s simple. ... this one is, I got [this one] when Chris [6 years]
was born, three wheelers are the best ones. I can move it with one
finger...

For Ashleigh, the pram’s materiality (size and weight) is known through years of practise. In her words, they are felt within her body as ‘simple’. When journeys with children lack this manoeuvrability, as Mayra explains, doing mothering-on-the-move becomes more challenging:

*Mayra: When I do walk, I take the pram because; suppose I go this way and she will talk to the opposite side. So, it’s totally different, and I have to rush all the time to get her, so you know.*

Hence, mothering is more than just ‘done’. The doings of mothering are made possible through the habitual interplay of technological, material and bodily specificities.

*Carrying bodies and things*

Prams afford mothers increased mobility by reducing the physiological stress and the physical strain of carrying children and items. Mayra explains that alongside keeping her daughter ‘safe’, another affordance of pram mobility is to carry heavy groceries and tired bodies:

*Mayra: ... it is really unmanageable without it, so that is why I manage her and I take the stroller and sometimes with the heavy things, with the hood of the stroller I can take like rice and...*

*Susannah: Oh, you can put things on top, yeah. So, it helps you?*
Mayra: Its helps me, and on the other side it she can sit here. ... ... So, a stroller has good side, many many good sides. .... Yeah, and sometimes if she feels sleepy she can sleep at the stroller, in the stroller and on the other side I can buy the things.

The mother-child-pram assemblage is mutable and continually transformed over and through time and space. For Mayra, her daughter’s pram is an important device to help her fulfil domestic tasks, such as grocery shopping. When hooking grocery bags over the handles and stacking large bags of rice on the hood, the mother-child-pram assemblage enables Mayra to do the shopping on-foot with her daughter. The pram becomes part-trolley because of its affordance to displace the shopping weight on four wheels, while it provides a seat for Aiyana to be transported.

Journeys with young children and mothers often involve more than just pram technologies; prams afforded the bringing along an array of 'baby-detritus' (Boyer and Spinney 2016, p.1120). Bella (early-30s), exemplifies this, listing the things brought along when journeying with her son, Lachlan (3 years), in their four-wheeled pram to the park:

Bella: There are always a set of keys on the pram ... I always take food, water, for him and because this [walk] was longer I took a backpack with a change of clothes for him as well ... ... And because we knew it was going to be windy I think I even brought his beanie and jumper.

For Bella, these mundane objects were integral to the performance of maternal identities on-the-move. The routine of packing baby things into the
pram is one way she becomes the ‘good’ mother, prepared for an array of challenges (Boyer and Spinney 2016). These participants lived experience illustrates how the pram affords safety, transportation of items and increased mobility for mothers walking with children.

**Changing bodies and cities**

For children, analysis suggests journeying with, or without a pram, is deeply embedded in understandings of ‘childhood’ and becoming ‘grown-up’. For example, Figure 5 shows some of the participants’ anxieties about what prams ‘do’ to children’s bodies. Here Sunni (mid-30s) and her daughters, Madi (4 years) and Saffi (6 years) are walking without their pram from home to the nearby pool for swimming lessons. Sunni is worried about the way using her pram position her 4 year old daughter, Madi, as a baby. Sunni alerts her daughter to how prammed bodies do not resonate with her understanding of a primary school-aged child. For Madi, the absence of the pram on this journey to swimming lessons is felt by her ‘tired legs’ as she complains to signal concerns about her mother’s care.
Figure 5. Becoming ‘grown-up’. Sunni, Madi, and Saffi, walking to swimming lessons without the pram. Source: Stills from Saffi’s video shot on GoPro with chest strap attachment.

However, for other 4 year olds, the mother-child-pram assemblage not only marks out a pre-school childhood identity, but also subsumes the ‘grown-up’ aspects of the self. For example, Mayra explains how her daughter, Aiyana, increasingly does not want to sit in her pram, preferring to walk:

*Mayra: ...when going to preschool, she says ‘Mumma I am growing up, so why you take me in the stroller? The teacher will laugh when seeing the stroller, I’m a big girl.’
Both examples highlight how the relationship between child and pram are attached to experiences of becoming grown-up. They highlight how childhood is co-constituted from human and non-human relationships on journeys to preschool.

The affective affordances of the pram also emerged in discussions about how mothers changed younger children’s somatic state and mood. For example, Bella reflects on how pram mobility was used to exercise and change her new-born son’s sleep patterns when she was on maternity leave:

*Bella:* For exercise and also, I wanted Lachlan to learn to sleep in the pram. So, every day I want him to have a nap in the pram, so he got used to it. .... and sometimes I’d even go a longer route because I would time it with Lachlan’s sleep. ‘Okay, well he can sleep for the length of that’, rather than interrupt him, let him sleep. You’d interrupt him to get to an appointment. So, I’d just walk so he’ll sleep in the pram.

These findings echo those made by Boyer and Spinney (2016, p.1120) who underscore the pram’s ability to offer mothers a ‘short break from the physical and emotional demands of caring for a young baby’. For Bella, pram mobility presented opportunities for ‘doing’ exercise to condition her own body into a ‘healthy’ state and to render the city more amenable to mothering by changing her son’s somatic state.

The affective affordance of prams was presented in discussion of how prams mediated children’s imaginations. For example, 3 year old Ethan and
his mother, Alicia (early-50s), speak of the affective affordance of his foldable four-wheeled pram and its attachable plastic rain cover:

*Ethan:* *Ummm when it’s raining I need that cover over me when I’m in the stroller. And when I’m playing Oznaughts, it’s like I’m in a Gupe.*

*Alicia* [Ethan’s mum]: *Oh, you can pretend you’re inside a Gupe, like the Octonauts.*

*Susannah:* *What’s an Octonaut?*

*Alicia:* *The toys he’s got, so he can pretend he’s like in one of those ship things.*

*Susannah:* *Oh cool.*

*Ethan:* *And the cover can be the windscreen.*

*Alicia:* *Like an underwater submarine.*

With the rain cover on, Ethan imagines he is an *Octonaut*, a character from a popular child’s animated TV show, travelling in his *Gupe* (an underwater submarine). The affective transition between human and non-human bodies-on-the-move shifts the way Ethan experiences the city through becoming ‘otherwise’ (Woodyer 2012). Ethan’s imagination highlights that for children, pram mobility is felt to be productive beyond adult-centric understandings. For children, cocooned comfort of pram mobility affords the opening-up of new imaginings, new ways of being, new assemblages and new experiences of the city.
**Affective atmospheres**

*Fear, Sociality and Safety*

Participants experiences show that alongside the affordance of pram mobilities, the possible feeling of journeying with prams was instrumental to route choice. For example, Bella explains how the anticipated affective atmosphere of sociality made through the presence of bodies, prams, traffic, sounds, daylight, weather, and the materiality of pavements and roads, shaped her route choice while mothering with a pram:

*Bella*: Well, we try to choose more quiet roads and when it was on a main road, we then just went behind each other, rather than parallel. There’s a path that runs along the Northern Distributor. I have walked that a few times but I don’t ever feel – it’s eerie and it’s always got dog poo. So, taking your pram through there is a nightmare and then walking, it’s just not pleasant. ... like because there was no footpath, we went on the road because often we had the two prams. You couldn’t do two prams side-by-side anyway. They’re too narrow. So yeah, we just walked on the road.

Bella describes how the transmission of visual, olfactory and sonic affects of the mother-child pram assemblage along the too-narrow path next to the Northern Distributor (the busiest northern arterial road in Wollongong) worked towards an affective atmosphere of fear rather than sociality. In contrast, despite the absence of pavements, the mother-child-pram assemblage constituted through the potential of ‘more quiet’ suburban backstreets provided a more conducive affective atmosphere of sociality and
safety. Bella’s experience highlights the point made by feminist scholars that the mobility needs of younger children and mothers are often overlooked in cities where planning is informed by a capitalist imperatives for speed and efficiency that prioritises cars over pedestrians (Gibson-Graham 2006; Boyer and Spinney 2016). Yet, while exposed to the risk of fast-moving hard metal bodies of cars, Bella’s prammed body feels not vulnerable but energised. These practices can be read as a form of resistance to normative encounters with the built environment where participants came to know themselves as mothers (Boyer and Spinney 2016). Equally, Bella’s pram mobility underscores Jensen et al.’s (2015) point that the affects anticipated in travelling particular routes, by car, cycle, train or foot, are strategically used to manage emotions and moods.

**Frustration**

The feeling of frustration is also apparent across many participants’ spaces of pram mobilities. For example, Figure 6 illustrates how, for Lachlan, sitting in his pram and waiting to cross a road at a red traffic light created intense feelings of frustration, heightened by the absence of passing cars. This example serves to highlight how automobility as the dominant form of transport affects prammed bodies who are often left waiting for their turn to move. Frustration is conventionally understood as solely a human achievement and a ‘response of the will when it is baffled and unable to achieve its goal’ (Fisher 2002, p.14). However, from a material feminist perspective this eruption of frustration can be approached as an affective atmosphere, where different affects emerge through ebbs, flows and the
coming together of environments, technologies, bodies and practices. As Bissell (2010) argues, for bodies prepopulated with an anticipation of flow, disruptions may cause annoyance and anxiousness. This affective force of waiting is conveyed by Lachlan’s language, tone and rhythm of speech. For Bella, this affective force created new capacity to reach out to her son, consoling him through her tone of voice and explanation of waiting in order to avoid danger. By mapping of the ebb and flow of the affective atmosphere of frustration enables a rethinking of the child-friendly city – not as a product of particular objects – but as expressive of the affective ties that bind people together.

Figure 6. Frustrations. Bella and Lachlan waiting at the traffic lights on the way to Woolworths.
Source: Stills from Lachlan’s video shot on GoPro with chest strap attachment.
**Playful**

In becoming mobile with younger children mothers use prams strategically to schedule time, negotiate risks and mediate their child's moods and energy levels to enhance more playful interactions within cities. Consider the video stills in Figure 7, which feature Alicia and Ethan walking to the train station after visiting a friend. The video shows Ethan walking along a grassy verge talking to himself as he repeatedly picks-up and throws away a palm frond while Alicia slowly walks next to him pushing the pram.

![Figure 7](https://example.com/figure7.jpg)

**Ethan:** Catcha fich…

**Ethan:** Stop it… Catcha

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*Figure 7. Having fun. Alicia and Ethan walking home from a friend’s house. Source: Stills from Ethan's video shot on GoPro with chest strap attachment.*
Alicia explains this moment in a follow-up interview:

*Alicia: Yes, yes heading back to the station. And Ethan was allowed to walk for some of the way... if we’re not in a hurry, and it’s not going to be busy, [walking,] it’s just more fun for him.*

For Alicia, facilitating moments for her son to play is one way she constitutes motherhood on-the-move. Alicia’s quotation also demonstrates how the affective atmospheres that enable her to facilitate play are partly kinetic. On this return journey, there is no timetable, itinerary or traffic, which may act to generate anticipated affects of anxiety or frustration. As a result, the lack of footpath and the friction caused by pushing the pram across the grassy surface is not felt as a hindrance. Instead, playful affects conveyed by smiling faces, held hands, tones of voice and laughter emerge as they momentary halt to look, listen and gather things encountered enroute. This example illustrates how urban spaces such as verges become felt as child-friendly through fleeting moments where motherhood and childhood are achieved through play.

**Chapter summary**

This chapter illustrates the importance of pram mobilities and their role in the spatial and temporal organisation of motherhood and childhood in the city. The feminist literature on prams highlights two key arguments that: (1) journeying with prams brings to fore mothers’ uneven access to the city, and (2) despite this, prams are an essential mothering tool used to restrain children’s bodies. However, less is known about the lived experiences of pram mobilities and specifically the experiences of those strapped inside
prams. Hence, this chapter brings attention not to only mothers’, but also children’s experience of pram mobility in Wollongong. In doing so, this chapter seeks to extend debates around the child-friendly city and children’s right to the city, arguing that urban planning policies should be infused with the lived experiences of children.

This chapter offered the concept of mother-child-pram assemblage to further progress children’s geographies scholarship by exploring how motherhood and childhood is always a relational achievement; an outcome of a process operating across human and non-human actors. To examine pram mobility as the mother-child-pram assemblage, attention was brought to the felt challenges of doing motherhood and childhood on-the-move. Through the concept of affective affordances, the discussion explored how the ability of prams to carry children’s awake and sleeping bodies and things enabled the becoming of ‘good’, ‘in control’ and ‘prepared’ mothers. For children, prams simultaneously assigned identity values to those seated as ‘baby’ whilst affording tired legs a comfortable place to rest and the possibility to imagine themselves as otherwise. The concept of affective atmospheres offered valuable insights to how pram mobility was experienced socially and playfully to enhance the capacities of bodies to act and be affected. Yet, affective atmospheres were primarily described negatively, including ‘frustration’ and ‘fear’. For example, child participants provided examples of how prammed bodies anticipate flow and constant movement while travelling, and how anger and frustration erupts while waiting to cross roads. At the same time, mothers provided compelling
examples of how they modulated affective atmospheres when spaces of car and pram mobility converged. There is a politics of mobility invoked by how these women and children reclaim roads and generate spaces of sociality on-the-move. Hence, it is not simply the lack of pavements that work against the right to the city, but the anticipated affective atmospheres of safety that circulate between bodies, prams, surfaces and vehicles to render the city child-friendly or not.

In thinking about who has the right to the city this chapter has shown that it is important to grapple with the corporeal dimensions of mobility. Assemblage thinking offers a productive lens to contribute to this agenda and inform scholarly, policy and popular debate around the child-friendly city. Policy-makers need to take seriously that children's movement is always bound up in the interpenetration of social, cultural, material and political entities. This work points to the importance for child-friendly city policy to better understand how mobilities relate to not only to children but other family members and technologies.


Chapter 6: Weather walking

Whether the weather be fine

Or whether the weather be not,

Whether the weather be cold

Or whether the weather be hot,

We’ll weather the weather

Whatever the weather,

Whether we like it or not.

– Author unknown

Considering the weather in walking studies

Rachel: ...so next opportunity for a walk just with us, weather dependent, would be Sunday and then not to the following Saturday.

In talking to families, the weather was frequently mentioned as a key influence in their day-to-day walking practices. This is highlighted in the opening participant quote; an extract from an email sent by mother of two Rachel (mid-40s). This might seem like an obvious point to make; of course the weather is important in understanding when, where and how families walk. However, as Ingold (2010) and Vannini et al. (2012) argue, the centrality of weather in everyday life has been recently absent in social
Within mobilities research the role of the weather is often presumed to be an ever present and unchangeable part of everyday life. Because of this, little consideration is given to the weather in walking studies.

When weather is mentioned in walking studies it tends to be in vague descriptive terms such as sunny, rainy, hot, cold or windy. Weather is perceived as an ‘environmental variable’ or ‘factor’ like topography (see Pooley et al. 2011; Andrews et al. 2012). Whilst humans may have little control over the weather and its seasonal variability, it is also considered to be a ‘control variable’ in pedestrian studies. For example, the pedestrian counts that informed the Public Spaces Public Life (2015a) study in Wollongong were required to occur on ‘fine/sunny’ days. Other studies also stipulate that pedestrian counts should occur on days when the weather is deemed ‘nice’ (Victoria Walks 2013; Gehl Architects n.d.) or ‘unexceptional’ (Shaw et al. 2013, p.29) to ensure for comparable data. This is because wet and windy weather deters most people from walking (Ziviani et al. 2004; Currie and Develin 2002). Qualitative pedestrian and transport studies illustrate that ‘poor’ weather conditions result in most people choosing to drive (Mikkelsen and Christensen 2009; Pooley et al. 2011). Public health research also points to ‘poor and extreme weather’ as barrier to physical activity to some people from walking (Tucker and Gilliland 2007; Wagner et al. 2016). Whilst most people are ‘fair-weather walkers’ (Pooley et al. 2014, p.263), others do walk in rainy and windy weather providing they have the provision of protective clothing.
Within walking studies researchers and participants alike describe the weather using a range of moralistic terms, such as: bad, good, inclement, nice and fair. But what do the terms actually mean? How can weather, a product of atmospheric shifts, be ‘bad’ or ‘good’? What is ‘nice’ weather, for whom is it ‘nice’ for, and how might this definition shift in relation to the reason for walking? Whilst walking studies conceive of walking as a socially and culturally mediated activity (Lorimer 2011; Middleton 2011b), this hasn’t been extended when considering the weather. Questioning the typecasting of ‘fair’, ‘wet’ and ‘all-weather’ walkers brings to the fore how weather whilst material, is also social, and made through the interplay between collective and individual discourses and experiences.

Post-structural scholars argue that the weather is more than just a naturally occurring phenomenon that shapes human society, but rather is made through sociocultural discourses (Meyer 2000; Sherratt et al. 2005; Strauss and Orlove 2003). This approach highlights the relationality between climate and seasonality in shaping our everyday engagements with the weather (Sherratt et al. 2005). For example, social practice scholars highlight how sociocultural weather practices are not only social constructions but are embodied and felt (Hitchings 2007; 2010; Hitchings et al. 2015; de Vet 2013; de Vet 2014). Understanding the discourses and embodied knowledges of localised daily and seasons conditions is useful for thinking about why, how, where and when people do their weather walking practices.

However, many of these studies reinscribe the idea that weather personally acts on us. The weather does more than just shape our everyday
practices. Positioning weather as personal disregards how weather also shapes other beings, processes, landscapes and how we might shape it. Ingold (2007; 2010) and Vannini et al. (2012) take a phenomenological approach to argue for not only a more social and embodied approach to weather, but a more relational approach which understands that there is no clear boundaries between the human body and the elements, where all actions are weather related. We are always with the weather, always feeling it, always being weathered by it, always weathering.

The concept of weathering is also taken up by material feminist scholars, who argue that humans, non-humans and weather are co-constituted, mutually emergent and coextensive (Neimanis and Walker 2014; Neimanis 2015; Taylor and Rooney 2017; Rooney 2018). From this perspective weathering is a process of becoming whereby subjects emerge through the interplay between the weather and its expressive and material contents and bodies moving on-foot. For example, motherhood, childhood and family are not already known. Instead, these individual and collective subjects are becomings which unfold out of daily engagements with the elements. This approach aligns with the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and their notion of assemblage; which understands subject becoming as a result of material and expressive encounters between bodies, materials, discourses, desires, emotions/affect and place.

In a review of new walking studies literature Lorimer (2011, p.30) highlights the need for geographers to consider a deeper engagement with the weather:
Future studies of walking could be as much about atmospherics as they are a world of substance: ranging from experience of place-making amidst washes of weather and elemental force fields...

This chapter aims to heed Lorimer’s call by exploring how the ideas, feelings and affects of sunshine, wind and rain work to shape when, where and how families walk, through shifting routes, routines, and moods to reconstitute people, place and the weather itself. Advancing the work of scholars who attend to weather from a material feminist perspective (Neimanis and Walker 2014; Neimanis 2015; Taylor and Rooney 2017; Rooney 2018), this chapter will unpack how weather is more than just ‘a factor’ that shapes the walking activities of participants, but is deeply intertwined in the production of families’ everyday pedestrian mobility and the production of familial walking assemblages.

The chapter is set out in five sections. The first section explores how meteorology has been accompanied by sociocultural scholarship of the weather from the disciplines of geography, anthropology and history, before outlining the various post-structural approaches including social practice theory, phenomenology and material feminist theories which foreground the weather in relation to formation of subjectivities and collectives. The next section draws on Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) notion of assemblage to inform material feminist notions of bodies, skin and comfort (Ahmed and Stacey 2001; Ahmed 2004a; 2004b). It argues that encounters with the weather are not merely ‘done’ as a practice, but are felt through corporeal skin encounters with the weather. How skin encounters with weather are
registered on and through the body as an affective resonance is mediated by
the material and expressive forces of bodies, objects and places. By focusing
on what the weather does to bodies, and what bodies do to the weather, the
next three sections aim to explore how the material and expressive limits of
the familial walking assemblage play out in relation to participants
anticipated and actual encounters with sunshine, wind and rain. Each section
explores how these limits emerge in relation to the constitution of familial
subjectivities, i.e. ‘good’ mother, ‘playful’ child, ‘responsible’ parents. Each
section also explores how limits of the assemblage may be extended through
the addition of material items as assemblage converters. The chapter
concludes by calling on future walking studies to consider the weather as
always intertwined in everyday mobility on-foot.

**Knowing the weather**

Researching the weather is not a new phenomenon. Humans have been
trying to understand the weather for thousands of years and thus features in
the culture and mythology of many ancient civilisations (Barnett 2015). In
more recent centuries western sciences have monopolised understandings of
the weather through empirical measurements, systems of classification and
forecasts. Such theoretical and methodological approaches have entrenched
a particular way of knowing the weather in relation to climate. The difference
between weather and climate is temporality. Weather is understood as the
day-today conditions at a particular time and place, whereas climate is the
longer-term average of these conditions taking into account seasonal
changes in ecology, temperature and length and intensity of daylight
Climate averages establish weather as something that is immediate and volatile, but can still be anticipated within the bounds of a place’s climatic norms. As Sherratt (2005, p.1) writes, ‘Climate is what you expect, weather is what you get.’ For example, the Köppen climate classification system first developed in the 1880s combines average rainfall and temperature to divide the Earth’s surface into five main climate groupings: A (tropical), B (dry), C (temperate), D (continental) and E (polar). Following this classification system Wollongong and the Illawarra region is characterised as ‘temperate’; experiencing warm and often humid summers, and moderate winters due to its coastal proximity (Bureau of Meteorology 2017).

Alongside meteorology and climatology, historical, geographical and anthropological scholarship highlights society’s engagements with the weather. In conjunction with archaeology, anthropologists explore of the relationship between the rise and fall of civilisations and climatic shifts. For example, in the early nineteenth century climatic variation was used to explained the social and cultural differences between races (Walker 2005). For example, the geographer Ellsworth Huntington proposed that cold climates produced more ‘advanced’ civilisations than those in warmer climate zones. These social Darwinist ideas were used by those within the British Empire to justify colonialism through supporting notions of superior races (Walker 2005). Whereas, in the twentieth century Braudel’s (1995, [1949]) geohistory of the Mediterranean region highlighted the connection
between agriculture, settlement, seasonality and prosperity in temperate climates.

In more recent times geographers, historians and anthropologists have applied a range of social-cultural approaches to understand weather and climate. For example, Meyer's (2000) post-structural history of weather and climate in American society explores the relationship between cultural shifts in fashion, house construction, transport and nationalism. In a similar vein, Barnett (2015) provides a natural and cultural history of rain. Strauss and Orlove's (2003) edited book brings together a collection of ‘ethnometeorological’ accounts of the weather and climate across international contexts. This work adopts a post-structural approach, bringing together ‘materially grounded ecologies and meaning-centred symbolic anthropologies’ to explore how different people think, feel, describe and comprehend the weather and climate over days, years and generations (Strauss and Orlove 2003, p.4). Sherratt et al.’s (2005) edited book also brings together diverse meteorological, historical and anthropological accounts to position weather as more than just a naturally occurring phenomenon governed by the physical sciences, but as socially and culturally constructed. For example, Rose (2005) draws on Australian Indigenous knowledges to highlight how Indigenous notions of seasonality differ from western meteorological understandings which focus on stability and predictability. Western meteorology uses seasonal averages to compare daily weather to a climatic norm. Offer the ‘reassurance that peaks and troughs even out over time; they convey a sense of underlying uniformity’ (Sherratt
This normalcy works to situate sociocultural expectations of seasonality and associated weather. In contrast, many Indigenous understandings of weather, climate and seasons do not chart a yearly calendar cycle (Rose 2005). What meteorologists might understand as irregular conditions are not always interpreted as such, rather weather is always unfolding out of connections to Country (Rose 2005). Looking to alternative weather knowledges unsettles the dominant scientific knowledges, and highlights how weather is always ‘immediate, local and personal’ (Sherratt 2005, p.2).

By acknowledging the embeddedness of human weather relations, geographers drawing on theories of social practice have turned their attention to the body to highlight how weather and climate emerge as not only social constructions, but also as embodied and felt. For example, Hitchings (2010; 2011; 2007) explored how the weather and seasonal changes in temperature interplay with embodiment experiences of comfort and discomfort in workplace and household contexts in the UK. Turning to the Illawarra, Hitchings et al. (2015) illustrate how the heating practices of Wollongong households are shaped by downplaying feelings of discomfort from cold weather because of local discourse of winters being moderate. The relationship between bodies, weather, climate and seasonal changes is also highlighted in de Vet’s (2013; 2014) doctoral study of people’s everyday practices, or what she calls ‘weather-ways’. Comparing the weather-ways of people living in tropical Darwin, Northern Territory, and the more temperate Melbourne, Victoria, de Vet draws on theories of social practice to explore
how seasonal fluctuations in the weather shapes how and when people exercise, do outdoor activities and household chores. De Vet (2014) argues that thermal comfort is contingent upon social practices performed in relation to the intensity and duration of weather events. Whilst not specifically about walking, these studies emphasize the way people do everyday practices in relation to situated cultural discourses and embodied experiences of weather. For example, de Vet highlights how thermal comfort is integral to mobility choices and practices through the avoidance of becoming too hot or cold. There are synergies here with Waitt and Harada’s (2012) work on driving cultures, where they found that the ability to use personal air-conditioning is a key reason many people choose to drive their cars instead of catching public transport.

However, these weather studies also reinforce the idea that weather personality acts on us. Positioning weather as purely personal and local disregards how weather also shapes other beings, processes, landscapes and how we might shape it. A phenomenological perspective argues for not only a more embodied approach to weather that explores how it impacts our bodies, but a more relational approach which understands that there is no clear boundary between the human body and the elements (Ingold 2007; 2010). Following Ingold (2010), we are always part of the ‘weather world’. Weather always affects us and we in turn are always affecting it. Similarly, Gorman-Murray (2010) argues that we feel our environments through embodied engagements with seasonal weather conditions. For connections with Tasmania’s declining snowfall, emotions are understood not as a mental
process, but as ‘relational achievements that provide the connective tissue between individuals and place’ (Gorman-Murray 2010, p.64). Vannini et al. (2012) similarly understands bodies as entangled in and always engaged in the multisensual process of ‘weathering’; where people skilfully weather their lives by moving alongside atmospheric patterns. As Vannini et al. (2012, p.362) writes:

To weather is an active, reflexive, practical disposition to endure, sense, struggle, manipulate, mature, change, and grow in processes that, over time, implicate the place-making of one’s dwelling. To weather, in short, is to dwell.

Weathering as dwelling recognises the embeddedness of the body in place, resisting the tendency to view the weather is merely an immaterial construct. Through weathering, people make and remake places and selves in a ‘performative ecology of movement’ (Vannini et al. 2012, p.361).

Material feminist scholars similarly conceptualise weathering through notions of emplacement, embodiment and becoming (Neimanis and Walker 2014; Neimanis 2015; Taylor and Rooney 2017; Rooney 2018). For example, Neimanis and Walker (2014) argue that we don’t just perceive the weather; we are part of a weathering world. Rooney (2018, p.6) similarly argues that we cannot ‘know the weather from the outside, because to extract ourselves from air, sunlight, wind and water would be to remove ourselves from the elements that sustain us’. A material feminist approach to weathering differs from a phenomenological approach through its impetus to decentre the human. Neimanis and Walker’s (2014) use the concept of weathering to help
disrupt the human-centric notion that weather ‘happens to us’. They argue that weathering is us, and every other body, being and thing on the planet, as we are all implicated in each other’s spaces of weathering. This material feminist perspective conceives human bodies as partaking in a common space, a conjoined time, and a mutual ‘worlding’ (drawing on Harraway’s (2008) notion of ‘worlding’). As Neimanis and Walker (2014, p.560) explain: ‘Weathering, then, is a logic, a way of being/becoming, or a mode of affecting and differentiating that brings humans into relation with more-than-human weather’. From this standpoint, humans are neither actor on the passive backdrop of instrumental nature, nor are weather and climate all-powerful. Humans, non-humans and weather are co-constituted, mutually emergent and coextensive. We make and change weather, just as it makes and changes us. For example, from our role in the production of urban heat islands to increasing carbon emissions and anthropogenic climate change (Neimanis and Walker 2014). Our everyday actions weather the weather, just as weather weathers us.

Material feminist scholarship advocates for a relational more-than-human approach to explore how the weather matters to everyday life. Hence, why we choose to walk or not must always be considered in relation to the weather. Walking is a mobility which opens ourselves up to the elements, often making us become more aware of our weathering and weathered bodies through embodied and sensory encounters (Rooney 2018). This may be because so many of us expect to live our lives at a constant temperature (de Vet 2014). As a result, walking with, rather than in, the weather is not
always comfortable. For example, the touch of sunshine, wind and rain on the skin; the transfer of heat onto clothes; the sound of rain on plastic raincoats and umbrellas; the feeling of slippery pavements underfoot; or the smell of muddy dirt, is shaped by and shapes both the experience of the walk and the subjectivity of the walker. Exploring embodied and sensory encounters with the weather on-foot can provide an important starting point for unpacking how the weather comes to matter in our everyday lives (Rooney 2018). Taking this approach, the weather and weathered bodies emerge out of corporeal encounters with the weather (Neimanis and Walker 2014); with the skin as the site of many of these encounters.

**Assembling skin encounters**

In medical terms, the skin is the largest organ of the body; a protective layer. Yet, skin does not simply contain the body as a pre-existing physical entity (Ahmed and Stacy 2001). From a material feminist approach the body is both material and social and ‘there is no clear boundary between the human body and the elements’ (Rooney 2018, p.6). In other words, the lived body is not identical to the material entity that is bounded by the skin (McGavin 2014). Ahmed and Stacy (2001) highlight how the skin can be rethought as not a barrier to the outside world, or a container of bodies, but rather as sensory surface that constitutes bodies, objects and places. Furthermore, it is through skin as a permeable surface that subjects emerge through feelings (Ahmed 2004a). Massumi’s (2002, p.30) work similarly views the body as ‘immediately virtual as it is actual’ and feelings and emotions as recognised affects. For example Ahmed (2004a, p.29) discusses
how the feeling of pain is an affect felt on and through the skin which constitutes the lived body:

It is through experiences such as pain that we come to have a sense of our skin as bodily surface, as something that keeps us apart from others, but as something that also ‘mediates’ the relationship between internal and external, or inside and outside. However, it is not that pain causes the forming of the surface. ... Rather, it is through the flow of sensations and feelings that become conscious as pain and pleasure that different surfaces are established.

Conceptualising skin as the site of constitutive corporeal and affective encounters aligns with Grosz’s (1994) argument that feelings do not emerge in a vacuum, but are felt on the body as a sociocultural artefact. Grosz (1994) argues that bodies and their skins are created by and produce affective intensities and flows. Like Massumi (2002), Grosz (1994) proposes that assemblage thinking is useful for exploring the manifestation of these intensities and flows into the provisional working arrangements we come to know as bodies.

For Deleuze and Guattari (1987) assemblages are structured through forms of content and forms of expression. As outlined in previous chapters, forms of content are also known as the *machinic assemblage of bodies*; they are the non-discursive or the material. On the other hand, forms of expression, or the *collective assemblage of enunciation* are the immaterial, the discursive, the embodied, the affective and the social. Assemblages form, shift, collapse and reform in relation to the interaction of these two
dimensions through the process of territorialisation (see Chapter 7). Hence, the material and expressive forces are the requirements or the limits of an assemblage to take a shape or maintain itself in a recognisable form. The forms of content are the internal limits of assemblages; they are the physical limitations of a material body to walk in specific weather conditions. Whereas forms of expression describe the external limits of discourse, emotions and affect; these are social limits that may be imposed by underlying discourse of ‘appropriate’ weather for walking with children, or the affective capacity of the sun which makes the skin feel hot, sticky and ‘uncomfortable’.

Whilst the terms internal and external sound quite dialectic and static, the limits or conditions in which assemblages can exist are anything but (Buchanan 2017). The forms of materials and expressions that make assemblages are independent, but come to matter through their interaction during moments of encounter. For example, what it means for skin to be and feel comfortable is not just expressive, but is determined by the materiality of bodies and places. Hence, what is important to understand is that the notion and bodily experience of comfort/discomfort is also mediated through the assemblage. Comfort is an affective resonance that circulates between proximate bodies, objects and place (Bissell 2008). Bissell (2008) uses the example of a body sitting in a chair to explore the corporeal sensibility of what it means to sit comfortably. He argues that comfort does not reside in the chair, but is created when sitting bodies work with chairs. Alongside this, comfort does not reside purely in the sitting body, given that
how different people sit is folded through the discursive and performative constitution of subjectivities. Rather, comfort, or finding comfort, is an ‘affective resonance’ that comes into being within a particular working arrangement of bodies with technologies (i.e. chairs) in place (Bissell 2008, p.1701). Comfort is thus conceived as embodied, personal, social, immediate and anticipated, material and immaterial, discursive and non-discursive. Furthermore, achieving comfort is not the end point. Just as bodies become comfortable, they can move beyond this affective sensation and become uncomfortable. Hence, comfort is not fixed, comfort must always be maintained.

The interplay between the material and expressive forces during encounters can be further understood when considering the ways in which the internal or physical limits of assemblages may be extended, or rather converted, in order to maintain their productive working arrangement. For example, when thinking about walking in hot sunny weather, material items, such as hats, may be added to the walking assemblage to maintain its working arrangement. The hat becomes expressive in its maintenance of comfort and upkeep of medicalised understandings of harm. In doing so, the affective resonances of skin encounters with sunlight may shift from uncomfortable to comfortable. The hat becomes an assemblage converter.

This understanding highlights Buchanan’s (2017) argument that the concept of assemblage has utility in that it does not merely describe a collection of things (i.e. assemblage is not an adjective), rather it offers a way of analysing particular sets of productive circumstances. This chapter
explores how the material and expressive elements of the weather – which emerge from skin encounters – work for or against families walking together on-foot. As argued in previous chapters, the familial walking assemblage is implicated in the constitution of shifting motherhood, childhood, familial and walking subjectivities. Hence, the chapter discusses how the skin encounters of the material and expressive forces of the weather when conceived as a walking assemblage help to maintain subjectivities and collectives.

Focusing on what the weather does to bodies, and what bodies do to the weather, the next three sections aim to explore how the material and expressive limits of the familial walking assemblage play out in relation to participants anticipated and actual skin encounters with sunshine, wind and rain. Empirical material comes from initial and follow up interviews and audio recorded walks made by thirteen participating families. The time of year the research encounter took place is included to provide context. Like previous chapters, most (but not all) of the insights come from mothers, grandmothers and children; this is reflective of father’s lack of engagement in the project and the gendered division of care for children. Each section explores how the material and expressive limits of walking together with the weather emerges in relation to the constitution of familial subjectivities. This highlights how bodies must be dry, warm, but not too hot, not cold, not physically exerted by the wind, and not walking in darkness. Each section also explores how these limits are always shifting in relation to the objective of the familial walking assemblage, weather conditions, and the addition of material items as assemblage converters. In doing so, each section highlights
how the temporality and rhythms of participants walking routines are constituted by and constitute encounters with sunshine, wind and rain.

**Elemental encounters**

*A touch of sunshine*

Skin encounters with different temporal qualities of sunshine, including the interplay between temperature, intensity, frequency and duration of sunny days, are integral in constituting the working arrangement of bodies, practices, routines and material items enrolled in the familial walking assemblage. For instance, the touch of sunshine on skin during autumn and winter months, where days are shorter, cooler and less likely to be sunny, was cited by many participants as an important reason to walk, often underpinned by medicalised discourses. For example, Jessica (early-70s) describes walking with winter sunshine as a good source of Vitamin D for her wheelchair bound grandson James (12 years), who has a number of complex physical and developmental disabilities:

> Jessica: *Not in the summer, but in the winter we do it. ... So, I guess, yeah, I think it’s really important for us to get out in the sunshine as well because Jack’s condition and his medications, he has some Vitamin D deficiency; so, it’s kind of like we try and get out in the sunshine as much as we can. (winter, June 2015)*

For Jessica, walking with James to school on sunny winter days was one way she maintained her subjectivity as a ‘good’ grandmother and primary carer by attending to the complex medical needs of her grandson. Similarly,
Rachel (mid-40s) explains how in the context of the cold, rainy and stormy week the forecast of a sunny Sunday offered the possibility to go outside and ‘getting some sun’:

Rachel: This is like the first day it didn’t rain so we went out.

Mike (5 years): I was on my scooter.

Susannah: That’s interesting in itself, that weather really affects you getting out of the house.

Rachel: Oh totally, because there were a few times that we planned to do something and we couldn’t because it was too wet or windy. .... But it was sunny so we were getting out, we’re getting some sun. (autumn, May 2015)

Rachel’s reflection highlights how the material and expressive bodily limits of the familial walking assemblage shift relationally with the presence and absence of sunshine. For example, bodies participating in walks planned as cordial ‘family time’ are anticipated to be comfortable. Hence, bodies should not become wet, cold or become physically exerted by wind. Hence, winter sunshine is not just understood discursively as healthy, but is also anticipated to feel good and result in happy dispositions and moments of familial togetherness. The sensuous affects of sunshine highlight Ahmed and Stacey’s (2001) argument that skin is not a barrier to the outside world, but a permeable site of encounter.
The anticipated positive affects of winter sunshine on the skin are also described by Piper (mid-30s):

*Piper: Sun just makes me happy…. As soon as I get to the beach I feel happy, but anything, going for a walk, even going out of the driveway and having the sun on your face it can make me feel good. ….. you know sunshine on your skin and on your face it makes me feel good. So, I don’t know whether its sunshine or exercise, it’s a bit of both. And it’s found freedom, you know, you’re not stuck in the house.* (autumn, May 2015)

For Piper – who was on maternity-leave after having her second child – the haptic sense of warm sunshine on the skin and the kinaesthesia of her moving body produced feelings of relaxation and a moment respite from the routines of motherhood confined to the house. Piper’s quote highlights Vannini et al.’s (2012, p.369) argument that the weather brings to the fore the ‘sensual dimensions of place…affording us with possibilities for movement, for action’. Hence for Piper, becoming a ‘good’ mother becomes wrapped up in caring for the self and keeping post-natal depression at bay. Walking in sunshine affords an affective atmosphere where such self-care and becoming mother can occur.

Yet, skin encounters with sunshine were not always experienced by participants in positive ways. For instance, the increased temperature and intensity of summer sunshine sometimes disrupted the limits of bodily comfort necessary for the familial walking assemblage. For example, Mayra (early-30s) described how the heat, brightness and medicalised risk of
sunburn from summer sunshine made collecting her 4 year old daughter Aiyana from preschool rather unpleasant:

Susannah: So, would you generally walk with an umbrella?

Mayra: Yeah

Susannah: Is that to protect your skin?

Mayra: Yeah to protect skin, and also, there is also a problem with the skin, and I feel more hot. If it is hot, then I can enjoy the weather [by being shaded]... Yeah I have seen here most of the people use glasses.... I feel bad headache if I don’t use the umbrella.... So that’s why I [use it], even in the rainy season or the hot.

Susannah: Because it’s bright?

Mayra: Yeah because it’s bright ......walking in the town is much better than walking near to my house, because there is no tree. But in the town, there are some shades from the buildings, so it is good to walk there. (autumn, March 2016)

Unable to change her daughter’s mid-afternoon pickup time from preschool means that Mayra has no choice but to walk when the sunlight is hot and bright. To reduce the risk of sunburn and the onset of headaches Mayra seeks out shade from trees and buildings or creates her own with an umbrella and the hood of her daughter’s pram. In shading herself and her daughter, Mayra reinstates the anticipated bodily limits of comfort and the requirement for walking bodies to be warm, but not too hot, unburnt, and
dry (including free from perspiration). Here the material trees, buildings, umbrella and pram hood become expressive through their function to provide shade. They become assemblage converters enrolled in the maintenance of the familial walking assemblage and Mayra's ongoing performance as a 'good' mother.

Walking routines and rhythms result from the negotiations between the bodily limits of comfort and the temporal qualities of sunshine. For instance, Mayra explains how she avoids the hot and bright summer sunshine by doing less schedule-orientated journeys, such as walks to the local shop or playground, in early evening when the sun is setting:

*Mayra: Yeah, so I got after picking her, I go home take some rest and when the sun is during the set, and then I go out. (summer, February 2016)*

For Mayra, the softer light and lower temperatures of dusk in summer emerge as a time when walking with her daughter is deemed more suitable and where the familial walking assemblage is more easily achieved.

Other participants also spoke of how their rhythms and routines of mobility on-foot unfolded in conjunction with the seasonal shifts in temperature and intensities of sunlight. For instance, Bella (early-30s) and Ryan (mid-30s) explain how they walk less with their son Lachlan (3 years) in winter compared to summer due to the cold temperatures and shorter days:
Bella: Probably because it’s winter and because it’s dark in the morning and afternoon, I wouldn’t say we regularly walk [much] like per week anyway with Lachlan at the moment. ...

Ryan: ...when there’s more light, like in Daylight Saving Time.

Sometimes we’d walk down to...

Bella: Actually, we did try in summer after having dinner, because we’d finish sort of by six to quarter to seven and then go for a walk with Lachlan. Yeah, we did that for a few times but that’s because it was light until half past eight at night, so, but you couldn’t do that now. ... In summer, it’s more common for us to walk to a place. ... ... It’s not good in winter. It’s too dark and too cold. (winter, June 2015)

Bella and Ryan’s discussion about their seasonal walking routines highlight how the familial walking assemblage is hinged on bodies not only being dry, unburnt and warm, but it also requires a certain amount of light. Darkness has long been associated with Medieval and Christian imaginaries danger and fear (Edensor 2015). Such discourses have become embedded in modern western society’s apprehension of walking in urban space at night, with women and children constructed as particularly vulnerable (Solnit 2000). These discourses interplay with affective discomfort of cold temperatures to underpin Bella and Ryan’s perception of walking with children on cold winter evenings is not a pleasurable or appropriate activity.
A gust of wind

Like sunshine, skin encounters with wind were also important in the constitution of familial subjects and walking experiences. The presence of wind pressing onto and through bodies was often spoken about as causing discomfort when walking. This doesn’t mean that wind itself is necessarily uncomfortable for walking, but rather that the sensation of wind pressing onto and through skin affects bodies in ways that become understood as uncomfortable in relation to the familial walking assemblage (Ahmed 2004a). Take for example the conversation between Kathy (7 years) and Aria (mid-40s) audio recorded in a beachside carpark at the beginning of a walk:

*Kathy: It's freeeeeezing, I'm cold

[Kathy is talking in a whiny voice, it sounds like she might cry]*

*Aria: Do you want to out your leggings on?

*Kathy: No, it's [the leggings are] itchy

*Aria: They aren’t itchy.

*Kathy: No but then I’ll get them sandy and they will be ruined!

*Aria: They won’t be ruined sweetheart, they’ll only get sand on them.

They won’t be ruined I promise. Do you want to put them on?

*Kathy: I don’t want sand on them.

*Aria: Well why don’t you...
Kathy: NoooooO! I DON’T WANT THEM, THEY’LL BE RUINED! (winter, June 2015)

Here the uncomfortable affects of cold windy weather pressing again Kathy’s body is made audible through her raised, trembling tone of voice and short-tempered conversation with her mother. Kathy’s bare skin is the site of this uncomfortable encounter, with the wind’s presence threatening to dismantle Aria’s plan for a cordial family walk along the beach on an otherwise sunny winter Saturday. As a performance of motherly care and in effort to maintain the familial walking assemblage, Aria suggests Kathy put on leggings. Yet, clothing as an assemblage converter to make bodies warm doesn’t completely solve the dilemma of Kathy’s irritation. The affordance of clothes to trap sand close to her body causes Kathy anxiety. In this instance, sand might be considered in the same way Douglas (1966, p.35) considers dirt, as ‘matter out of place’ which evokes feelings of abjection. The abject provokes anxiety because it dissolves the border between the self and the other (Longhurst 2001). Here, windswept sand caught in clothing as abject matter out of place works to disrupt constructed bodily boundaries necessary for feeling comfort.

Marge (early-40s) also described walking in the wind as uncomfortable:

Marge: I don’t like windy. If it’s fine misty rain I’m fine, but I don’t, I’m a bit pathetic like that... it hurts my ears [laughs]. ... And, also when I was a kid a tree blew down at my school and some of us were underneath it and so I was taken to hospital for a night. ... Something might fall on me. (autumn, March 2015)
Marge’s aversion to walking in wind is cited as discomfort, constituted in relation to memories of a past traumatic event. Avoiding walking in the wind hence becomes a form of risk management in which Marge adheres to become a ‘good’ mother and care for herself and her children.

**A drenching of rain**

As the previous sections explored, the anticipated affective resonance of walking with children requires bodies to be comfortable. For most participants, this meant avoiding feelings of discomfort which emerged from intense sunlight, temperatures spoken about as hot and cold, strong winds, and darkness. As this section aims to explore, comfortable walking bodies must also remain dry. For instance, Billie (late-40s) alludes to the difficulties walking with children in the rain presents for mothers. Whilst rainy weather doesn’t always limit her walking the family’s two pet dogs, it does change whether she decides to bring her three children:

*Susannah: Ok. And so how often would you do this sort of walk with the dogs?*

*Billie: Umm on my own. Ummm weather permitting, well sometimes I will go in the rain if I feel like I really need it, it depends on whether I’m taking kids or not... (winter, July 2015)*

As Billie explains, whilst walking in the rain isn’t preferred, she still chooses to walk the dogs in the rain, particularly if she ‘needs it’. Like Piper’s walks in warm winter sunshine, walking with the dogs in the rain is felt by Billie as a form of escape; a chance to exercise and take time out of the day
for herself (as well as exercise the dogs). Furthermore, as explored in Chapter 3, for Billie, walking the dogs with her children is also felt as a moment of care where mother-child bonding can occur. Yet, such moments of bonding are not considered possible when children are wet. This is also highlighted by Cherie (mid-30s):

Cherie: ...during the week we’ll go for a walk to the park, if we’re not lazy or if the weather is good... But just the only limiting factor is that it has to be good weather because if it’s too windy, too cold or raining, the kids won’t enjoy [the walk]. (winter, May 2015)

Cherie’s quotation explains how rain disrupts the affective resonance of bodily comfort needed to make walking to the park enjoyable for her and her children.

The importance of mothers keeping children warm and dry is further highlighted by Jack (12 years). He explains that his mother Karen (early-40s) drives him and his older sister, Gillian (15 years) to school on rainy days:

Jake: Walking to the bus stop and stuff? Okay well we walk to the bus stop.

Susannah: You walk to the bus stop?

Karen: And home, because mum is so mean that she won’t come and pick you up for that 200 meter walk.

Jake: It’s more in the morning, because we walk down the [road] to our friends house and then we walk.

Karen: About 500 meters if that.
Jake: But on rainy days she drops us off and, when she's not busy. (Initial interview, summer, February 2016)

Jack and Karen’s light-hearted conversation brings awareness to how motherhood is tied up in the provision of care for children (including teenage children) through transporting them places not only safely (Barker, 2011; Dowling, 2000), but dryly. This is particularly important at the start of the school day, ensuring children arrive at school presentable and not soaking wet. Chaffering children in cars, instead of letting them walk in the rain, was also discussed by Marge:

Marge: ... if the weather’s not so good, then they are walking back [from swimming lessons] with wet hair and it’s cold and winter and yeah, it’s not good. But if they are just walking there [to swimming lessons] and it’s raining well that’s ok they are going to get wet anyway. ... Yeah, the weather’s a factor as well.

Susannah: So, do you kind of look at the forecast and then always have brollies pack[ed] and...?

Marge: Yeah, yeah and it depends on how long we are going to be out. Like if the kids get wet and are going to be wet all day then that’s not, well sort of responsible, yeah. (autumn, March 2015)

For Marge, becoming a ‘good’ or in her words a ‘responsible’ mother requires children to be generally kept warm and dry and not exposed to the risks of rain soaked clothes and skin. Marge also highlights how the bodily limits vary between the intensity and duration of rainfall, temperature and
the type of walk. For instance, letting children walk in the cold winter rain and getting soaked through is not something a ‘responsible’ mother should allow. However, a quick journey in the rain to swimming lessons where children will remain wet is deemed okay in warm summer months. In the same interview, Marge goes on to explain further exceptions to the requirement of dry bodies in constituting the familial walking assemblage:

Marge: It’s refreshing to get out... Like sometimes when it’s just been wet and they’ve been cooped up inside all day I go ok we’re getting our raincoats on and our gumboots on and we’ll just go walking around the street. ... We just go in the puddles, at the end it was about jumping in every puddle we could. We got soaking wet. (autumn, March 2015)

In this instance, walking in the rain with children is not considered irresponsible. Rather, the possibilities of rainy days, putting on gumboots and jumping in puddles present the opportunity to expel pent up energy and spend time together as a family. When the purpose of the walk is to get out of the house, getting wet is expected and part of the fun.

Whilst walking in the rain with children was generally avoided by most participants, other participants more regularly walked in the rain. However, these even for these participants, keeping children’s bodies and clothes warm and dry is still necessary for the familial waking assemblage to function. This functioning, as Jacky (6 years) and her mother Alicia (early-50s) explain, is achieved through the provision of wet-weather gear:

Susannah: What happens when it rains?
Jacky: I’ve got a raincoat in my bag.

Susannah: Oh, ok and does it keep you all dry?

Jacky: Yes. Ethan’s [son (3 years)] got an umbrella thingy on his stroller

Susannah: Oh ok, what does your mum do, does she get wet?

Alicia: I’ve got a raincoat but my head gets wet. You’ve got rain hats too, and sometimes if it’s really heavy you get to wear your gumboots

Jacky: And I have my raincoat and I like my umbrella because I like ‘siiinnnggging in the rain, what a glorious feeeeling...’ (autumn, April 2015)

The addition of these material items become expressive in their ability to convert the walking assemblage and reduce anxieties about children arriving at school wet. Furthermore, as assemblage converters these items generate surprising anticipated affective intensities, including moments of joy and playfulness for Jacky (see also Chapter 5 for an example of the affective atmospheres of play generated by rain and Ethan’s pram cover). Umbrellas, rain and their association with songs from popular culture open-up the opportunity to for Jacky to sense the city differently and become a singing and dancing performer.

However, whilst wet-weather gear serves Alicia, Jacky and Ethan well for the most part, on some occasions heavy rainfall made transporting children dry and safely on-foot difficult:
Susannah: How did you get to school when it was so rainy?

Alicia: I think Marcus [husband] drove Jac, on the days that he was off. I think one day we went up in the full rain gear. ... And I think we had to go home one or twice in full rain gear. Ethan and I didn’t go to playgroup

Susannah: It was too stormy?

Alicia: Yeah, we decided [we’re] not going to do that. (autumn, April 2015)

On a particularly stormy week, heavy rain understood as an environmental risk disrupting the rhythms and routines of familial walking assemblage. As ‘good’ parents following meteorological warnings, Alicia – who doesn’t drive – chose not to go out. Instead, her husband Marcus – who is a nurse and is usually at work or catching up on sleep during school drop off times – changed his routine to drive Jacky to school. This example highlights Rooney’s (2018) argument that ‘wild’ weather conditions offer the opportunities for unpacking the contingencies of everyday life.

Therefore, rather than categorising families as ‘wet-’ or ‘fair-weather’ walkers, it is important understand that their identities are not fixed, but rather emerging in relation to the material and expressive forces that are produced and felt by the sensuous body in space. For instance, whilst some families are more likely to walk in the rain than others, this doesn’t mean it all rain is felt to be comfortable. Nor does it mean that all family members enjoy walking in the rain. Take for example, different experiences walking in
the rain for Janet (late-40s) and her daughters’ Samantha (12 years) and Delila (10 years):

Samantha: No, I hate walking in the rain

Susannah: Oh?

Janet: No, well we’d catch the bus for that distance [to singing lessons], [but] walking into town if it’s raining we’ll still go if we needed to and couldn’t put it off...

Samantha: I hate walking in the rain

Janet: ... it’s too muddy and...

Susannah: Why?

Samantha: Because it might be really wet and then cold and sick and then...

...

Janet: And the footpath gets wet and your feet get wet.

Susannah: Yeah. So, what happens if it’s raining when you have to go to school, [do] you still have to walk down to the bus stop?

Samantha: Yeah, it’s not that far though; a 10 minute walk.

Susannah: You have an umbrella and stuff?
Delila: We have to walk to school too. I like walking to school in the rain, I get to jump in the puddles.

Janet: She has knee high gumboots and jumps in the puddles.

Susannah: Do you wear gumboots to school and then change into other shoes?

Delila: I wear no shoes.

Janet: The teachers let them take their shoes and socks off. So, she wears gumboots to school, jumps in every puddle she can find. (late autumn, May 2015)

Samantha highlights the social limits of comfort and responsibility, with wet bodies understood to be more at risk of catching a cold. Janet repeats these concerns, voicing her anxiety about the material limits of their protective wet weather gear with gumboots only partially keeping mud and water away from the body. However, Janet is also aware of the enjoyment her youngest daughter Delila gets from jumping in puddles and becoming wet. The ability for Delila to take gumboots and wet socks off once at school eases the anxiety about children wearing soaking wet clothes all day. Like Marge's quotes explained, it is the duration bodies are anticipated to be wet and the ability for children to change out of wet clothes that shapes how the materiality of rain and puddles become expressive through their enrolment in the familial walking assemblage. Hence, just like mothers who choose to drive their children to school when it rains, to reduce getting too wet, Janet and her daughters put off non-necessary travel or take the bus partway.
Janet also highlighted how the type of water encountered on walks is important in shaping the affective resonances of bodily comfort:

*Janet: This is the first time recently that it’s actually rained and the roundabouts haven’t been flooded. I wonder what they do to the drains of the roundabouts whether it’s this one [on Throsby Drive] or the one on Mercury Street. They’re [always] underwater. ...the whole foot path goes underwater and it gets so deep. You can’t walk. Today’s the first day walking along Victoria Street, that that part of the foot path is not under water. It’s finally dried out. And no matter what direction we go, I find the drainage around here is very bad.... ... There’s been a time here where we’ve walked around Victoria Street and the drain must have been blocked up by the railway bridge. It’s like a wall of water just came over the top of us as a car drove past. It’s ridiculous. (late autumn, May 2015)*

Janet highlights how the regular occurrence of flooded footpaths and roads intensifies issues of pedestrian access in a city designed for cars by causing discomfort, frustration and disruption to familial walking routes and rhythms. For Janet, wading through flooded footpaths and having flood water splashed over the body is sensed as abject, containing dirt and unknown pathogens. Following Douglas (1966), flood water can be considered as matter out of place as it disrupts the anticipated capacity of city infrastructure to deal with heavy rainfall and maintain pedestrian access. Hence, encounters with flood water, even momentarily, are felt as deeply
uncomfortable, and as a result challenge the working order of the familial walking assemblage.

**Chapter summary**

In most walking studies the weather is overlooked, described as a ‘control variable’ for gathering comparable pedestrian data, a barrier to walking or just part of the background of everyday life. Walking studies often categorised people in terms of their propensity to walk in certain types of weather; labelling people as ‘fair’, ‘wet’ or ‘all-weather’ walkers. This chapter moved away from these static representations of pedestrians and the weather, following the call from material feminist scholars to consider what the weather does to bodies through skin encounters with sunshine, wind and rain. Drawing on a material feminist reading of Deleuze and Guattai’s notion of assemblage weather is understood in this chapter as more than a natural occurring phenomenon that people ‘adapt’ to. Instead, walking with the weather is understood a mode of becoming whereby subjectivities and collectives are constituted in relation to the material and expressive limits of assemblages.

To understand how weather comes to matter to the familial walking assemblage, focus was put on the skin as the site of weather encounters. Skin is a surface that constitutes bodies/subjects, rather than one which already contains them (Ahmed 2004a). Skin encounters with sunshine, wind and rain and its varying qualities (intensity, frequency, duration) maintained and disrupted walking routes and routines through the affective resonances of
comfort, pleasure, discomfort and even abjection. These affective resonances are enrolled in subject and collective becomings.

How weather expands and narrows the possibilities for walking is always tied to gendered politics of care that shape motherhood, childhood and familial becomings. The analysis points to how, for mothers and grandmothers, the decision to go for a walk is less about the physical effort involved, but is about the anticipation of bodily comfort and upholding notions of responsible motherhood. These performative caring responsibilities of course play out individually. However, in most cases enacting care is underpinned by the notion that children’s bodies are expected to be dry, warm, not too hot, not cold, not physically exerted by the wind and not walking in darkness. For example, participants spoke about the productive possibilities of walking with winter sunshine on cool winter days, or the impossibility of enjoying walking on windy and rainy days. Such discourses about the ‘appropriate’ weather for walking are recirculated by children’s expectations of their parent’s ability to keep their bodies warm, dry and free from dirt. Tantrums and feelings of disgust highlight how frictions arise and walking becomes difficult when such expectations of bodily comfort are disturbed.

The chapter also explored how material items work to reinscribe these body limits of comfort. Umbrellas, hats, raincoats, prams and gumboots were often used to reduce anxieties about bodies becoming wet, hot, burnt or sick by distancing skin from such uncomfortable and undesirable weather encounters. As a result these material items become expressive in their
ability to reinstate the bodily limits of comfort and performance of familial subjectivities, converting and maintaining the familial walking assemblage.

However, whilst highlighting the fairly narrow limits of bodily comfort expected when walking the chapter also explored how these limits are always shifting. What is deemed appropriate weather for walking varies with the weather's intensity, duration, temperature, the purpose and the context of the walk. For example, in some instances the possibilities of walking in rain was not understood as challenging, but felt as a joyful and playful activity. In other instances, the material items enrolled to reduce or ease the anxieties of skin encounters weren’t able to overcome the challenges of walking with the weather. Lack of tree cover, overflowing drains and flooded footpaths highlights how the city often fails the needs of pedestrians to walk in comfort.

This chapter continues the work of material feminist scholars who have reconceptualised the weather as something that doesn’t just happen ‘out there’, but is part of how we relate to the more-than-human world. It continues the work of feminist scholars who have explored the body as fluid and subjectivity as emerging. Mobility studies and children’s and family geographies could benefit from a material feminist approach to exploring our everyday interactions with the weather.
Chapter 7: The emotional politics of rainforest encounters

Kathy: My legs are tired.

Aria: Well just keep going slow Kathy, just keeping on slow.

Kathy: We’re turning around.

Aria: No we’re not, we’re just going slow.

Kathy: [huffing loudly] My legs are really tired! [Moaning] Huuuaaahh!

Audio from video-recording made by the Beech family during Minnamurra Rainforest bushwalk, July 2015.

Let’s go for a bushwalk

This chapter provides insights to the corporality of family bushwalking (an Australian term for nature walking or hiking). Bushwalking is a popular leisure activity and is often taken-for-granted as a ‘good’ way families can spend quality time together, get fit and healthy and reconnect with nature (Louv 2005; Louv 2014; Vincent 2017). However, as the above conversation between Aria (mid-40s) and Kathy (7 years) alludes, family bushwalking is not always joyful or easy. Bushwalking involves tired legs, tantrums and ongoing emotional work done by parents and children to keep bodies moving. Hence, there is a morality and politics to walking. As ‘new’ walking studies remind us, walking is not an activity which is inherently ‘good’ for the mind, body or soul (Lorimer 2011; Carpenter 2013). Instead, walking is
always deeply embedded within specific socio-cultural contexts and enrolled in a process whereby places and subjectivities are constituted. Bushwalking is a mobility through which sets of ideas about Australian nature and are known, made and remade (Palmer 2004; Waitt et al. 2009). Nevertheless, whilst walking in nature has received a lot of scholarly attention, much of this literature remains focused on the solitary adult walker or adults walking together in groups. Little work understands the implications of how or why families might walk together in places set-aside for nature. A growing volume of literature has begun to explore children-nature interactions from material feminist and post-human perspectives (Taylor 2011; Taylor 2013; Rautio 2013a; Malone 2016a). This work has sought to de-centre human agency and think about subjectivities, mobilities and places as relationally constituted. That said, even within this work ‘the family’, and questions of what this collective is and how it is constituted remain peripheral to individual children’s experiences. To date, no work attends to the corporeal and more-than-human encounters which occur on family bushwalks. This chapter aims to address this gap.

This chapter brings Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concepts of assemblage and territory into conversation with material feminist approaches concerned with corporeality and the politics of emotion (Ahmed 2004b). In doing so, it shows how places, subjects and activities are spatially constituted within assemblages and their territories, populated by human and non-human bodies, materials, discourses, emotions and affects. From this approach, nature and family are constituted as relational becomings
which emerge through bushwalking as a territorialisng process. The chapter looks to the Beech family’s bushwalk in the Minnamurra Rainforest – a popular ‘family-friendly’ tourist attraction situated in Budderoo National Park, 30km south of Wollongong – through a sensory walking ethnography that combined semi-structured interviews and video recordings. The analysis maps the emotional and affective moments of encounter with real and imagined snakes, lyrebirds and sticks. These moments provide clues to why families go for bushwalks, by seeking the affective pleasures of bushwalking in nature as a way to maintain the familial assemblage. Furthermore, these moments of encounter also point to how the maintenance of the familial bushwalking assemblage in turn includes and excludes specific plants and animals as belonging in Australian nature.

The chapter is structured in five parts. The first section argues that although different styles of ‘nature walking’ consistently draw scholarly interest, the experiences of children and families are overlooked. The second section critiques the popularised ‘child and nature movement’ that draws on romantic discourses to inform ideas about child-nature interactions. It outlines the contributions from material feminist scholars that encourage thinking about the corporality of more-than-human interactions. This section concludes by arguing that families’ leisure walks are yet to be properly interrogated. Section three discusses how bushwalking can be viewed as a mode of territorialisation whereby, family is simultaneously made, unmade and remade. This is then integrated with Ahmed’s (2004b) work on the sociality of emotions. Section four discusses the research context and
methodology to better understand how the process of territorialisation operates during the Beech family's bushwalk. The next section analyses the Beech family's bushwalk, focusing on three moments of encounter with an imagined snake, a lyrebird and a collection of sticks. These moments of encounter provide insights into how the subjectivities of family, parent, child and nature emerge and shift through specific emotional and affective resonances of fear and excitement; awe and wonder; and disgust and appeal. The final section concludes by highlighting how mapping the emotional and affective forces that sustain family bushwalking assemblages and through the territory of family illuminates the environmental politics of nature tourism, bushwalking and family time.

*Adults walking alone in ‘nature’*

Walking in nature has long been the subject of academic literature. Much of the early work stems from the Enlightenment ideas of the eighteenth century, where walking in nature was positioned as morally ‘good’ for the mind, body and soul (see Solnit 2000; Chapter 2). Yet, as argued throughout this thesis (see Chapters 1 and 2) and elsewhere (Middleton 2011b), walking is not a given activity which is inherently ‘good’, but is a constitutive and constituting practice, whereby places and subjectivities are made and remade.

The ‘cultural turn’ within humanities and social sciences has been integral in shifting conceptions of place, subject and practice from static to socially mediated and unbounded. As a result of this turn, a particularly productive body of work within geography has sought to destabilise nature-
culture dualisms. From 'situated natures' (Instone 2004), 'socionatures' (Castree 2005), 'contested natures' (Macnaghten and Urry 1998), to 'naturecultures' (Haraway 2008); this work critiques the dominance of western categories of nature and culture that silences other ways relating to the more-than-human world (Whatmore 2002; Braun 2005; Taylor 2011; 2013; Gibson et al. 2015; Braidotti 2013). For walking studies, this has meant reconsidering how place, mobility and the self are conceptualised as not pre-given but as always emerging. For instance, post-structural approaches have considered how romantic notions of walking in the countryside as restorative intertwine with embodied experiences to situate particular kinds of nature walks, nature places and nature walkers (Edensor 2000b). From this perspective walking in nature places is a bodily and social practice ‘beset by conventions about what constitutes appropriate bodily conduct’ (Edensor 2000b, p.83). Stevenson and Farrell (2017, p.5) similarly note how different styles of walking are ‘associated with the places in which we walk, the nature of the walk and who we are’. In particular they highlight how leisure walking in ‘natural environments’ is underpinned by wider sets of power structures which demark ‘distinct walking identities ... respect for the environment, membership of formal or informal walking groups and donning appropriate attire’ (Stevenson and Farrell 2017, p.6).

Post-phenomenological work repositions walking as more than a leisure activity, but as mobility deeply entrenched in Western scientific models of nature conservation (Wylie 2005; Lorimer and Lund 2008). Lorimer and Lund’s (2008) chapter on ‘Munro-bagging’ in the Scottish Highlands
considers how recording, collecting and classifying walkers reinscribe particular kinds of knowledge about mountainous landscape over others. Wylie (2005, p. 236) similarly argues that the zoning-off of various landscapes marked as ‘natural, national and nostalgic significance remains a gendered and racialized process of excluding and including’. For Wylie (2005), walking is simultaneously material, discursive and embodied.

In the Australian context, Palmer (2004) considers different bushwalking practices in Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory, to highlight how a process of inclusion and exclusion operates in places designated for nature. Palmer’s work explores the politics of bushwalking contrasting the expectations of tourists and those done by the traditional custodians of the land. Despite the Bininj/Mungguy people’s concerns about tourist’s intrusion into sacred sites, bushwalking continues. Citing a management plan for the park, Palmer notes that banning bushwalking is ‘likely to incur the wrath of most Australians who consider national parks as the public domain and bushwalking a legitimate and harmless “wilderness” activity’ (Clarke 1996, p. 47 cited in Palmer 2004, p.113). Here bushwalking is a political activity through which nature-cultural binaries may be recirculated and challenged; with sensuous experiences disrupting the ways the Australian bush is often constituted through white settler narratives and value systems.

A performative approach conceives walking as a type of place-making, a form of holding oneself in place, and a way of doing and territorialising nature (Mackenzie 2008; Waitt et al. 2009). Waitt et al. (2009) draw on empirical material gathered from participants who frequently walk in a nature reserve
in Albion Park, NSW (a suburb in Shellharbour, the LGA south of Wollongong). Like Palmer (2004), Waitt et al. (2009) illustrate how the more-than-human encounters of routine reserve walks sustain and disrupt the ways natures are known. They highlight how Australian nature is constructed as place where people are a problem, unless they are engaged in specific activities, like walking. Walking gives people the permission to visit places which are designated as and come to be known as ‘nature’.

Waitt et al.’s (2009, p.44) argument that walking is a ‘territorialising process’ has many synergies with non-representational and material feminist scholars (Instone 2004; 2010; 2015; Nxumalo 2014; Ayres 2016; Taylor 2011). This scholarship has highlighted how walking and nature may be conceived as co-constituted. For these scholars, the nature walk is conceived as an embodied, performative, emotional, affective and corporeal activity which unfolds out of not only discursive, but affective and emotional encounters with the more-than-human world. For example, Instone (2015, p.134) highlights the relationality between ‘body, knowing, place and feeling’. This relationality is always mediated by more-than-human others:

> Whether we realize [sic] it or not, whenever we walk we are walking alongside multiple others, human and nonhuman, and how we move is likewise not only a human achievement, but shaped by the more-than-human worlds through which we step. (Instone 2015, p. 136)

Similarly, Ayres (2016) offers an understanding of place and nature as made, remade and unmade through movement and encounters. She evokes nature not as a noun, but as a performative verb. Nature emerges through
the coming together of multitude discourses, practices, materialities and embodiments. For example, Ayres (2016) considers National Parks as processual places made through certain kinds of encounters, including bushwalking. However Ayres (2016, p.121) argues that the affective intensities and the role of the nonconscious affect in ‘eliciting feelings, sentiments and opinions’ are rarely acknowledged in the management policies of National Parks informed by scientific principles.

In summary, post-structuralist thinking indicative of the cultural turn offers ideas that focus on walking as an embodied place-making practice. Neither, place, nature nor walker can be thought of pre-existing the practice of walking. Instead, in such relational thinking, each is ongoing, constituted through the practice itself. Moreover, this scholarship points towards the multiplicity of styles of walking. Each style embedded in a particular cultural politics of nature that provides clues as to who and what belongs in particular places. Attention turns to moments of encounter and affective intensities that examine embodied knowledges of how nature is made and remade. That being said, the predominate focus is on the experiences of mostly adult bodies walking alone or together in social groups (e.g. Lorimer (2011) discusses the dynamics of leisure walking groups). Families walking together in nature remain to be interrogated. When family nature walks are discussed it is often in terms of their taken-for-granted benefits for children’s wellbeing, development and learning (Berman et al. 2008; Gatersleben and Andrews 2013; Linzmayer and Halpenny 2014). As the next section outlines, such a focus is problematic as it overly-romanticises child and nature
interactions and positions ‘the family’ as a given entity through which child
development and learning is best established.

**Critiquing the ‘child and nature movement’**

Within the childhood studies and education a growing volume of research
recommends that families walk in nature for its educational and health
benefits (Louv 2005; Berman et al. 2008; Wilson 2012; Moss 2012; Lekies
and Beery 2013; Wake and Birdsal 2016). This scholarship has emerged in
light of concerns over children’s loss of connection to nature in rapidly
urbanising societies; connected to screen time (Louv 2005; Moss 2012),
decline in free play (Holt et al. 2015) and ‘over-subscribed family life’ (Skår
Biophilia (the notion that humans have an inherent affinity with nature and a
primal urge to connect with the natural world), Louv (2005) offers a
diagnosis that many children living in westernised countries now suffer from
*nature deficit disorder*. As Louv (2005, p. 6) highlights in his bestselling book,*
*Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*: ‘For
a new generation, nature is more abstraction than reality. Increasingly,
nature is something to watch, to consume, to wear – to ignore’. Hence, Louv
advocates for activities that offer possibilities for children to reconnect with
nature, including family nature walks (Louv 2005; Freeman et al. 2015;
Children and Nature Network 2017). Parents and guardians must be
mobilised in this process of reconnecting children to nature. In doing so it is
argued: ‘By making a commitment to getting your kids unplugged and out in
nature, you are taking action to improving their health and wellness’
To help mobilise parents and guardians, Louv (2014) positions the nature walk as basic human right; thus making activities that reconnect children with nature a way to demonstrate parental care for their children. The family nature walk is positioned as providing parents with possibilities to demonstrate care by providing children with opportunities to ask questions and be curious about the natural world (Wilson 2012), address children obesity (Romero 2011) and provide ‘good’ stimulus for mental wellbeing (Vincent 2017). In doing so, child and nature movement scholars follow Louv (2005) who frames nature as offering benefit to families suffering from urbanised lifestyles: ‘Stress reduction, greater physical health, a deeper sense of spirit, more creativity, a sense of place, even a safer life – there are the rewards that await a family which it invites more nature into children’s lives’ (Louv 2005, p.163).

Furthermore, the family nature walk is positioned as a mechanism to ensure pro-environmental behaviours in the future (Wells and Lekies 2006). Seemingly, the family nature walk is ultimately tied to the future health of not only the child, but of the Earth.

However, a growing number of material feminist and post-human scholars criticise these claims about children becoming less connected to nature (Taylor 2011; 2013; Pacini-Ketchabaw and Nxumalo 2015; Rautio 2013a; Malone 2016a). These scholars offer three main critiques of the child and nature movement (Rautio 2013a). First, claims of children’s loss of connection to nature uncritically presume what nature is, and do so from a predominately western perspective (Dickinson 2013). For Louv (2005),
nature is considered to be something we as humans are separate to, but also something we need to teach our children to protect and care for. This is particularly problematic when considering the work of cultural geographers and post-colonial scholars who have long critiqued the dominance of western separation of nature and culture (Castree 2005; Instone 2004; Whatmore 2002). As Castree (2011, p.190) argues ‘representations of “nature” are rarely innocent, and frequently become the surreptitious vehicle for the exercise of power and acts of social resistance’.

Second, claims of children’s curiosity and wonder for the natural world reinforce the romantic conflation of nature/childhood/primitivism (Taylor 2011). This is evoked by the idea that children are somehow closer to nature than adults, and like wilderness, childhood is also becoming endangered (Taylor 2011). Louv positions nature and childhood as things which need to be ‘saved’. Yet, many children’s geographers and childhood researchers argue, childhood, like nature is not some essentialised state. Rather, childhood is socially constructed, situated, emergent and subjective (see Jenks 1996; Holloway and Valentine 2000; Matthews and Limb 1999; Tisdall and Punch 2012; Holloway 2014; Chapter 2) with experiences of childhood and child-nature connections vastly different across the globe (Malone 2016b).

Third, the child and nature movement positions children’s interactions with nature as a predominantly a form of teaching and learning (Rautio 2013a). From this understanding, adults generally hold the environmental knowledge about the world and children do the learning (Rautio 2013a).
Thinking about nature interactions solely in this way reinscribes the dualism about nature and culture, and discourses of children as merely adults in the making (Taylor 2013). It presumes that nature interactions are for the benefit of human educational attainment; always with a goal to become more knowledgeable about the world.

To unsettle these nature-culture binaries a group of material feminist and post-human childhood scholars have developed what they call a common worlds pedagogy (Taylor 2013; Taylor and Blaise 2014; Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw 2015; Pacini-Ketchabaw and Nxumalo 2015; Gannon 2017; Nxumalo 2017). As Taylor and Pacini-Ketchabaw (2015, p.508) explain:

This shift to common world pedagogies not only challenges human-centric assumptions about individual children’s significant relations, it also challenges the assumption of human exceptionalism, including the assumption that only humans have the capacity to exercise agency. ... children are not the only orchestrators or actors in these interspecies worlds and encounters. Rather, the learning emerges from the relations taking place between all the actors – human and more-than-human alike.

Common worlds thinking is underpinned by material feminist and post-human philosophies (that also informs much of the critical geographies of walking) which focus on emergence, heterogeneity, encounters and intertwining agencies, intensities, forces, actors, materials, bodies, emotions and affects (Braidotti 2013; Barad 2007; Grosz 1994; Haraway 2008). For example, drawing on material feminist readings of Deleuze and Guattari
(1987), scholars reconceptualise childhood as simultaneously both nature and culture, where ‘the child’ emerges as a product of relations or multiplicity of nature-culture assemblages (Prout 2005; Taylor 2011; Rautio 2013a). Such work has been productive in shifting discussions about children’s nature interactions in childhood studies and education away from human-centred approaches. Nxumalo (2014) adopts a common worlds approach to reflect on the encounters between children, educators and non-humans during a forest trail walk in British Columbia, Canada. She employs Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) notions of assemblage and territory to provide insights into the working arrangement and ordering of meanings, bodies and materials. Nxumalo argues that walking with children in forests is not inherently educational or non-innocent; forests as nature, children as learners and educators as teachers do not pre-exist relatings. Instead they emerge through embodied and affective practices enrolled in the mutual becoming of children, educators and the forest itself. Highlighting how the forest trail is materially and discursively connected to past and present colonial histories, walking has the possibility to provide understandings of the affectivities in the ‘mobile and contested meanings’ of place (Instone 2010 p. 362).

Nxumalo’s (2014, p.88) and other material feminist critiques of the child and nature movement are important for uncovering some of the ‘normative assumptions and omissions’ present in recent calls for children to spend time in nature. However, like walking studies literature, much of the focus continues to be on individual children neglecting the family. Some studies
have examined families spending time together outdoors from post-structural accounts (e.g. van der Burgt and Gustafson 2013; Goodenough et al. 2015). These studies have highlighted how families are made and remade within moralised nature places through the doing of various social practices. However, there remains a lack of research that attends to the corporeal experiences of families going for walks in nature places.

The rest of this chapter aims to bridge the gap by conceiving bushwalking as practice which works to constitute place, nature and individual and collective subjectivities of family. To do this, the next section follows material feminist approaches to childhood, family and mobility to think with Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concepts of assemblage and territory alongside Ahmed’s (2004b) cultural politics of emotions.

**Territorialising family**

This thesis has conceptualised family as an assemblage mediated through the corporeality of walking. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) conceive assemblages as made through a non-sequential but purposeful ordering process comprised of two axes. So far, this thesis has mainly focused on the interactions of horizontal axis, composed of a *machinic assemblage of desires* (content) and a *collective assemblage of enunciation* (expression) that provisionally operate as heterogeneous parts. The vertical axis involves the formation of *territory* through the ongoing process of *territorialisation* that functions as mechanism of inclusion and exclusion.

For Deleuze and Guattari (1987), territory is the first assemblage and every assemblage is territorial. Just like the common definition of territory –
an area that is controlled or owned by someone or some group and their social customs – Deleuze and Guattari’s territory is structured by *nomos* (customs or habits) or a *regime of signs* that define forms of behaviour, desires, ideas and the functions of subjects, objects and materials (Aurora 2014). Territory has a semiotic structure; to navigate and exist within it requires the use and knowledge of language. Assemblages and territory form as they operate within and alongside the regimes of signs. This operational order can only ever be provisional: ‘relations may change, new elements may enter, alliances may be broken, new conjunctions may be fostered’ (Anderson and McFarlane 2011, p.126). Hence, whilst territory is a bounded entity, the boundaries of territory are never static. Territory is a liminal space, a transitional space, but it is also the space we make for ourselves, to make us feel comfortable. Family can be considered a territory through which familial assemblages form and are maintained.

Territorialisation – the process of forming territory – consists of two interrelated kinds of movement: *determinitorialisation* (a pulling apart, towards creative resistance) and *reterritorialisation* (bringing together, towards regulation). The latter is impossible in the absence of the former, and *vice versa*. As Anderson and McFarlane (2011, p.126) write: ‘Assemblages always ‘claim’ a territory as heterogeneous parts are gathered together and hold together’ – this is the process of reterritorialisation. This claiming of territory seeks to maintain and strengthen assemblages. Just as territorialisation occurs – constituting people, places and objects within assemblages – deterritorialisation unfolds.
Deterritorialisation is a move which challenges the foundation of territory, it is a creative reinterpretation where the order of the assemblage is varied or changed. Deterritorialisation is not the collapse of assemblages into nothingness. Rather what forms as a result is a reorganisation of existing assemblages (variation) or a new assemblages (change). Deterritorialisation is hence followed by reterritorialisation and the reordering of territory again, and again, and again, etc. As Aurora (2014) explains, it is impossible to break the circle formed by (de/re)territorialisation. Furthermore, Aurora (2014) highlights how there is no absolute deterritorialisation and no absolute reterritorialisation; as every movement presupposes a territory to deterritorialise and reterritorialise thereafter. This constant process of (de/re)territorialisation highlights how assemblages are always becoming with boundaries of territories ever shifting.

Conceptualising family as territory and bushwalking as a mode of territorialisation is useful for opening up human and non-human encounters to go beyond discourses. Families’ walks outdoors are more than purely about teaching children about nature or being fundamentally changed by immersive nature experiences. Assemblage offers a way of thinking about identities as ‘events, actions and encounters between bodies’ rather than ‘simply entities and attributes of the subject’ (Kennedy et al. 2013, p.49). That is, alongside ingrained westernised discourses of nature, it is the intangible qualities of encounters such as the emotional affective resonances that work towards or against subjects becoming family (in its many forms) or not.
Family and the ‘doing’ of familial identities are always enrolled in the social, cultural and political management of emotions and affects (Holdsworth 2013). Ahmed’s (2004b) work on the cultural politics of emotions resonates with Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) notion of assemblage and territorialisation. Ahmed describes emotions as not existing within subjects (bodies) or objects (materials), but as the constitutive force which circulates between and among things, people and places. Ahmed understands affects, feelings and emotions as emerging from what can be understood as sets of assemblages entwining the biological and social. Emotional responses are therefore not simply personal, but are always socially and culturally mediated. For instance, ‘emotions are not simply something ‘I’ or ‘we’ have. Rather, it is through emotions, or how we respond to objects and others, that surface or boundaries are made: the ‘I’ and ‘we’ are shaped by’ (Ahmed 2004b, p. 10). In surfacing and creating boundaries emotions work to (de/re)territorialise subjects and objects in particular moments of encounter. Holdsworth (2013) adopts a relational approach, arguing that families are made and remade through a dynamic location of activities, mobilities and embodied practices. Hence, attending to the corporeality of family bushwalking is key to understanding how mobilities ‘create and reaffirm relationships and moral identities’ (Holdsworth 2013, p.32).

The remainder of this chapter looks to moments of encounter where emotions circulate between, slide over and stick to (non)human bodies reinforce or rupture familial territories and subjectivities within one family’s
bushwalk. The next section outlines a brief history of Minnamurra Rainforest, the Beech family and context of their bushwalk.

**The Falls walk**

Minnamurra Rainforest is situated approximately 30 kilometres, or a 40 minute drive south of Wollongong. It is a popular tourist attraction with a visitor centre, well-maintained walking tracks and elevated walkways that wind through ‘rare remnant rainforest’ that once existed throughout the Illawarra region (NSW NPWS 2016). The rainforest is part of Budderoo National Park and is managed by the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service (herein referred to as NSW NPWS), an agency of the state government’s Office of Environment and Heritage. NSW NPWS management of the rainforest is relatively recent. The rainforest is first and foremost Dharawal Country, cared for by the Wodi Wodi people for thousands of years (NSW NPWS 1998). However from early European settlement in the 1800s it became a site of intensive logging for highly prized Red Cedar (NSW NPWS 1998). By 1850 most cedar had been felled. From the 1870s the rainforest became a popular picnicking destination and was partially turned into reserve for ‘public use’ in 1896. During this time a walking track to two waterfalls, known locally as The Falls, was constructed and facilities such as rest spots, bridges and toilets installed. The reserve was rezoned as Budderoo National Park in 1986 (NSW NPWS 1998).

Like most National Parks in NSW access to Minnamurra Rainforest is car-dependent. Visitors must also pay entry fees upon arrival or hold an annual pass. Fees are $12 per car per day, or $4.40 per adult and $2.20 per child if
arriving via bus or taxi (NSW NPWS 2016). These fees are a key source of
revenue for the NSW NPWS to continue their conversation work. However,
there is a trade-off between revenue and visitor numbers. Daily entry to the
Minnamurra Rainforest is capped if the carpark becomes full. The
management plan for Budderoo National Park explains managing tourist
numbers and visitor experience is one of the key challenges the park faces:

The [Minnamurra Rainforest] centre is heavily used on weekends and
on a high proportion of Sundays some visitors cannot gain entry
because all car parking is in use. Any significant increase in car
parking would, however, result in crowding and reduce visitor
enjoyment. (NSW NPWS 1998, p.35)

This policy document along with the many information and directional
signs present in the park (see Figure 8) highlight how NSW NPWS treads a
fine line between conversation, environmental education and tourism.
Minnamurra as an important site of biodiversity must be married with the
white settler legacy of visiting nature places and bushwalking as a form of
leisure (Palmer 2004).
Adjacent to the car park is the Minnamurra Rainforest Centre. The Centre provides visitors with informational displays about rainforest animals, plants and Aboriginal artefacts, and runs guided walks and education programs for school students. It is from this building that the Beech family began their bushwalk.

The Beech family are new migrants to Australia, moving from England to the Illawarra in the last five years. Aria and Steven are both aged in their mid-40s and work as medical professionals at the local hospital. Steven works full-time and Aria works part-time 2.5 days a week. The family is relatively affluent. Kathy is 7 years of age and is in Year 1 at a private school. Her younger brother Tim is aged 4 and goes to a preschool two days a week. Like all participants, pseudonyms have been used for first and last names to maintain participant privacy.
As Aria explained in an initial interview she and Steven are keen bushwalkers: ‘We used to do lots of walking holidays before we had kids’. The anticipated pleasures of walking are something Aria and Steven are also keen for their children to experience:

*Aria:* [Going for a walk] is something we would normally do, we would go, so most weekends if we were both off [from work], we would find somewhere to go. And we like walking, so we’re trying to introduce these two to the idea that it [walking] might be something to do.

As explored previously (see Chapter 4) the sociological literatures highlights how weekend outings are organised by parents (particularly mothers) as ‘family time’ with the aim to strengthen bonds, encourage physical activity and facilitate moments of teaching and learning (Gillis 1996; Shaw 2008). The Beech family’s visit the Minnamurra Rainforest on a Sunday in early July 2015 was in part organised with the intention of enabling some of these outcomes.

*Aria:* I chose this [to do this walk at Minnamurra] because we had never been here before. And so it was a new place. And we had the conversation, Steven said there is a rainforest we can walk around and the kids had been really interested in the idea of going to the rainforest.

The Beech family chose to do *The Falls* walk; which, according the NSW NPWS website (2016) is a 4.2 kilometre return journey, with a track splitting from the main *Rainforest Loop* walk to follow the Minnamurra River upstream to a waterfall.
Aria: … the waterfall at the end was beautiful. And I don’t know just being outside and being somewhere different. And being with family.

Aria’s reflection of the walk provides clues to how bushwalking in Minnamurra Rainforest is embedded in western romantic ideas of walking within rainforests as a passport to relaxation, well-being and rejuvenation. This is exemplified by the NSW NPWS website’s description of the walk:

Mother Nature truly shines on The Falls walk … Amble along the elevated walkway and paved track, taking in the trickling streams, moss-covered rocks and feathered ferns beneath you. Soak up the breathtaking views over the rainforest canopy and canyon and take your time at the viewing platforms at the lower and upper Minnamurra Falls.

Yet as the remainder of the chapter explores, Minnamurra Rainforest as a place for families, nature and bushwalking becomes constituted through more than just the carpark, boardwalk, viewing platforms, informational signs, waterfalls and greenery. Minnamurra Rainforest and those who visit are constituted through the affective encounters that emerge along the way.

The bushwalk was recorded by Aria on a GoPro video camera attached with a clip to the shoulder strap of her backpack. The video-recording goes for 54 minutes; starting as they leave the Minnamurra Rainforest Centre and ending just before they reach the first waterfall viewing platform when the GoPro’s batteries ran out. Further insights into the walk are drawn from the follow-up interview conducted a week later with Aria, Kathy and Tim at their
house and parts of the video were re-watched and discussed. Steven was at work during this time, and due to difficulties organising another time to meet he wasn’t interviewed during the course of the project.

Focusing analysis on one family’s bushwalk was underpinned by acknowledging the importance of the specific context in which familial subjects are embedded and territorialised. Within geographical research vignettes are a productive means through which individual and collective experiences and the specificities of encounters can be analysed (see Waitt and Clement 2016; Chapter 3). Analysis focused on exploring moments of bodily intensities where different emotions are generated through the coming together of human and non-human bodies, materials, objects and other forces into a working arrangement. The next three sections illustrate how the feelings of fear, excitement, awe, wonder, joy and disgust, which emerge during real and imagined encounters with a snake, a lyrebird and sticks, operate to produce order and constitute specific territories, subjectivities, collectives and belongings. Each section highlights a politics of inclusion and exclusion where emotions and affects are enfolded in the familial bushwalking assemblage through an ongoing process of territorialisation.
**Rainforest encounters**

*A snake: fear and excitement*

Throughout the video recording Steven, Aria, Kathy and Tim can be seen and heard smiling, laughing and enjoying their bushwalk in the rainforest. This sense of conviviality is noticeable at the beginning of the walk when they can be heard talking about the kinds of plants and animals they might encounter along the way. These conversations and encounters work to produce feelings of excitement which mobilise bodies forward along the raised platform boardwalk. However, whilst there are numerous pleasures of walking in the rainforest and encountering the different animals and plants, not all moments are felt in such positive ways. Specifically, when there is a possibility of ‘dangerous’ encounters with a snake (see Figure 9).

![Figure 9. Fearful and exciting encounters. Source: Stills from Aria’s video shot on GoPro with clip attachment.](image-url)
Kathy's fearfulness in this moment might seem like a natural response to the possibility of encountering a snake. Yet as Ahmed (2004b) argues understanding fear as a physiological response to danger is only part of the story. The imagined snake is not inherently dangerous or fearsome; rather it must be known to be feared (Ahmed 2004b). For settler Australians, migrants and tourists snakes have long been a ‘metaphor for the dangers that lurks[sic] in the Australian bush’ (Markwell and Cushing 2016). However, this does not mean that Kathy's fear is purely a result of the socio-cultural knowledge of Australian snakes as dangerous. Rather, fear may be conceived as an affective resonance that circulates between real and imagined bodies. Fear is a matter of specificity about how, where and which bodies come into contact and impress upon each other. Fear as an emotion, feeling and affect is a sticking point; the glue that simultaneously holds together (territorialises), ruptures (dett erриториalis e s) and reorders (reterritorialise) assemblages. For example, Kathy’s fearful response of the imagined snake stops her in her tracks. For some fear endangers a sense of self and as a result ‘shrinks bodily space and ... involves the restriction of bodily mobility in social space’ (Ahmed 2004b, p.64). The emergence of a fearful affective atmosphere also has the capacity to bring bodies closer together. Kathy feels it is unsafe to walk by herself and seeks safety by moving closer to her parents. As Ahmed (2004b, p.1134) notes, ‘emotions work by sticking figures together ... a sticking that creates the very effect of a collective’. For Kathy, fear of snake encounters momentarily disrupts and deterritorialises the working order of the bushwalking family assemblage.
Importantly, the fearful affects generated through the imagined encounter with a snake points to the differential susceptibility to be affected is constituted by ideas and performances of gender. For Kathy, fear is constituted by and constitutive of a young heteronormative feminine subject. Young girls are often positioned as being more rational and aware of their own safety than young boys (Valentine 1997a). As a result of these material, affective and discursive entanglements being fearful of snakes becomes felt as a sensible response for a young migrant girl walking in the rainforest – a place in this moment territorialised through an affective atmosphere of danger.

The gendering of emotions and affects is further highlighted when considering the response of Kathy’s younger brother. For Tim, the possibility of an encounter with a snake is thrilling. Tim’s response to the imagined snake further exemplifies Ahmed’s argument that emotions and affects do not reside in objects or subjects but circulate between and through them in specific moments of encounter (or anticipated moments of encounter). As Aria explains in a follow-up interview, Tim was excited about seeing the ‘Australian rainforest’, specifically the animals constituted as ‘scary’ like snakes and water dragons:

*Susannah:* So, what type of things do you talk about?

*Aria:* Ummm just the things we see along the way really. Thomas was really [excited], so he kept saying “are we going to the ‘Australian rainforest’?”, because one of his friends had been to the ‘Australian rainforest’ whatever that is or wherever that is. But he was really
interested in seeing the animals he might see, particularly the scary ones.

In Australia, discourses of snakes position them as dangerous, abject animals, that simultaneously repel and fascinate (Markwell and Cushing 2009). The young gendered bodies appear to have contrasting thresholds which emerge as fear or excitement for snakes. Tim and Kathy’s susceptibility to be fearful is embedded in masculine and feminine performances of boyhood and girlhood. Masculinities are constructed in relation to seeking out danger. For Tim the element of risk and adventure makes the bushwalk exciting (see Figure 10). Fear and excitement reveals themselves in the potential snake encounter during the rainforest walk. The affects of this potential encounter are at once productive and destructive of the familial bushwalking assemblage. Sensing this conflict, Steven steps in. Despite being afraid of snakes himself, Steven is primed to act as a caring and protective father. Steven helps to dissipate fear from intensifying by reassuring Kathy that she is not in danger. Steven’s reassurance works to not only reassert his fatherhood subjectivity, but in turn reterritorialises the rainforest as a safe place for families to walk.
A lyrebird: awe and wonder

A particularly striking and affective moment from the Beech family’s bushwalk is when they encounter a lyrebird. Approximately 50 minutes into the walk the video recording shows Steven, Kathy (who had walked on ahead) and two other pairs of bushwalkers stopped on the path, pointing into the bushes. When Aria realises they are looking at a lyrebird her pace slows then stops, her body hunches, her fingers point to help guide searching eyes, her voice lowers to a whisper and she instructs Tim to do the same (Figure 11).
Figure 11. An ‘amazing’ lyrebird. Source: Stills from Aria’s video shot on GoPro with clip attachment.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Minnamurra Rainforest and many of its plants and animals are embedded within romantic discourses of natural landscapes as sublime and awe-inspiring (Ahmed 2004b). As Picard (2012, p.5) writes: ‘For the Romantics, experiencing awe in the face of specific natural sites, e.g. ‘wild’ mountains and sea fronts, was considered a liberating process.’ As a result, ‘Awe and tourism are historically interconnected’ and considered a form of moral learning (Picard 2012, p.5). Awe and wonder are understood as feelings that exist in certain places and objects; specifically waterfalls, mountain tops and night-skies (Picard 2012). Phenomenological literature, on the other hand, understands awe and wonder as something which stirs within bodies as a result of seeing something that is socially and culturally understood as beautiful. For instance, expressing awe for nature is
not a universal emotion, but stems from a historical process of understanding certain landscapes and sites as morally 'good' (Milne 2010).

Yet, a material feminist approach argues that both these understandings ignore the materiality of the body. For example, rather than feelings of wonder existing within bodies or within objects, Ahmed (2004b) instead argues that wonder is the affect cultivated through and between proximate bodies and objects encountering each other for the first time, or, as if it was for the first time. Wonder evokes a response of surprise by what is before us and 'works to transform the ordinary, what is already recognised, into the extraordinary' (Ahmed 2004b p.180). Wonder shifts our affective relation to the world. Consequently, wonder works to increase the capacities of bodies to affect and be affect, opening up new possibilities for becoming. To draw on Irigaray (1993, p.73, cited in Ahmed 2004b, p.180): 'Wonder is the motivating force behind mobility in all directions'.

Upon encountering the lyrebird, Aria's body performs a series of gestural postures which convey a sense of awe for the bird. Whilst Aria describes the lyrebird as 'amazing', the bird is not inherently so. Rather, it is the affective resonance of awe and wonder which are sensed, produced and circulated through the proximate co-presence of human and lyrebird bodies, performances, discourses and materials. For instance, part of the experience of amazement involves performative dimensions, including gestures and subjectivities. In this case, the performative dimensions that merge and fold through the act of walking in Minnamurra rainforest constitute the enactment of an 'good' environmentalist identity. By slowing her movement,
stopping, and being quiet Aria, Steven and her children are being careful not to scare the lyrebird away. Her whole body is enlisted to convey the sensation of wonder. This counters assumptions that wonder is somehow effortless.

The desirable and positive affective resonance of the lyrebird encounter is heightened by the promise that sightings of this bird ‘native’ to Minnamurra and rainforests across south eastern Australia. The Superb lyrebird (*novaehollandiae*) is featured on tourist information websites, informative signs, is the namesake of the café adjoining the Minnamurra Rainforest Centre (e.g. the Lyrebird Café), and is on the crest of the NSW NPWS (see Figure 12).

Visit the multi award-winning Minnamurra Rainforest Centre and experience the splendour of the rainforest…. Feel your senses awakening as you listen to the birds, feel the spray of the waterfalls and spot rainforest residents – perhaps the superb lyrebird, eastern water dragon or swamp wallaby (NSW NPWS 2016).

![NSW NPWS Crest](image)

**Figure 12.** NSW NPWS crest features a male Suburb Lyrebird. Source: NSW NPWS website.

Together, these texts work to naturalise expectations of encountering a lyrebird and the desire for wonder through such an encounter. Indeed, on numerous occasions prior to this encounter the family can be heard discussing the possibility of seeing a lyrebird on the bushwalk:

(2 minutes into the walk)

*Steven: We might see one of those birds, with the long tails.*
Aria: The lyrebirds, yeah.

...

(30 minutes into the walk)

[bird call rings out]

Aria: It might be a lyrebird... lyrebirds copy lots of other birds.

Kathy: Daddy it might be an eagle?

Aria: I don’t think it’ll be an eagle. I’m just listening to the sound.

Steven: I don’t know.

Kathy: Do lyrebirds lie?

Aria: No, it’s L-Y-R-E like the musical instrument.

Kathy: And it goes wooop-woooop!

...

(35 minutes into the walk)

Steven: We haven’t seen a lyrebird yet.

Whilst the affects of awe and wonder do not pre-exist their encounter, the family’s anticipation of sighting a lyrebird during their bushwalk highlights how nature places are always laden with sets of ideas and desires that increase the possibility for potential affects. Within the context of Minnamurra Rainforest wonder becomes a socially constructed attribute of lyrebirds. From an assemblage approach, wonder is a sensibility, a refrain, a moment of reterritorialisation which is socially known, anticipated and repeated in specific territories, such as National Parks, rainforests and bushwalking places. As moments of reterritorialisation these potential affects are widely known and accessible, even for those like the Beech family who have never been to Minnamurra Rainforest before.
Emotions and affects accelerate and slow bodies. The sensation of wonder works to momentarily halt walking bodies so that they can witness, what is for a British migrant family, an ‘unusual’ bird.

Aria: We see a lyrebird actually, but I’m not sure if it’s on here.

Susannah: We don’t see it, we see you stopping to look but it’s not on the tape.

Aria: So it’s not something we would always [get to] do.

...  

Aria: Yeah, it had the big white feathers at the back.

Susannah: That’s exciting when you see something.

Aria: Yeah, yeah exactly. When you see something unusual. It wasn’t the snake that Tim was hoping for.

Susannah: The rainforest kind of delivered.

Aria: Yeah. [laughs]

Aria remembers encountering the lyrebird as extraordinary during the follow-up interview. In her words, it was ‘something unusual’ and felt as a particularly special moment. Focussing on awe and wonder as a sensation that slows and immobilises walking bodies highlights the politics of bushwalking. From an assemblage perspective, the encounter with the lyrebird described through the lexicon of amazement enables consideration
of how more-than-humans understood as extraordinary can shape what natures are deemed worthy of looking at, valuing and protecting.

**A collection of sticks: joy and disgust**

Along with fearful and awe-inspiring animal encounters, sticks and leaf matter also played an integral part in maintaining and reinforcing the territory of family. How sticks became enrolled by different family members provides insight into how aged and gendered bodies emerge through the relationships between expressive and material content of the bushwalking assemblage. For instance, for Aria and Steven sticks become important in maintaining the working order of bushwalking as a family by keeping tired children’s bodies moving, as the video stills in Figure 13 show.

Figure 13. Stick-train to keep bodies moving. Source: Stills from Aria’s video shot on GoPro with clip attachment.
Sticks shouldn’t be understood as inherently useful for bushwalking (Rautio 2013b). Rather, sticks become useful within this particular moment of encounter. In this moment sticks and bodies imagined as a train generate joyful affects that mobilise child and parent bodies through the rainforest. The stick train doesn’t reduce the physical effort needed to walk up the hill, but rather it works to transforms feelings of tiredness so that they can be better managed.

Sticks are felt to be particularly important for Tim, who in later part of the walk, becomes preoccupied with finding and carrying a number of different sticks. Aria comments on Tim’s relationship with sticks in the follow-up interview:

_**Aria:** So, Tim has got his stick_

_**Susannah:** Yep, why do you think that is?_

_**Aria:** I think it’s just genetic; it’s just a boy thing [chuckles]. Yep he’s just got an attraction to sticks. Most days, like on the way to school today, he had a stick. So, yeah, sometimes it half a tree that he’s carrying around._

For Aria, boys playing with sticks is naturalised along the lines biological gender binaries of boy/girl. In describing Tim’s appeal of sticks a ‘just a boy thing’ Aria hints to how the rainforest is always mediated through gendered contingences of play. Yet, as post-human and material feminist childhood scholars argue, the gendered contingences of play are never solely biological (Blaise 2005) and material encounters are never apolitical (Rautio 2013b). Play is always emplaced, embodied, performative, affective and underpinned
by heteronormative gendered discourses (Blaise 2005). Furthermore, play is always mediated through the affects that resonate between bodies and materials the co-constitute them (Harker 2005). Play occurs ‘at the intersection of being and becoming’ (Harker 2005, p.53). Hence, rather than understandings sticks as inherently appealing to Tim as a ‘natural’ form of play for a young boy it is important to consider what his stick playing achieves. Consider the following moment from the video stills of the rainforest walk in Figure 14.

![Figure 14. Becoming stick-man. Source: Stills from Aria’s video shot on GoPro with clip attachment.](image)

For Tim, the pleasure finding and carrying the biggest stick is not an inherent practice but is about having his parents witness his strength by carrying large sticks up the hill. Here the size of the stick becomes an
indication of a masculine subjectivity defined by strength. Aria naming him ‘stick-man’ and the slope a ‘mountain’ further indicates how the stick becomes enrolled in the ongoing, transformative and performative gendering of Tim as a young boy. This moment provides important clues to how the joyful circulation of affects between sticks and bodies not only reterritorializes the rainforest as an enjoyable place for families to walk but helps to constitute gendered bodies and identities along the lines of heteronormative family structures.

How children’s gender is assembled through expressive and material forces which work to (de/re)territorialize is again evident through Kathy’s encounters with sticks. Take for example, the moment in the video stills shown in Figure 15. Here tired walking bodies again reply upon sticks for assistance. Drawing on assemblage thinking, the stick as a walking supplement is enrolled to maintain the territory of the rainforest as a place for family walking and work against it falling into chaos. Like the stick train pulling and pushing Tim’s tired body up the hill, Aria encourages Kathy to find a ‘marching stick’. Yet, for Kathy, finding a suitable marching stick faces different challenges. For Kathy, qualities of touch are prioritised over size, with sticks needing to be free from leaves, dirt and plant matter, so not to evoke feelings of disgust and discomfort. There is always a gendered performativity of disgust (Ahmned 2004b). As Ahmed (2004b, p.85) notes, ‘one does not feel disgust in the abstract’. Therefore, ‘we cannot understand disgust without understanding its contingency, defined in terms of the ‘contact’ between object’ (p.89). Ahmed (2004, p.93) goes on to argue that ‘to
name something as disgusting is to transfer the stickiness of the word ‘disgust’ to an object’. Hence, the unsuitable sticks, leaves and dirt aren’t inherently disgusting but are made to feel disgusting in the context of the family rainforest walk. This moment provides insights into how within the familial bushwalking assemblage, decomposing matter is understood by Kathy as ‘dirt’ not as soil. Aged 7, Kathy understands soil in the context of the rainforest as something that she has come to close too, but it also has the possibility to contaminate her young ‘clean’ feminine body. Hence, decomposing matter is to be removed from the skin as quickly as possible, by throwing unsuitable sticks way in disgust, so that their dirtiness does not become engrained in or tarnish her skin. Like Tim, Kathy’s actions and affective reactions provide clues to how gender emerges through the capacities of the familial bushwalking assemblage to incorporate and withstand more-than-human encounters. There is a gendered politics at work in how Kathy and Tim experience and in turn territorialise the rainforest as a place for a family bushwalk.
**Figure 15.** Finding the right marching-stick. Source: Stills from Aria’s video shot on GoPro with clip attachment.

_Aria:_ Tim has found a stick to take with him.

_Kathy:_ I don't have a stick.

_Aria:_ Well I think this might be just the place to find sticks. There might be a few sticks around here…

_Aria:_ That’s a good stick Kathy, it’s a very big stick.

_Kathy:_ It’s got dirt on it, _yuck!_ [throws stick to the ground] It’s not a good marching stick.

_Aria:_ It’s not a good marching stick, well let’s keep looking then.

_Tim:_ It’s a good stick for me!

[Kathy picks up another stick]

_Kathy:_ See it bends whenever I walk

_Aria:_ Yeah, I think you need to find a studier stick.

…

[Kathy picks up another stick]

_Aria:_ Are you bringing half a tree with you?

_Kathy:_ Yes …

_Steven:_ Ah Kathy has a walking-tree.

_Kathy:_ It's not good! It's got too many leaves on it and it's scratchy! [Kathy throws stick away]

_Aria:_ Ahhh well keep looking Kathy, I'm sure you'll find the perfect one.
Chapter summary

Bushwalking is increasingly promoted as an important activity that families should do together in a time when children are understood to have restricted or limited access to places designed for nature. Yet, such arguments are underpinned by romantic understandings of nature as something that is restorative, separate to us, for human use, and in need of human protection (Taylor 2011; Dickinson 2013; Malone 2016a; 2016b). Even within 'new' walking studies – where post-structural scholarship of the cultural turn has unsettled nature-culture binaries – walking literature is preoccupied with predominantly solo, male, white, middle-upper-class, colonial socio-historical narratives of the countryside. No research explores the experiences of families going on bushwalks together. Hence, this chapter provided an interpretation of the experiences of one family's bushwalk in Minnamurra Rainforest, a site that is now purposefully managed for ecotourism, nature conservation and environmental education. Taking an assemblage approach the Minnamurra Rainforest may be conceived as a territory that is managed by National Parks of New South Wales as a place for nature informed primarily by conservation biology.

Offering the concept of the familial bushwalking assemblage, the chapter illustrated how nature, child, parent and family are constituted as relational becomings that emerge through bushwalking as a territorialising process. For Deleuze and Guattari, all assemblages are territorial. Subjectivities, places and ideas form when assemblages make and claim territory through an ongoing process of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. After Ahmed (2004), emotions and affects are part of this process; they make
sticking points or slippery surfaces which bring disparate elements together or pull them a part. Hence, assemblages are constantly being made and constituted through more-than-human affective encounters which shift the boundaries of territory.

Using the semi-structured interviews and video-recordings of the Beech family’s bushwalk in Minnamurra Rainforest, attention was drawn to the affective moments of encounter which emerged between walking human bodies and an imagined snake, a lyrebird and collection of sticks. Following Ahmed (2004b), the analysis focused on how affective resonances are felt and become articulated as emotions (fear, excitement, awe, wonder, joy, disgust) thought socially mediated sets of ideas about nature, bushwalking, rainforests, family time and National Parks. Each moment of encounter gave insights into how and why families go in search of nature through bushwalking as a way to maintain the territorial assemblage of family. Walking in rainforests does not fundamentally change their territory, but aims to incorporate the non-human things that comprise nature, or rather its positive affects, as a way of strengthening intimate family bonds.

Considering how emotions and affects are always socially mediated, analysis pointed to the gendered bushwalking performativities of young children and parents. Through the fearful and exciting encounters with an imagined snake and the joyful and disgusting encounters with sticks certain kinds of familial, parent and child subjects are enacted and reinstated. For example, prospect of seeing a snake co-produces multiple subjectivities: the brave, thrill seeking young boy; the fearful young girl at risk; and the
protective and caring father. Encounters with sticks also produced affects that worked to mobilise and situate bodies in the familial bushwalking assemblage. For example, carrying big sticks enabled Tim as a young boy to become ‘man’; stick-trains and marching sticks became enrolled in parents coxing children’s tired bodies up the hill; whilst soil constituted as dirt worked to reinscribe gendered performativities of ‘clean’ feminine bodies. It was not the snake or the sticks themselves which produced these qualities and subjects, but it was the flow of affects which circulated between proximate human and non-human bodies through which they were momentarily stabilised. These affects work to (de/re)territorialise Minnamurra Rainforest as a place of nature, which is at once pristine, protected and special, but is also highly accessible for visitors, including families. Minnamurra Rainforest is a place where dangerous, unique and dirty more-than-human encounters might occur at the pleasure or displeasure of visitors.

The rainforest encounters in this chapter also provide insight into how nature places are always laden with potential affects. Visitors already have a heightened expectation feeling this sensation within anticipated of encounters due to sets of ideas about National Parks, bushwalking, family time and rainforests. For example, through the sensations of awe and wonder lyrebirds become felt and known as belonging in the Minnamurra Rainforest. As Rautio (2013b, p.398) argues, more-than-human encounters are always constituted through assemblages as territory and as a result are never apolitical – ‘as something takes form, other things are necessarily excluded’. 
For example, specific plants or animals named as "amazing" may become considered somehow worthier of protection than others. There is a politics to bushwalking.

How and why certain places, plants and animals are sensed as extraordinary, dangerous, or disgusting offers possibilities to open-up questions about the spatiality and materiality of families’ relationships with the non-human world. For instance, what is it about places for nature that requires them to be maintained with routes organised, signposted, tracks) before families visit? Family visits to zoos or wild-life parks provide alternative context to explore this question. Furthermore, how might familial subjectivities and natures come to be sensed and known through the more-than-human encounters outside of tourist or ‘protected’ places? Further insights could be drawn from better understanding the experiences of families walking in less ‘touristy’ places or suburban settings, such as parks, streets or backyard gardens. Future research should continue to focus on the family and family leisure time outdoors as a territorial assemblage through which meanings, subjectivities and mobilities are made.
Chapter 8: Conclusion

Do families even walk anymore?

At the beginning of the thesis this question was posed. Such a question shouldn’t come as a surprise given the large volume of academic and grey literature which proposes Australian families are walking far less than ever before. The decline in walking has been linked to deteriorating population health outcomes, climate change through the reliance automobility, as well as unsafe and un-friendly cities for children and their families. A large number of studies explore the 'barriers' to walking in an effort to improve the walkability of cities (Speck 2012; Pooley et al. 2011; Freeman et al. 2012). In part, this thesis could be considered another one of these pedestrian studies with its aim to better understand the demise of walking in the everyday family life. Yet, this thesis sets itself apart from much of the walkability research on families which has come before, building upon Middleton’s (2011) important point that walking isn’t an easy, ‘natural’ activity that people ‘just’ do. This thesis sets itself apart from previous research by asking a different set of questions:

What is walking, what is family, and how do families walk together?

Addressing the research aim and questions

This thesis follows the work of material feminist geographers who, following the ‘mobilities turn’, have argued that walking is more than a way of getting to point A to point B. Walking is a place and subjectivity making
practice. From this standpoint, *walking, place or family* is not a given.

Walking is constitutive of family, just as families constitute walking. This thesis followed Holdsworth’s (2013, p.150) call to reconceptualise family as a ‘constellation of mobilitities’, mediated, produced and reinscribed through the everyday practices of daily life.

Specifically, this thesis draws on Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of assemblage to argue that mobility is always a relational and more-than-human achievement. To walk as a family is conceived through the becoming of the *familial walking assemblage*. This approach highlights the importance of corporeality to help rethink how walking is always experienced in conversation with how places and subjects are constituted somewhere on-the-move.

As outlined in Chapter 1, the research context for the project was Wollongong, a car-dependent regional city on the east coast of New South Wales, Australia. The choice to study the experience of families who live in this regional city follows Wollongong City Council’s recent attempts to improve the liveability and liveliness of the city by engaging with the notion of the pedestrian-friendly city. This thesis extends the work done by Wollongong City Council by showing how walkable places are embedded in socially embodied feelings of family.

Chapter 1 outlined three questions which helped to frame the research project:
1) How can assemblage thinking inform academic and policy debates concerned with the pedestrian-friendliness of cities for families?

2) How can research attend to the fleeting working arrangement of more-than-human bodies, materials, discourses, emotions and affects which constitute the familial walking assemblage?

3) How can assemblage thinking contribute to new understandings about how walking configures the emotional and affectual bonds that comprise families on-the-move?

Chapter 2 addressed the first research question by positioning the thesis as one which seeks to draw upon the productive possibilities of assemblage thinking for informing urban policy. The chapter situated the thesis within two broad bodies of literature – walking studies and children and family geographies. First it outlined the breadth of literature on walking in order to highlight the many different styles, subjectivities and places which walking produces. The chapter then turned to children’s geographies. It argued that whilst a large volume of literature explored children’s experiences on-foot, there tends to be a preoccupation with the notion of the ‘independent’ child. The chapter highlighted a gap the literature about the lived experiences of everyday family walking practices. Working across these two literatures, the chapter then outlined how their ideas have applied within urban policies that aim to create walkable cities that are healthy, sustainable and livable for children and their families. The chapter concluded by arguing that whilst walking has received enormous scholarly and policy attention, limited work looks beyond the solitary adult pedestrian or independent child. This chapter
is significant as it identifies a lack of academic research and policy that addresses the walking experiences of families.

Chapter 3 addressed the methodological challenge articulated in the second research question. It sought to explore the practicalities of doing qualitative research with families’ on-the-move. Structured in three parts the chapter outlined the process of reviewing, designing and doing walking sensory ethnographies with sixteen Wollongong families. In doing so, the chapter builds upon Pink’s (2009) sensory ethnographic methods by employing non-representational and material feminist approaches which attend to the embodied, emotional and affective moments of everyday life.

The empirical chapters focus on the ways in which the familial walking assemblage is constantly being worked upon, maintained and reproduced through the movement of proximate bodies, ideas, materials, emotions and affects. Addressing the third research question, these chapters aimed to explore how the notion of assemblage can be a put to work alongside complimentary material feminist theories to analyse the conditions under which walking as a family is ‘done’. For instance, Chapter 4 brought assemblage thinking into conversation with a feminist care ethics, building on the work of Boyer and Spinney (2016). This chapter shed light on the experiences of mothers walking with children through five interrelated ‘moments of care’. The results suggest that shortening the distance between origins and destinations may not be enough to break the demand for motorised transport. Walking is never a rational choice. Women who walk with their children are entangled in cultures of mothering, the presence of
children, changing moods, material attributes of places and objects brought along. This working arrangement is conceptualised as the *mother-child assemblage*. Participants’ experiences illustrate how the walkability of cities must be understood through how moving bodies experience the materiality of place (noisy/quiet streets, speeding cars, pavements, parks) in relation to the felt affects of mothering.

Chapter 5 focused on mothers and young children who walked with prams. In doing so, this chapter spoke to debates around what entails a child-friendly city, arguing that urban planning policies should be infused with the lived experiences of young children. Attention was drawn to how children’s and mothers’ right to the city is felt through the *mother-child-pram assemblage*, specifically the challenges of doing motherhood and childhood on-the-move via the concepts of *affective affordances* and *affective atmospheres*. Findings suggest that it is not simply the lack of pavements that work against the right to the city, but the anticipated affective atmospheres of safety that circulate between bodies, prams, surfaces and vehicles. There is politics of mobility invoked by how women and children reclaim roads to generate spaces of sociality on-the-move.

Chapter 6 focussed on the elements to consider how the weather is always part of the more-than-human familial walking assemblage. The analysis moved away from static representations of pedestrians and the weather and followed the call from material feminist and post-human scholars to consider what the weather does to bodies through skin encounters with sunshine, wind and rain (Ahmed and Stacey 2001; Neimanis
and Walker 2014; Rooney 2018). The chapter considered how the weather is registered on and through the body as an affective resonance of comfort and in turn, how walking is always mediated by the material and expressive forces of bodies, objects and places. The significance of this chapter is in how it highlighted how the possibilities for going for a walk are not just about ‘the weather’ as a predetermined thing, but is always tied to gendered politics that shape responsible parenting, motherhood, childhood and familial becomings. Furthermore, the chapter highlighted how city infrastructure in Wollongong often fails the needs of families to walk comfortably with the weather.

The final empirical chapter considered how family is constituted through the more-than-human encounters of one family’s rainforest bushwalk. Chapter 7 integrated assemblage thinking and the notion of territory (Deleuze and Guattari 1987) with material feminist approaches concerned with corporeality and the politics of emotion (Ahmed 2004b). Focus was on how walking in a place designated for ecotourism works to territorialise gendered and classed notions of family and natures. The chapter brought together cultural geographies of nature with post-human critiques of the child and nature movement, offering an alternative way of framing and understanding family bushwalking as a way of doing, being and becoming family through more-than-human encounters. The affective intensities of places designated for nature illustrated important insights into how parents and children make sense of their individual and collective roles that comprise a family. Furthermore, it provided insights into who or what
natures, feelings and affects are desirable for familial bushwalking assemblages to be maintained.

**Next steps**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, this thesis is not representational of all Wollongong families’ walking experiences; nor is intended to be. Rather the thesis brought together just some of the meaningful moments of everyday family life on-foot to enable urban policy-makers, such as Wollongong City Council, to better understand how the city and it surrounds is felt as pedestrian-friendly or not.

How, when and why families walk is always mediated by the social attitudes to walking, the materiality of the urban environment and how people understand themselves. This thesis has found that for families, pedestrian-friendly cities are not just ones with footpaths (although wide pedestrian-specific footpaths are preferable), but are made when doings and feelings of care, play and safety can be enacted. Greater attention should be given to thinking about how families territorialise places for walking to exercise, care for children, socialise, commute and facilitate moments of fun. Places constituted as walkable for families were almost always along quiet, low traffic, low speed limit streets that facilitated a sense of doing family on-the-move. This is further evident in the choice to drive to destinations designed for walking (parks, beaches or national parks) to facilitate ‘family time’. Walkable places were embedded in embodied feelings of safety; a feeling that is not about potential risk, but is articulated in terms of sustaining a sense of individual and collective self and belonging. Hence,
creating a pedestrian-friendly city is a question of who has the right to the city. Evidence shows that in Wollongong, drivers currently hold a monopoly on this right; with those moving on-foot often left to negotiate their mobility in relation to cars and their obtrusive infrastructure.

There is much work to be done that promotes pedestrian-friendly cities by attending to corporeal geographies. All but one of the empirical chapters of this thesis focused on the experiences of mothers. This was due to sample of participants and richness of the themes that emerged through the empirical material. As highlighted in Chapter 3, the majority of adult participants were women. In a cultural context, where women are positioned as primary carers of children, men were less likely to go for walks with their children and were less actively engaged in the research project. Furthermore, all adult participants were heterosexual, most were white, middle class and all but one participant was able bodied. Future research may seek to further investigate family mobility on-foot for fathers, grandparents, same-sex parented families, lower-socio economic social groups, ethnic minority groups or people with a disability across different geographical contexts. This thesis is just the first step in researching the relationships between walking and family lives.
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Hanson, S., 2010. Gender and mobility: new approaches for informing sustainability. _Gender, Place and Culture_, 17(1), pp.5–23.


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### Appendix A: Participant List

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<td>Retired; primary carer</td>
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<td>Initial Int. /Talk &amp; Draw</td>
<td>Video /sound</td>
<td>No. of walks recorded</td>
<td>Go-along walk</td>
<td>Follow-up int.</td>
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<td>Janet</td>
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<td>Mother; divorced</td>
<td>Unemployed</td>
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<td>Daughter; sister</td>
<td>Primary school; Year 5</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Full-time; Manufacturing Professional</td>
<td>Anglo-Aust</td>
<td>Mount Saint Thomas</td>
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<td>Full-time; shift work; Postal Worker</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Mother; married</td>
<td>Full-time; work in Sydney</td>
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<td>Go-along walk</td>
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<td>30s</td>
<td>Uma*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>M</td>
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<td>Graduate student</td>
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<td>(Step)-father; married</td>
<td>Full-time</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>Son; (step)-brother</td>
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<td>Primary school; Kindergarten</td>
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Appendix B: Ethics Approval Letter

12 February 2015

Ms Susannah Clement
Dept of Geography and Sustainable Communities
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Wollongong

Dear Ms Clement,

Thank you for your response dated 10 February 2015 to the HREC review of the application detailed below. I am pleased to advise that the application has been approved.

Ethics Number: HE15/031
Project Title: Let’s go for a walk
Researchers: Ms Susannah Clement, Professor Gordon Waitt
Documents Approved:
- Initial Application
- Participant Information Sheet for Adult Family Members (V2 Feb 2015)
- Participant Information Sheet for Children (V2 Feb 2015)
- Consent Form for Adult Family Members (V2 Feb 2015)
- Consent Form for Child (V2 Feb 2015)

Approval Date: 12 February 2015
Expiry Date: 11 February 2016

The University of Wollongong/Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District Social Sciences HREC is constituted and functions in accordance with the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. The HREC has reviewed the research proposal for compliance with the National Statement and approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with this document.

Approval by the HREC is for a twelve month period. Further extension will be considered on receipt of a progress report prior to expiry date. Continuing approval requires:
- The submission of a progress report annually and on completion of your project. The progress report template is available at http://www.uow.edu.au/research/ethics/human/index.html. This report must be completed, signed by the researchers and the appropriate Head of Unit, and returned to the Research Services Office prior to the expiry date.
- Approval by the HREC of any proposed changes to the protocol including changes to investigators involved
- Immediate report of serious or unexpected adverse events on participants
- Immediate report of unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

Ethics Unit, Research Services Office
University of Wollongong NSW 2522 Australia
Telephone (02) 4221 3380 Facsimile (02) 4221 4338
Email: rse-ethics@uow.edu.au Web: www.uow.edu.au
Appendix C: Recruitment Poster

Let’s go for a walk!

With studies showing that walking for both adults and children is declining due to increased car use researchers from the University of Wollongong are asking the question:

Is walking really becoming redundant?

What are your memories of walking as a child? Where do you walk together as a family? How far do you walk together as a family? When do you walk together as a family? What are the joys and angst’s of walking together as a family?

If you are a parent, grandparent, adult sibling or carer for a child between the ages of 3 and 12 years we would like to speak with you and your family.

Participation involves a series of interviews and a video and sound recording activity. The project invites all family members to be involved.

If you would like your family to be involved in the Let’s go for a walk project please contact Susannah Clement for more information:

Email: sc527@uowmail.edu.au
Phone: 0421 223 166
Write to: Department of Geography and Sustainable Communities
Faculty of Social Science
University of Wollongong
Wollongong NSW 2522
Appendix D: Participant Information Sheet – Adult

Participant Information Sheet for Adult Family Members

Let’s go for a walk

About the project: This project explores walking in everyday family life. Studies show that walking for both adults and children is declining due to increased car use. In this study we ask the question, is walking really becoming redundant? Despite living in a car dependent society we want to know if, how, when, where and why families walk. To do this we want to speak to you and your children about your walking habits and experiences in and around the area in which you live.

Participant requirements: As an adult participant you must be living in the Wollongong area, be over the age of 18 years and be the parent, family member or carer of a child or children between the ages of 3-12 years old. Before deciding to participate we ask that you speak to your child/children about the project and go through the Participant Information Sheet for Children with them.

What you will be asked to do: The project consists of a number of stages that involve both you and your child family member(s).

Interview

We invite you to take part in a conversation (semi-structured interview) at a time and location of your choice. The interview will go for approximately 1 hour and will cover the themes of where you walked as child; and where, why and when you walk with your child/children, including the sharing of walking experiences, e.g. walking to school, walking in the shopping centre and walking in the city centre. We ask that your child/children are not present for this interview. This conversation will be audio recorded and transcribed for research purposes.

Drawing Activity

With your permission we will then invite your child/children to take part in a short drawing activity to explore what they know about walking. This may be at the same time as the previous interview or at a different time or day. You may be present for this activity. This will take 15 – 30 minutes and the conversation will be audio recorded and transcribed for research purposes.

Recording of walks, go-along and follow-up interview

For the 2 weeks following the initial interview we invite you to record at least 4 of the walks you go on together using video or sound recording devices. Your child will also be asked to
record these walks. The researcher will come along one of these walks with you. After the 2 weeks we will meet again to watch and listen to your recordings together. In this follow-up interview we ask that you talk about and reflect on the walks you recorded, including where you and your child/children were, why you were walking and how you felt when you were walking. The follow-up interview will take 30 minutes to an hour and will be audio recorded and transcribed for research purposes.

Privacy and confidentiality: You are invited to request a copy of the interview transcripts and to submit edits/revisions. You will also be given a pseudonym as direct quotations from the interview discussions may be used in scholarly publications. Names of your children, other family members, your workplace and any addresses mentioned will be changed in publications. You will be able to indicate on the Consent Form whether or not you consent to your videos and sound recordings to be used in scholarly publications. If used, videos, stills from videos and sound recordings will be chosen carefully and will have close-ups of faces blurred.

Freedom to consent and withdrawal of consent: Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to decline to participate. You are also free to withdraw from the research and withdraw any of your data provided within the timeframe of the project (December 2015). Declining to participate or withdrawing your consent will not affect your present or future relationship with the University of Wollongong.

Data and results: Data collected by the researcher including transcribed interviews, videos, stills from videos or sound recordings you provide may be used by the researchers in scholarly publications such as a PhD thesis, journal articles or conference papers.

The Project Organiser: If you have any enquiries about the research please contact: Professor Gordon Waitt (02 4221 3684; gwaitt@uow.edu.au) or Susannah Clement (0421 223 166; sc527@uowmail.edu.au). This research is being conducted through the Department of Geography and Sustainable Communities, Faculty of Social Science, University of Wollongong and has been reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Wollongong. If you have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted you can contact the Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Office of Research, University of Wollongong on 02 4221 3386 or email rso-ethics@uow.edu.au.

Thank you for your interest in this study!
Appendix E: Participant Information Sheet – Child

Participant Information Sheet for Children

Let’s go for a walk

About the project: We want to know if, how, when, where and why children walk in Wollongong. To do this we want to speak to you and your family about where you go for a walk together.

Participant requirements: As a child participant you must be in pre-school or primary school and be between the ages of 3-12 years old. Before deciding to participate we ask that you read this information sheet and that you talk to your parents or an adult family member about participating in this project.

What you will be asked to do:

Drawing activity

We invite you to take part in a drawing activity with a researcher from the University of Wollongong. Through drawings you might want to share stories about where you go for a walk with other family members. An adult family member will be with you and the interview will be recorded so that the researchers can later write up the results of the study.

Being a researcher

For 2 weeks after the interview you and your adult family members will become researchers, recording your walks together through video and sound! We will give you a video camera or a sound recorder so that each time you walk somewhere together you can document the walk. We ask that you record at least 4 walks over this time and on 1 of the walks the researcher from the university will go-along with you. After the 2 weeks we will meet again to watch and listen to your recordings and talk about them. You might like to share with the university researcher why you were walking or how you felt when you were walking.
Freedom to participate: If you don’t want to participate in this research you don’t have to and you are allowed to stop doing the research project at any time.

Results: Data collected by the researcher including your drawings, videos and sound recordings may be used in scholarly publications such as a PhD thesis, journal articles or conference papers. Your name and the names of your parents and family members will be changed to keep your identity secret.

The Project Organiser: If you have any questions about the research please ask your parents or adult guardian and they can contact the researchers at the University of Wollongong.

Thank you for your interest in this study!
Consent Form for Adult Family Members

Let’s go for a walk

I have been given information about this study and have discussed the research project with Susannah Clement who is conducting this research through the Department of Geography and Sustainable Communities, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Wollongong.

I have had an opportunity to ask the researchers any questions I may have about the research, my participation and the participation of the child/children in my family.

I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary and I am free to decline to participate, as well as decline to allow my child/children to participate. I understand that my child/children and I are free to withdraw from the research and withdraw any of my or my child’s/children’s data from the research within the timeframe of the project (early December 2015). I understand that declining to participate or withdrawing my consent will not affect my or my child’s/children’s present or future relationship with the University of Wollongong.

If I have any enquiries about the research, I can contact Professor Gordon Waitt (02 4221 3684; gwaitt@uow.edu.au) or Susannah Clement (0421 223 166; sc527@uowmail.edu.au). Or if I have any concerns or complaints regarding the way the research is or has been conducted I can contact the Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Office of Research, University of Wollongong on 02 4221 3386 or email rso-ethics@uow.edu.au.

By ticking the boxes and signing below I am indicating my consent to participate by:

- [ ] Taking part in interviews which will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription
- [ ] Recording video and sound over a 2 week period whilst walking with my child/children.
- [ ] Taking part in a follow-up conversation about the video and sound recordings we made which will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription

By ticking all or some of the boxes and signing below I am indicating my consent to:

- [ ] Be directly quoted in publications with the use of a pseudonym
- [ ] Provide the videos and sound recordings made by me to the researchers to be used in publication with the knowledge that images of faces and my family members will be blurred for our privacy
- [ ] To be provided with a copy of the transcript of interviews for checking
By ticking the boxes and signing below I am indicating my consent to allow my child/children (circle one)

..............................................................................................................................................(name) .........................................(age),
..............................................................................................................................................(name) .........................................(age),
..............................................................................................................................................(name) .........................................(age),
..............................................................................................................................................(name) .........................................(age),

to participate in this research project by:

☐ Taking part in a drawing activity (where I will be present) which will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription

☐ Recording video and sound over a 2 week period whilst walking with me

☐ Taking part in a follow up conversation about the video and sound recordings we made (where I will be present) which will be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription

I understand that the data collected from my and my child’s/children’s participation will be used for a PhD thesis, scholarly publications, conference presentations and reports and I consent for it to be used in that manner.

Signed ___________________________ Date __________/_____/_______

Name (please print) ___________________________

Contact details

Email ______________________________________

Phone ______________________________________

Terms and conditions:

I understand that my and my child’s/children’s personal particulars will be stored by the University of Wollongong for a minimum of five years for record keeping and administrative purposes only and will not be supplied to any other person or organisation for any other purpose.
Appendix G: Consent Form – Child

Consent Form for Children

Let’s go for a walk

I have been given information about this study and have discussed the research project with Susannah Clement who is conducting this research through the Department of Geography and Sustainable Communities, Faculty of Social Science, University of Wollongong.

I have had an opportunity to ask the researcher any questions I may have about the project. I understand that my participation in this project is voluntary and if I no longer want to do the research I am allowed to stop at any time.

If I have any questions about the project I know I can ask an adult family member to contact the researcher or the university.

By ticking the boxes and signing below I am indicating my consent to participate by:

☐ Taking part in a drawing activity with the researcher with my adult family member present
☐ Recording video and sounds over a 2 week period whilst walking with my adult family members
☐ Taking part in an interview which will be recorded where we watch the videos and listen to the sounds we made with my adult family member present

By ticking all or some of the boxes and signing below I am indicating my consent to:

☐ Be directly quoted in publications with the use of a different name to keep my identity secret
☐ Provide the drawings, videos and sound recordings made by me to the researchers to be used in publication with the knowledge that my identity will be kept secret though blurring my face and the faces of my family members.

I understand that the data collected from this project will be used for a PhD thesis, scholarly publications, conference presentations and reports and I consent for it to be used in that way.

Signed ___________________________ Date _______________________

................................................................. ...../..../.....

Name (please print)

.................................................................
## Appendix H: Semi-structured Interview Schedule for Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 1: Walking over life course</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Walking Biography           | When you were growing up how did you and your family get around?  
 Did you walk as a child? When, with who, why, where?  
 How has this changed since having kids?  
 When do you walk now?    |
| **Part 2: Walking with Children** |                                                                                                                                               |
| Drawing or Word Bubble Activity | To begin I want to do a drawing activity with you. Can you draw for me or write some words down that come to mind when you hear the word ‘walking’? |
| Joys and frictions of walking | Tell me about walking with your family?  
 Where do you go, when do you walk, why do you walk?  
 Where is walking in Wollongong easy?  
 Where is walking in Wollongong difficult?  
 Tell me about your most horrific experience?  
 Tell me about your most delightful experience?  
 Tell me about your most surprising experience? |
| Preparing walking bodies    | Before you go leave the house what do you have to do?  
 Does it take time getting the kids ready? E.g. getting a pram, raincoats, umbrellas, sunscreen, putting on shoes. |
| Special time                | Is walking an important activity for your family? Why or why not?  
 Is there a walk that you always go on? Can you tell me about it?  
 Are there any particular times that you set aside for walking? E.g. the weekend, after work, holidays? |
| Walking in nature           | Is there a local park that the children in your family regularly play at?  
 When do you go there, do you walk there?  
 Do you walk along the beach? Do you take your family for walks along the beach? |
| Walking in the suburbs      | Where are your local shops?  
 Do you walk there with your children?  
 Where do your children/grandchildren go to school? How do they get there? |
| Walking in the city         | How often do you go into the Wollongong city centre?  
 Why do you go? Do you take your children into town with you?  
 How do you get there?  
 Where do you go shopping? (clothes or grocery shopping)  
 Tell me about going shopping with your child(ren)/grandchildren. Do you have a routine? Is it easy, is it difficult? |
| Other times                 | Tell me about any other times you go walking with you’re the children in your family that we haven’t covered. |
## Appendix I: Draw and Talk Activity for Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of child</th>
<th>Types of Questions</th>
<th>Example of drawing activity questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **10 – 12 years** | Questions that rely on memory  
Developed a memory capacity comparable to that of adults and can accurately recall past events. | Can you draw for me a picture of what you think of when I say the word ‘walking’?  
Or  
Can you write down some words that you think of when I say the word ‘walking’?  
- What does this picture show?  
Can you draw for me a walk that you go on with your [insert adult pronoun]?  
- Why do you go on this walk?  
- What do you enjoy/dislike about this walk? |
| **6 – 9 years** | When? Where? How? Able to respond to questions that require explanation | Can you draw for me a picture of you going for a walk with someone in your family?  
- What’s in the picture?  
- What are you doing in the picture?  
- What are they doing in the picture? |
| **3 - 5 years** | Who? What? Where? Able to identify people, places, and locations, and distinguish between self and others. | Can you draw for me a picture of you going for a walk?  
- What’s in the picture?  
- What are you doing in the picture?  
- What are they doing in the picture? |

Guidelines for interviewing children adapted from Greig et al. (2007)
Appendix J: Participant Instruction Sheet for Recordings

Participant Instruction Sheet for Audio/Sound Recording Regular Family Walks

What to do: For the next 2 weeks we invite your family to record at least 4 of the regular family walks you go on together through video or sound. On one of these walks the researcher (Susannah Clement) will accompany you.

The walks can be anything you or family member regularly does together e.g. walking to school, walking along the beach, walking in the shopping centre. You may take more than 4 recordings if you wish.

If possible we ask that you keep the go pro, video camera, mobile phone or audio recorder on for the duration of your walks. Both adult and child family members are encouraged to make their own recording of the walk. Separate recording devices can be provided.

After the 2 weeks the researcher will collect the recordings from you and your family and will meet to have a follow-up interview to discuss the content of the video and sound recordings. We ask that adult family members have separate follow-up interviews from child participants. Child follow-up interviews will occur in the presence of their primary carer.

Why: The purpose of the recordings is to learn more about the walk as it unfolds. Furthermore, it is often difficult to talk about something as taken-for-granted as walking.

Equipment: If you do not have a video camera or audio recording device we will provide you with one. High powered smart phone cameras, such as IPhones, are fine.

Public Privacy: Video footage taken should be done so at your discretion whilst being mindful of the privacy of other members of the public. Care should also be taken when videoing scenes with minors. We suggest that you only take close up videos of your own children.

If you have any further questions you can contact Susannah on 0421 223 166 or sc527@uowmail.edu.au
### Appendix K: Example of Follow-up Interview Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Video</th>
<th>My notes</th>
<th>Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Video 1** | Camera is facing Mayra, she is pushing a stroller with the camera on the handlebar.  
It looks like it’s outside Aiyana preschool on Keira Street.  
This is the same walk as the go-along | Tell me about his video…  
Where are you going?  
What are you doing?  
Who is with you?  
Why are you going there? |
| 1:23    | Footage becomes shaky as the stroller moves over a bumpy surface           | That looks bumpy                                                           |
| 1:40    | Mayra is talking in Bengali                                                | What are you saying?                                                      |
| 2:13    | She stops and moves the camera to face the front                           | [rotate video to watch>effects filters>view>video]                          |
| 3:00    | Cross road at Burelli Street and continues up Keira Street                 | What do you notice in this video?  
Tell me about what is happening here |
| 5:15    | It looks sunny                                                             | It looks sunny, is it hot?                                                 |
| 6:44    | Arrive at bus stop on Crown Street – lots of people waiting, Mayra turns video off. | What is happening here?  
How long do you wait for the bus?  
Where are you going?  
Do you find the bus easy to use with your daughter? |

| **Video 2** | Mayra is at a bus stop in Gwynneville, attaches GoPro to stroller handle | Tell me about this video…  
Is it the same day?  
Where are you going? |
| 1:30    | Begins walking along a footpath                                            | How do you find this part of the walk?                                    |
| 2:16    | Notice Aiyana’s backpack over the stroller handle                          | Are you carrying anything? (i.e. bags)  
Or are your bags on the stroller? |
| 4:00    | They cross a side street                                                  | How do you know when to cross roads?                                      |
| 4:30    |                                                                           | Does that part of the walk feel any different from the one in town?       |
| 5:30    |                                                                           | When you’re walking can you see what your daughter is doing?  
How can you tell?  
Can you hear her? |
| 6:44    | The camera moves to view the other stroller handle, Mayra’s backpack is on the other handle | Why do you stop here?  
What are you doing? |
| 7:28    | Mayra has a child’s shoe in her hand                                      | What’s that?  
Is it Aiyana’s? |
| 7:49    | Mayra moves the stroller across the grassy verge and onto the side of the road. She waits for a few seconds before crossing | How do you know when to cross?  
When we crossed here it was really busy. |
| 8:20    | The go down a driveway – to their house and Mayra begins talking to someone walking out | |

### Appendix L: Ethics Approval Letter for Pilot Project
7 October 2014

Ms Susannah Clement
Building 41.G12
Department of Geography and Sustainable Communities
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Wollongong NSW 2522

Dear Ms Clement,

Thank you for your response dated 1 October 2014 to the HREC review of the application detailed below. I am pleased to advise that the application has been approved.

Ethics Number: HE14/405

Project Title: Viva La Gong: a family-friendly festival?

Researchers: Ms Susannah Clement, Professor Gordon Waitt

Documents Approved:
- Original Ethics Application (received 18/9/14)
- Interview Questions (version: dated Sept 2014)
- Participant Information Sheet (version: dated Oct 2014)
- Consent Form (version: dated Oct 2014)
- Recruitment Script (version: dated Oct 2014)

Approval Date: 2 October 2014

Expiry Date: 1 October 2014

The University of Wollongong/Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District Social Sciences HREC is constituted and functions in accordance with the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. The HREC has reviewed the research proposal for compliance with the National Statement and approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with this document.

Approval by the HREC is for a twelve month period. Further extension will be considered on receipt of a progress report prior to expiry date. Continuing approval requires:

- The submission of a progress report annually and on completion of your project. The progress report template is available at http://www.uow.edu.au/research/ethics/human/index.html. This report must be completed, signed by the researchers and the appropriate Head of Unit, and returned to the Research Services Office prior to the expiry date.
- Approval by the HREC of any proposed changes to the protocol including changes to investigators involved
- Immediate report of serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants
- Immediate report of unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.