Paths to belonging: exploring the influence of community-led walking tours in Toronto

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Photo Credit: Amanda Shear, Jane's Walk Toronto 2022

"When we create beloved community, environments that are anti-racist and inclusive, it need not matter whether those spaces are diverse. What matters is that should difference enter the world of beloved community, it can find a place of welcome, a place to belong."

- ***bell hooks***
(Belonging: A Culture of Place, page 183)

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Abstract

While widely agreed upon as a fundamental human need, the idea of belonging remains conceptually and empirically ambiguous. The question of what it means to belong is especially pertinent as cities become increasingly diverse and dynamic identity patterns among residents begin to shape social connection and order in increasingly complex ways. This study uses Jane's Walk, an annual festival of community-led walking tours, in Toronto, one of the world's most diverse and multicultural cities, to explore this question of belonging amid diversity. Specifically, it seeks to understand whether residents' involvement in these community walks might influence their feelings of belonging in the city. A mixed-methods research approach is used and includes a survey, in-depth semi-structured interviews, a participatory walk, and participant observation. Findings indicate that while closer, more sustained connections and interactions than what is typically possible through the festival may be needed to facilitate deeper feelings of belonging, leading and attending walks can still help individuals explore processes and relations of belonging in a myriad of ways. This study enriches our understanding of belonging, providing insight into the specific ways in which it is a situated, emergent, and ongoing process, deeply informed by not only the fluidity of individuals' identities, but also their interactions and immersion with the diversity that surrounds them. It contributes to expanding knowledge on the role community organizations and activities play, or have the potential to play, in fostering belonging among a diversity of urban residents.

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Title and chapter page photos all taken by Amanda Shear, 2022

1. Introduction

In a rapidly globalizing world, scholars have been exploring for decades what it means to co-exist amid diversity in cities. Diversity has been frequently conceptualized in terms of culture or ethnicity, with studies focussing on processes of assimilation or integration of newcomers, or the potential for 'exposure to diversity' to increase 'insiders'' acceptance towards 'outsiders'. Such a view, however, is limited in contexts of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007), where social realities and hierarchies are shaped by increasingly complex and fluid patterns of identity, and populations are often of a "majority-minority" context (Crul, 2016: 55).

Toronto—the setting of the case study and itself embedded in super-diversity—has seen its residents emerging from the pandemic less connected to family and friends, less active in community engagement, and with lower overall sense of wellbeing and belonging (Parkin & Ayer, 2022: 74-75). Questions around belonging in this city, however, are not new—with the second-highest percentage of foreign-born residents in all the world as of 2020 (Raco & Taşan-Kok, 2020), such questions extend well before the pandemic and bleed into questions around who is included/excluded and negotiations or contestations with who belongs or doesn't. Despite claims that "the diversity among its people has strengthened Toronto" (City of Toronto, 2017), in recent decades the city's pursuit of competitive, neoliberal urban strategies rooted in a desire to prove its rank in the "global cities" hierarchy has led to some cultures being "spectacularized" or tokenized (McLean, 2014), and state-led gentrification efforts in many neighbourhoods have exacerbated rather than eliminated existing inequalities (Slater, 2004; Ostanel, 2020; August, 2014).

Jane's Walk Toronto is an urban actor that attempts to help build social cohesion and bridge gaps across difference (Jane's Walk principles, 2023). Stemming from Jane Jacobs' perspective that cities are "created by everybody" (Jacobs, 1961: 238), it aims to transfer power back into the hands of community members, by leading walking conversations about any topic they like. This grassroots urban actor has a clear, community-oriented mission to create an inclusive space where everybody belongs—but does this happen in practice?

There is a notable lack of research on what it means to 'belong' amid contexts of 'super-diversity' (Vertovec, 2007), where "there is no longer a clear majority group into which one is to assimilate or integrate" (Crul, 2016: 57) and where "social realities [are] determined by more complex and fluid patterns of belonging" (Lehner et al., 2022: 768). With most research in contexts of super-diversity focusing on what it means for *newcomers* to *assimilate or integrate*, there is room to explore what it means for individuals *with a variety of lived experiences* to *belong* in such contexts.

My research will explore this problem by attempting to answer the following question: **How does involvement in community organizations and activities influence a sense of belonging for different individuals in super-diverse urban societies?**

To explore this question, a mixed-methods research approach is used and includes a survey, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and a participatory walking tour. Belonging is conceptualized as emotional, becoming (or, a process), and relational. Its definition is informed by concepts such as place attachment, place identity, politics of belonging, sense of

community, and embeddedness. The role that encounters and participation might play in engendering a sense of belonging amid super-diversity is explored as well.

This thesis contains six sections. I begin in the next section (section two) by providing an overview of a literature review on topics pertaining to the topic: super-diversity, belonging, encounters, and participation. In section three, I describe the conceptualization of my research based on my findings from the literature. I outline the four methods I used to conduct data collection and analysis; the descriptive, inductive-dominant, interpretivist approach used; and an overview of the case study of Jane's Walk Toronto including rationale for certain decisions around operationalization. I also address my own positionality and the ethics of the research. In section four, I share the final results of the study, tying back to convergences and divergences with the literature from section two. In section five I present a discussion on the implications of this research, including an acknowledgment of limitations and room for further research. In section six I share a conclusion with summarizing thoughts.

2. Literature review

2.1 Super-diversity

2.1.1 Conceptualizing super-diversity

In recent years, cities like Toronto have seen a marked increase in inflows of immigrants and naturally, their populations have diversified considerably. Social scientists have been seeking more systematic ways of articulating, analyzing, and understanding the increasing complexities that arise alongside increased diversity at the neighbourhood, city, national, and global levels (Vertovec, 2019). While scholars across a variety of disciplines frequently conceptualize the diversity of cities' populations in terms of individuals' ethnicity and/or country of origin, Vertovec, who introduced the term 'super-diversity', argues that such a view of diversity is insufficient (Vertovec, 2007). He calls on researchers to "take more sufficient account of the conjunction of ethnicity with a range of other variables when considering the nature of various 'communities', their composition, trajectories, interactions and public service needs" (Vertovec, 2007: 1025). He highlights certain variables as integral to shaping newcomers' lives, including legal statuses, labour market experiences, gender, age, and patterns of spatial distribution, among others. Super-diversity as a concept (rather than a theory) proposes that new migration patterns entail more variable combinations of these traits and produce new hierarchical social positions, thereby entailing "new experiences of space and 'contact'" (Vertovec, 2019: 126).

Since introduction of the term in 2007, hundreds of papers featuring the topic of super-diversity have been written, oftentimes in ways that obfuscate the term's intended meaning (Vertovec, 2019). Vertovec highlights seven ways in which the term 'super-diversity' has been used in literature: 1) synonymous with diversity, 2) as a backdrop to a study, 3) as a methodological reassessment, 4) synonymous with "more ethnicity", 5) as multidimensional reconfiguration, 6) as an argument against ethnicity-only, and 7) as a means to invoke other complexity. Keeping criticisms of misinterpretations and simplifications in mind, this particular study will veer away from interpreting 'super-diversity' as 'very much diversity' or 'more ethnicity', and from using the concept solely as a backdrop to the research. Rather, it will seek to add to the increasing body of research related to the seventh type, which seeks to describe, conceptualize, understand, and/or explain the new complex social developments that contemporary super-diversity entails. It will complement studies that explore such complexity as they relate to the form of new social relations, in particular those (see Butcher, 2010; Matejskova, 2013; Chimienti & van Liempt, 2015; & Ozkazanc-Pan, B., 2019) that explore new forms of contestation of or identification with belonging.

Some scholars have critiqued the concept of super-diversity for lacking novel insights beyond what can already known or observed through concepts such as race, ethnicity, culture, or diversity (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019; Sealy, 2018; Crul, 2016), for being overly rooted in experiences of the Global North (Ndhlovu, 2016), and for being conceptually vague (Meissner, 2015; Crul, 2016). Regarding the latter point on conceptual vagueness, Crul critiques that, contrary to assimilation theories, while super-diversity *describes* the situation, it has failed to provide a clear framework to *explain* or *analyze* the situation—for instance, the differences in social mobility patterns or the within-group differences that super-diversity entails (Crul, 2016: 66).

2.1.2 Characterizing super-diverse nations, cities, and neighbourhoods

There is a notable lack of a clear definition of what exactly makes a nation, city or neighbourhood super-diverse (Meissner, 2015; Crul, 2016). However, included in every study on super-diversity is a justification on why a particular case was chosen, from which we can begin to glean characteristics. In the study that introduces the term 'super-diversity', Vertovec (2007) employs certain variables to contextualize super-diversity at the nation-level in the UK: immigration changes (a marked rise in net immigration, a diversification of countries of origin), net inflows of people, a multiplicity of countries of origin (without colonial or commonwealth links), an increase in the number of languages spoken (at home), the diversity of religions, an expansion in the number and kind of migration channels and immigration statuses, changes in the gender proportions of newcomers, changes in the concentration of age categories among immigrants, and increased transnationalism (for instance, through increasing value of remittances sent from Britain, an increase in the volume of international phone calls, and the frequency of transnational marriage practices).

While employing such national variables and factors to the city level might be feasible, doing so at the neighbourhood level is perhaps more complex. Vertovec (2007) cautions against suggesting certain immigrant groups are fixed to certain areas, referencing data that show that nearly all migrant groups in the UK tend to live in a number of different boroughs, and emphasizing that increased diversification is not simply a matter of increased numbers but rather a relative change in a given locality (Kyambi, 2005 in Vertovec, 2007). In their study of neighbourhood participation in Vienna and Amsterdam, Hoekstra & Dahlvik (2018) choose a neighbourhood in each city that they characterize as super-diverse simply because they are both "ethnically diverse", with a proportion of residents with a migrant background reflecting the city average (roughly 40% and 60% respectively). Beyond this, they also mention that "interethnic coexistence and local integration are among the targets of current municipal policy measures" (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018: 445). Crul (2016) focuses on both the city and neighbourhood level in Western European cities through two criterion that apply at both levels: firstly, "there is no longer an ethnic majority group that is dominant based on its demographic majority position" (p. 55). The second characteristic is that within this "majority-minority context", the number and size of different ethnic groups is "substantial" (p. 55), although he does not draw any conclusions for exact metrics. These criteria represent a slight provocation toward some of Vertovec's (2007) claims, as they imply that differentiation between ethnic groups is the most commonly used way to describe a situation as super-diverse, where, as we have seen, Vertovec emphasizes the need to move beyond this. Some scholars, on the other hand, appear to take super-diversity as a given in their selection of case studies, such as Chimienti & Liempt (2015) and their analysis of the city of London, and Wessendorf & Phillimore (2019) in their analysis of neighbourhoods in East London, Luton and Birmingham.

In writing this, I remain conscious of the fact that the intent with research on super-diversity should not be to apply labels to regions, categorizing them as either 'super-diverse' or not, and thereby merely employing them as contextual background to a study. Rather, the intent is to further understand and describe the shifting configurations and new social structures that an

influx of people from abroad entails, including the "multiplication of significant variables that affect where, how and with whom people live" (Vertovec, 2007: 1025). It is this appreciation toward the complexities of such multiplying variables and their associated effects that will shape my research process.

2.2 Belonging

There is no singular agreed-upon definition of 'belonging'—rather, a multitude of definitions and interpretations of the concept exist across a variety of research disciplines. The domains of belonging and its associated concepts such as place attachment are multi-faceted and can be thought of psychologically, sociologically, physically and spiritually (Hagerty et al., 1992). In my review of the literature on belonging and place attachment, a range of fields of study was observed, notably psychology/health & medicine (Gillespie et al., 2022; Segers et al., 2021; Hagerty et al., 1992; Relph, 1976 & 2015); ethnic, racial or intercultural studies (Ahmed, 1999; Butcher, 2010; Wise, 2005); sociology (Wessendorf & Phillimore, 2019; Segers et al., 2021); geography (Leitner, 2012; Matejskova, 2013; Smith, 2018; Wright, 2015); and political science (Yuval-Davis, 2004), among others. In a comprehensive review of advances in the theory, methods and applications of place attachment, Williams & Miller (2020: 24) explain that rather than converging into a singular theory, "we find that the domain of place attachment has and will continue to be ontologically, epistemologically, and axiologically pluralistic, with different developments splitting off and coming back together much like a braided stream." In fact, belonging's ambiguity and lack of conceptual or theoretical strength opens up opportunities for exploration—it is a "weak theory" that yields to emerging knowledge (Wright, 2015). We do know, however, that the need for belonging is buried deep in our biology, down to the human genome, and has been evolutionarily critical for survival (Boyd & Richerson, 2009). The multi-faceted nature of the idea of belonging and its associated concepts like place attachment, as well as its importance, is something I have tried to summarize in this section of the literature review.

2.2.1 Belonging amid globalization and super-diversity

The transient mobility patterns inherent to a globalizing world and the co-existence patterns inherent to diversifying populations (described in section 2.1 on super-diversity) clearly have implications for what it means to feel 'at home' or feel as though one belongs. At the onset of the 21st century, British sociologist John Urry articulated a shift from a sociology of territory to a sociology of flows, describing how belonging "almost always involve(s) diverse forms of mobility", so that people dwell "in and through being at home and away, through the dialectic of roots and routes" (Urry, 2000: 132-133). Similarly, Savage, Bagnall, & Longhurst (2004a: 1) describe the diasporic, mobile, and transient nature of identities, stating that in a world characterized by movement of people "at great speed across large distances, social life cannot be seen as firmly located in particular places with clear boundaries". They build on Massey's

work in *Space, Class and Gender* (1994) in which she shows how people move in and out of places, and argues that this transient, coming-and-going nature is critical to consider in order to better understand how individuals develop and perceive their relationship to place.

There are studies exploring how such transience inevitably affects one's ability to find a sense of belonging in places they move through, and why empirical research is needed on the topic. Studies have found, for instance, that for international migrants, a lack of sense of belonging in the host country is the most stressful factor in their acculturation process (Hang & Zhoung, 2023; Mena et al., 1987; Berry et al., 1987). We see the need to explore how one finds a sense of belonging amid super-diversity in particular because super-diversity itself "describes social realities determined by more complex and fluid patterns of belonging that not only take newcomers into consideration but also considers the situatedness of diverse individuals in general" (Lehner et el., 2022: 768) However, while studies have begun to emerge exploring belonging amid super-diversity (Lehner et al., 2022; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019), they are notably limited in number.

2.2.2 Belonging as tied to place

Several scholars have noted that a sense of belonging is inextricable from a sense of place, with some scholars noting that, "all aspects of identity have, to some extent, place-related implications" (Twigger-Ross & Uzzel, 1996; in Segers et al., 2021: 119), and "without a sense of place … there can be no sense of belonging" (Relph, 2015; in Segers et al., 2021: 119).

One term that is often associated to notions of belonging is place attachment. Traditionally, place attachment is defined as an affective bond that connects people to places (Altman & Low, 1992). Lewicka (2020: 66) explicitly incorporates belonging into a description of place attachment, stating that the term "implies 'anchoring' emotions in the object of attachment, feelings of belonging, willingness to stay close, and a wish to return when away." Segers, Hannes, Heylighen, & Van den Broeck similarly describe the inextricable linkage between belonging and place by describing belonging as a combination of place attachment and place identity (2021: 118). They define 'place *attachment*' as "an affective and secure link with a place … feelings of comfort, security, and inclusion or being part of this environment" (Segers et al., 2021: 118). They define 'place *identity*' as "the process by which, through interaction with places, people describe themselves in terms of belonging to a specific place, which then becomes a component of their personal identity" (Segers et al., 2021: 118). The difference between these two concepts is important. One can feel at home and comfortable in a place (place identity) but not want to live there (place attachment). Conversely, one can live in a place (place attachment) without feeling comfortable there (place identity). It is for this reason that they argue the two must be satisfied in order for one to feel a sense of belonging. They posit that a definition rooted in mental health and psychology and articulated by Hagerty et al. (1992: 173) serves as an excellent combination of these two elements, the definition being, "the experience of personal involvement in a system or environment so that persons feel themselves to be an integral part of that system or environment." In this definition, a system can be a

relationship or organization, and an environment can be natural or cultural (Hagerty et al., 1992).

Another concept attaching belonging to a sense of place is the notion of 'belonging-in-place', which Gillespie, Cosgrave, Malatzky, & Carden (2022: 2) state involves "the establishment, over time, of an affective connection to or a 'sense of fit' in a particular place, facilitated by the social interactions experienced in that place." Similar to the research on place attachment, they argue that simply existing or being present in a place does not automatically lead to feelings of connection, belonging, or feeling at home. Rather, they argue, feelings of place attachment must be present.

Finally, belonging to a place is sometimes used in close conjunction with belonging to a community or neighbourhood. Community itself can be defined as "a group of individuals who share a mutual concern for one another's welfare" (Vogl, 2016: 9), implying that the question of community goes deeper than simply sharing interests or ideas. Community belonging includes both an attitudinal dimension of one's feelings toward the community, and a behavioural dimension manifested through neighbourly or community-oriented activities (Lehner et al., 2022; Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001; Manzo & Perkins, 2006). On this former point, having a sense of community or community belonging is deeply intertwined with emotional connection and feelings of "mutual trust, social connections, shared concerns, and community values" (Manzo & Perkins, 2006: 339). The length of time in a place also matters, for "as individuals stay longer and develop stronger social ties within the community, there may arise a perception of togetherness as well as affective feelings about others in the community" (Lehner et al., 2022: 271).

2.2.3 Other interpretations of belonging

Belonging as conforming or assimilating

Among research on migration and newcomers, there is an interpretation of belonging more in line with one's ability fit in with the community and the environment around them. This interpretation often goes hand-in-hand with notions of 'assimilation' in a new place as part of the integration process, but can also apply to instances in which there is a so-called ethnic 'majority' and a 'minority' in a region. One concept that arises in this vein is the notion of 'politics of belonging', which can be defined as "negotiations and power struggles over boundaries that define who belongs to a particular local and national community and place and who does not" (Leitner, 2012: 830). In her study on encounters between long-term white residents and immigrants of colour in small-town rural Minnesota, Leitner (2012) conceives belonging as conforming to white America, as this is the perception rooted in the opinion of her research participants. From the perspective of white residents, "belonging is conditional on immigrants becoming like them, through expectations that immigrants adapt to prevailing norms and culture" (Leitner, 2012: 839). This concept differs from previous interpretations of 'belonging' highlighted in this section because it lies in the 'majority's' interpretations of who does and does not belong to this 'in-group' (rather than individuals' feelings of whether or not they personally

belong to a community—majority or not), and can lead to processes of 'othering' and racialization. It focuses on the interpretations and negotiations of the boundaries between the 'we' and the 'them'. Other scholars similarly explore feelings of being part of the 'out' group or 'in' group in interpretations of belonging. Relph (1976), for instance, developed seven degrees of 'outsidedness' (discomfort arising from existing in an unfamiliar place and the alienation that ensues) and 'insidedness' (subconscious, comfortable immersion in a place due to its familiarity).

One might question this notion of 'outsidedness' and 'insidedness' in the context of super-diversity. As Crul (2016: 57) points out, "The idea of assimilation or integration becomes at any rate more complex in a situation where there is no longer a clear majority group into which one is to assimilate or integrate". I argue that the view that there is no "clear majority group" simply due to population proportions is overly simplistic. Histories of colonization and white supremacy have left indelible marks on the fabric of our cities and neighbourhoods, and in the minds of individuals. These marks do not simply go away when the populations of various ethnicities become more mixed and/or 'equal' in terms of proportions. With my research, the intent is not necessarily to focus on tensions between 'we' and 'them' or the 'majority' and 'minority' and ensuing processes of 'othering' and ostracization. That said, these are an inherent component to conceptualizing belonging and feeling comfortable in a place, and are therefore feelings and perspectives that will inevitably come up in the research.

Belonging as reflexive and elective or choice-driven

A quite different approach to understanding belonging as whether one fits in with a certain group (often one of relative 'majority' or of power) is understanding belonging as a symptom of either a conscious or unconscious choice or lack of longing. In survey studies carried out in Britain, Savage, Bagnall, and Longhurst (2004b) distinguished between "elective belonging" (newly settled residents who actively chose their place of residence) and "dwelling" (long-term residents in the same area). What is notable about this study is that both groups show attachment to their places of residency despite the differences in the duration of their living there. Rather than feelings of familiarity or nostalgia to a place being the main driver of a sense of belonging (feelings which would only present themselves in those who have lived there for several years), it was the act of choosing to live in the area that engendered new kinds of solidarities between residents rooted in common concerns about where they live. While familiarity has been seen as a central component to the meanings of place and community, the authors note that "this kind of familiarity is often not enough to convey a full and assertive sense of belonging." (Savage et al., 2004b: 48). Hummon (1992) similarly views feelings of belonging as a reflexive process and anchors the act of choosing a place of residence to the meaning of belonging in his five different types of sense of community. The first type is 'everyday rootedness' (people who take their place of residence as given, never really comparing it to other places or considering moving elsewhere) and the second is 'ideological rootedness' (an attachment to place as a result of a conscious choice to live in a certain place—this kind of attitude is typically accompanied by active involvement in community affairs). Highlighting both

the conscious and unconscious choices of residence as forms of belonging contrasts with Ahmed's (1999) interpretation of belonging, which is more in line with an unconscious choice. In her analysis of narratives of migration and estrangement, she characterizes the feeling of being 'at home' as "a purified space of belonging in which the subject is too comfortable to question the limits or borders of her or his experience, indeed, where the subject is so at ease that she or he does not think" (p. 339).

Belonging as embeddedness and emplacement

Much scholarship on the social aspect on migrant settlement focuses on connections that migrants build for the purpose of socio-economic or educational advancement, typically referred to as 'social capital' (Bourdieu, 1986). In their review of how migrants form social relations in the UK, Wessendorf & Phillimore (2019) critique the heavy emphasis in literature on the utilitarian nature of social capital as a way to help migrants integrate with members of the majority. They argue that for migrants, forging social relations and enhancing connectedness with place extends beyond the functional, into the emotional. They articulate three terms to describe "how migrants forge social relations which enhance their connectedness with the place in which they settle and the wider society around them" (p. 125): social integration (which is more in line with notions of assimilation described earlier), embedding (building on Ryan and Mullholland, 2015), and sociabilities of emplacement (building on Glick Schiller and Çağlar, 2016). They identify the latter two as critical to creating a sense of belonging, as they are characterized by relations that, although they foster a sense of rootedness and integration, are not framed around solely utilitarian goals, but rather around seeing each other as equal. This interpretation differs from others firstly in its focus on the migrant experience specifically, and secondly in its emphasis on commonality between individuals rather than difference in an effort to build networks of connection within a specific locality. They also highlight the limitations of conceptualizing belonging as migrants having relations with and/or conforming with 'the majority' (in this case, white British people), explaining that "it was other migrants, but not necessarily co-ethnics, who were crucial in their process of settlement and in the process of becoming embedded in the various domains of life in the UK" (Wessendorf & Phillimore, 2019: 135).

Belonging as emotional, becoming, and relational

As I have described so far in this section, there is no shortage of studies that attempt to solve the 'puzzle' of what it means to belong, and to conceptualize belonging as a sort of state to achieve. There are few, however, that attempt to shed light on it theoretically and ontologically. Wright's paper on more-than-human, emergent belongings (2015) is one paper that does. She conceptualizes belonging in three ways: as emotional, becoming, and relational/emergent. While belonging as emotional may appear superficial, "seldom are questions asked that explore what belonging feels like; how it works as an emotional attachment and the significance for the emotionality of belonging" (Wood & Waite, 2011: 201). Looking at belonging through the lens of weak theory, Wright argues, "suggests that placing emotion at the centre of our enquiry may

lead to insights that transcend understandings of belonging as solely and distinguishably either emotional, political or practical" (2015: 397).

When it comes to 'becoming' or processes of belonging, Wright highlights the ways that belonging is experienced, enacted, and practiced, arguing that belonging is constantly (re)negotiated, (re)made, and (re)constituted (Wright, 2015: 400). Approaching the question of belonging in this way—through its embodiment and its performance rather than as a status one might hold—she argues, can lead to more nuanced understandings of the complexity of how individuals find their place in the world. Processes of belonging could be related to religious practices (Fenster & Vizel, 2007), practices of care among housing tenants (Mee, 2009), or youth volunteering activities (Lehner et al., 2022).

Relational or emergent belonging leans on Indigenous and feminist geographies to underscore the "co-constitution of beings and belongings" (Wright, 2015: 402) and the fact that "we belong in deep relation to each other and our worlds" (Wright, 2015: 403). Essentially, rather than seeing humans as belonging to a place, this view sees humans and 'more-than-humans' such as places, institutions, feelings, and processes co-constituting and therefore belonging to each other. In taking on this lens of the co-constitution of belonging, we can appreciate belonging as something that is not achieved in isolation. Rather, we belong 'to' and belong 'with' other beings and elements around us.

2.2.4 Conclusions

The need to research feelings of belonging in circumstances characterized by globalization and super-diversity has been made clear, as has the linkage between belonging and sense of place. While there is no singular definition of the concept, given the range of disciplines in which research on place attachment is occurring, "conceptual clarification and theoretical agreement across them is elusive and perhaps unnecessary" (Gillespie et al., 2022: 2). That said, a better understanding of the different approaches across disciplines—which I have attempted to do in this section—helps with the operationalization of the concept at hand.

Certain critical perspectives must absolutely be kept in mind when researching notions of belonging within super-diverse areas. Firstly, inherent to theorizations of difference, inclusion and belonging is the risk that researchers perpetuate or create inequalities related to opportunity, access and voice (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019: 486). As it stands, a troubling trend in this line of research is the implicit assumption that the onus for integration lies predominantly within minority communities (Amas & Crosland, 2006 in Askins & Pain, 2011). As we have seen in this section, assimilating or conforming to the 'in-group' is and should not be the only way to infer and interpret belonging. Secondly, there are just as many ways of experiencing belonging as there are interpretations of it. As Hoekstra & Dahlvik (2018: 455) puts it, "the same characteristics that foster attachment and a sense of belonging among particular resident groups, generate feelings of exclusion among others as conviviality is invoked by practicing 'sameness.'" Such a view points to the need to refrain from an overly romanticized, singular, or dominant view of belonging and acknowledge oppressive dynamics that are inevitably at play.

2.3 Drivers and outcomes of belonging

2.3.1 Encounters

An implication inherent to the increasing diversity of cities and neighbourhoods and the search for belonging amid this is the question of how residents navigate social, economic, and cultural differences between themselves. Over the past decades, 'geographies of encounter' has emerged as a term for literature investigating how people "negotiate difference" in their everyday lives (Wilson, 2017: 451). Encounters are not a way to describe any form of meeting, but rather, those where difference is noteworthy (Wilson, 2017). While conflict or confrontation may be a product of encounters, scholars also describe their potential to "[create] the possibility for change and transformation", and "inscribe and shift existing boundaries between individuals and collectives" (Leitner, 2012: 830). In this way, encounters have the potential to influence feelings of (un)belonging in super-diverse cities.

There are different encounters that can exist, within different shared spaces. In his summary of the geographies of encounter literature (see figure 1), Schuermans (2018)—borrowing from Goffman (1963)—separates the possible types of encounters into unfocused interactions (fleeting exchanges and short-lived encounters), and focused interactions (shared activities; cooperation; and working, living, playing, or studying together). He separates the possible types of shared spaces into public space (e.g. streets, parks, buses, etc.), parochial space (e.g. neighbourhoods, schools, community centres, etc.), and private space (e.g. homes and other spaces of family life), although the literature on the latter remains notably limited. Most of the literature within the field of urban geography on encounters has been on unfocused interactions occurring in streets, squares, parks, libraries, and public transit (Schuermans, 2018).

Support of contact theory

Within this field, there has been ongoing debate on the effects of encounters with difference, in particular on their potential to reduce prejudice and increase acceptance toward the 'other'. Much of this debate stemmed from Allport's (1954) theory of contact hypothesis, which argued that "interpersonal contact between members of different racial or cultural groups can reduce prejudice and increase positive attitudes toward each other, and in turn lessen conflict between such groups" (Matejsokva & Leitner, 2011: 719). A key component of Allport's theory is that smaller positive encounters with individuals have the potential to broaden such perceptions of the wider group (e.g. cultural or ethnic) to which these individuals identify and belong.

Several scholars have found evidence that supports Allport's initial theory. Wise (2005) found in her study of Sydney that simple "moments of intercultural exchange" and gestures of care and recognition, even if these gestures are fleeting and between strangers, can create feelings of connection with the diverse residents in the neighbourhood. Wessendorf (2013) describes how when diversity becomes "commonplace" (i.e. experienced as a normal part of social life), attitudes toward diversity are typically positive, even if interactions are fleeting rather than sustained. Similarly, in their study of Berlin's mixed neighbourhoods, Blokland & Nast (2014:

1148) argue that "public familiarity" (the act of recognizing and being recognized in local spaces and feeling some degree of acquaintance with them, even if superficial or fluid) enables individuals to "learn to deal with differences, … acquire new information about unknown others, and … learn what to expect", ultimately deepening individuals' sense of belonging. Finally, in their study of urban Canadian neighbourhoods, Wu et al. (2011) found that exposure to diversity fosters a *higher* sense of belonging to Canada and a *lower* sense of belonging to one's own ethnic group, deemphasizing the importance of in-group/out-group distinctions.

Figure 1: Summary of literature on geographies of encounter, interpreted by Schuermans' (2018, p. 11)
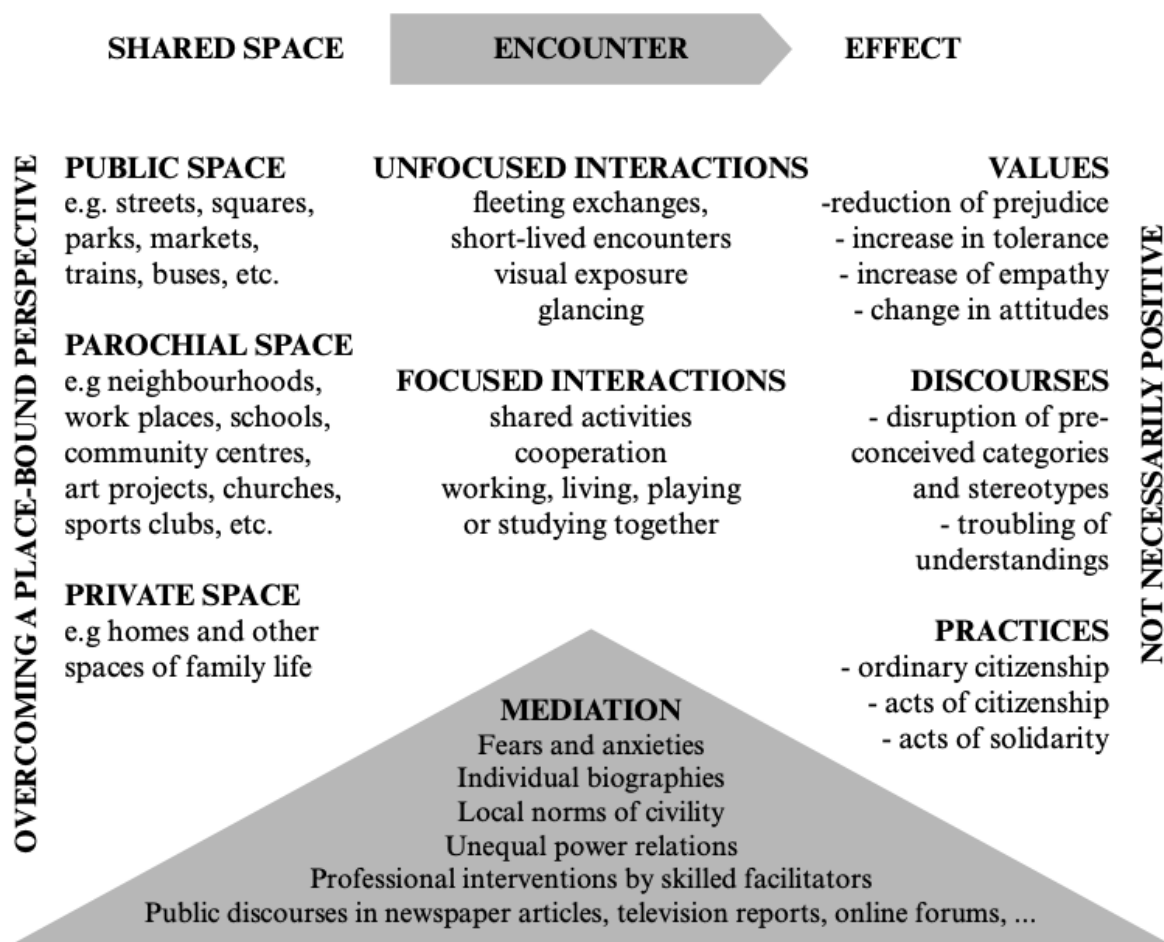
Contestations toward contact theory

Just as scholars have supported Allport's theory, several have contested it. In her study on spaces of encounters in small-town rural Minnesota, for instance, Leitner (2012) observed that encounters between long-term white residents and immigrants of colour incited processes of 'othering' and feelings of fear and anxiety. Similarly, Matejskova & Leitner (2011) contested contact theory when their research showed that even if sustained and closer contact engendered greater empathy on the part of local German residents toward individual Russian Aussiedler migrants, these attitudes were not scaled up to the wider group (e.g. toward Russian Aussiedlers as a whole). As evidence from her research on white majority attitudes toward a range of minority groups in the UK, Valentine (2008: 324) cautions heavily against a romanticization of urban encounter, arguing that the assumption that "cultural difference will somehow be dissolved by a process of mixing or hybridization of culture in public space" is overly simplistic. She emphasizes that encounters are embedded in history and power relations, and cautions that a naïve celebration of everyday encounters in cosmopolitan contexts runs the risk of reproducing inequalities.

The role of focused interactions

Among critiques that contact theory is overly simplistic and/or ignores the potential for encounters to further entrench inequalities is the perspective that deeper forms of contact are critical to foster feelings of acceptance or belonging. Oftentimes, such encounters are understood to occur in spaces beyond the public realm (parks, streets and otherwise) in what Schuermans (2018) calls 'parochial spaces'. Amin (2002), for instance, stresses that 'habitual contact' can simply entrench group animosities and identities and that more regular and sustained encounters are needed to move beyond harmful gendered, classist and racist perspectives and practices. He uses the term "micropublics" of every-day social contact and encounter (referring to groups such as sports/music clubs, drama/theatre groups, communal gardens, etc.) to emphasize that in order for positive intercultural interactions to be effective and lasting, they must "be inculcated as a habit of practice (not just copresence) in mixed sites of everyday contact" (p. 976). In their reflections on a participatory art project in northeast England, Askins & Pain (2011) argue that while one-off encounters and events are not void of potential for new social relations, activities themselves (in this particular instance, participatory art projects), if executed in the right way, can lead to deeper, transformative relations between people. Matejskova & Leitner (2011) noted differences in attitudes depending on both the type of interaction and the type of space: they found that while fleeting encounters between Russian Aussiedler and local German residents in public and quasi-public spaces reinforced stereotypes, sustained and close encounters through neighbourhood community centres engendered more empathy and positive attitudes.

These findings related to the limitations inherent to fleeting encounters complement Wessendorf & Phillimore's (2019) three types of social relations that migrants make to help with the settlement process: 1) brief and serendipitous, 2) crucial acquaintances, and 3) friendships. In

this study, the authors similarly posit that while brief and serendipitous encounters are critical regarding settlement and can help provide necessary resources, they do not necessarily foster a sense of belonging, whereas the latter two do. When it comes to shared spaces, they argue the importance of institutions such as faith organizations and workplaces—which can be understood as 'parochial spaces' under Schuerman's framework—in engendering crucial acquaintances and friendships.

To conclude, encounters are by nature complex and diverse, and it is therefore difficult to derive conclusive meanings and effects of one 'type' of encounter versus another, in one 'type' of space versus another. While we cannot definitively say, for instance, that fleeting encounters in public space *do not* create feelings of connectedness to place and people, and more focused encounters in a community group *do,* or vice versa, we have seen instances of each within the literature. Much is dependent on the power relations between individuals, their accumulated social experiences, and the historical context of the place at hand (Valentine, 2008). Rather than simply assuming that encounters across difference automatically translate into respect and acceptance, we must take into account the complexity and dynamism of such encounters when conducting research.

2.3.2 Participation

While there are various 'types' of participation to be found in the literature, there are two forms that are most relevant to this study—community/neighbourhood and non-profit. There are several studies across disciplines of geography, sociology, and urban policy, and within the fields of third-sector research or urban studies, to investigate the relationship between belonging or social cohesion and these types of participation (Jupp, 2008; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018; Benoit et al., 2022; Wenlin & Seungahn, 2022; Chavis & Pretty, 1999; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006).

Community or neighbourhood participation has commonly been defined as including social involvement and civic engagement (Talò et al., 2014) and as "a process in which individuals take part in decision making in the institutions, programs and environments that affect them" (Heller et al., 1984: 339). Non-profit participation typically refers to "specific citizen-initiated voluntary activities in the non-profit sector … for the betterment of public goods", with 'giving' and 'volunteering' as the two activities that underpin this form of participation (Wenlin & Seungahn, 2022: 270).

In studies that explore the connection between community cohesion, belonging, and participation, the former two are typically drivers of the latter. Scholars have found that having little sense of belonging to a community was a key reason for not participating (Cornwall, 2008), or that community belonging, sense of community, and/or social cohesion can be catalysts for civic participation (Wenlin & Seungahn, 2022; Benoit et al., 2022; Chavis & Pretty, 1999; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006). Additionally, feelings associated with a sense of belonging and community have been found to influence participation. Jupp (2008), for instance, posits that micro-level

feelings—such as feelings of comfort or feelings of being 'at home'—that are derived from micro-level interactions—such as sharing a cup of tea with someone or making a piece of art together—are constitutive of participation and can lead to engagement and empowerment of locals.

These forms of participation are characterized by the presence and initiative of certain institutions—whether the state or a non-profit organization—and have the betterment of society as an implied objective for individuals. However, there have been calls to expand such conceptualizations of participation (Jupp, 2008; Cornwall, 2008; Kesby, 2005; Benoit et al., 2022). Jupp (2008), for instance, emphasizes the need to go deeper than these definitions; that collective experience, co-presence and relations with others and space are important forms or determinants of participation in and of themselves. The scholar argues that "the importance of valuing seemingly everyday interactions, practices and feelings, as constitutive of potentially powerful forms of participation." (2008: 341). Other scholars, like Cornwall (2008) are also critical of traditional definitions of participation, describing a need to move beyond conceptualizations of participation through 'invited spaces', into conceptualizations of participation through spaces that community members with mutual interests create for themselves.

Finally, a common insight within research on participation is that those who participate are the "usual suspects" (Barnes et al., 2004 in Jupp, 2008: 340)—those of a middle or upper class who have the time, interest, and resources to spare—whose interests are not necessarily representative of the entire community (Benoit et al., 2022).

2.4 Conclusions, gaps in research, and conceptual framework

In this literature review, I have provided an overview of research conducted on three topics relevant to my study: super-diversity, belonging, and drivers/outcomes of belonging (encounters and participation). These topics are relevant as I aim to explore how individuals foster a sense of *belonging* by *participating* in community-oriented activities where they find themselves *encountering* others (a key feature of any Jane's Walk) in an urban setting of *super-diversity*.

2.4.1 Conclusions and gaps in research

Scholars have recently mentioned that "further research would benefit from more attention to … the notions of place identity, place attachment, sense of belonging, and sense of place" (Segers et al., 2021: 118). There has been little empirical progress in research on place attachment and belonging largely due to the proliferation of measurements, theories, and conceptual frameworks that have only expanded in a "colossal" way over the past few decades (Hernández et al., 2020: 95). Not only is such research lacking, it is lacking specifically in the context of super-diversity. Within research on super-diversity, there is a call to integrate considerations around the multi-sited nature of people's lives, and that to understand differences and

belonging, "transnational scales and the specificity of experiences associated with encounters between/among people need to be part of the research" (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019: 484). On the first point on transnational scales, my research will provide added value by further investigating the temporal, coming-and-going nature of people's lives in super-diverse settings. On the second point on encounters, I argue that while there are a plethora of studies exploring co-existence, encounters, and integration within super-diverse neighbourhoods and cities, those exploring whether those encounters could lead to place attachment and feelings of belonging in explicitly super-diverse settings are comparatively limited. My research will therefore contribute to filling this gap as well, and will do so in a way that moves beyond essentialist dichotomies of 'migrants' and 'natives' to instead consider the richer, more nuanced situatedness of diverse individuals (Lehner et al., 2022: 768).

What is also notable is the disciplines that are and are not present in research on super-diversity. In his analysis of the 325 publications on the topic of super-diversity between the years 2008 and 2014, Vertovec (2019) noted that while no discipline or field was wholly associated with one of the seven usages of the concept of super-diversity, certain disciplines (in particular socio-linguistics, but also geography and ethnic-migration studies) have explored or at least referred to the topic more extensively than others. Notably, research within media/cultural studies and urban studies/planning is lacking, with only 11 and 10 articles included in the analysis respectively (Vertovec, 2019). This, the fact that a significant portion (155) of articles reviewed interpret and utilize super-diversity in an arguably more simplistic manner (either as a backdrop to a study or a call to re-assess a field), as well as the lack of research in American (as opposed to European) settings validate the need for the research implicated in my study.

While highlighting gaps within the types and nature of studies done within the field of super-diversity is important, I would also argue that gaps within the conceptualization of the term itself are critical to highlight. I agree with other scholars who critique that the term can be overly simplistic and perhaps even problematic (Ozkazanc-Pan, 2019; Sealy, 2018; Crul, 2016, Ndhlovu, 2016, Meissner, 2015). There are limitations to a concept that encourages scholars to move beyond race and ethnicity, while still being largely rooted in the basis of race and ethnicity. In using this concept, there is a risk of losing sight of more structural inequalities at play and reinforcing incorrect assumptions or categorizations of certain groups' experiences. These are limitations and critiques that I keep top-of-mind in choosing this term as a basis for my research, and that will shape the execution of this research in a way that I hope is objective yet critical.

Finally, while the core purpose of this research is not to understand the link between participation in Jane's Walk and deeper civic participation, it contributes to calls to "think [of participation] in terms of different kinds of spaces, made up of different kinds of 'doings'" (Jupp, 2008: 341). Specifically, it analyzes whether participation in Jane's Walk—a different kind of participation than typically investigated—can engender feelings of belonging. This fills a notable gap in the literature as most studies analyze the relationship from the reverse perspective—how belonging is a pre-condition to participation. It opens the door for considering Jane's Walk as a form of participation we're not accustomed to, and/or an activity that could potentially lead to

more neighbourhood/civic participation as it is traditionally defined in the literature. It continues to investigate 'who is Jane's Walk truly *for?",* to see deviances or convergences with research on conventional participation where the 'usual suspects' of a certain class and background tend to prevail (Jupp, 2008; Cornwall, 2008).

2.4.2 Conceptual framework

While I conducted my fieldwork and analysis with all findings from this literature review in mind, I ultimately decided to structure both using Wright's (2015) conceptualization of belonging as 1) emotional, 2) becoming (a process), and 3) relational. I chose this as my conceptual framework because I believe it is the most empirically and ontologically sound—given the lack of scholarly consensus on what it truly means to belong, a weak-theory approach (Wright, 2015) that opens the door for emergent theories is most suitable. To investigate belonging as a pre-determined state to achieve or embody is, I believe, reductionist. In assessing belonging through the lens of the feelings, processes, and relations inherent to finding one's place in the world, we acknowledge belonging as it truly is: a messy, emergent process full of negotiations that is enacted in different ways, ebbs and flows, and is bound up in connections with other people, places, and beings.

I considered using the framework by Lehner et al. (2022), who combine Wright's three-pronged framework for belonging with an additional three units of analysis to incorporate considerations around super-diversity through an urban lens (urban localities; ideas of the city; and individuals and groups within the city). However, after an attempt to deploy such a framework for analysis, I concluded this three-by-three model was overly complex and prescriptive. The analytical categories were not mutually exclusive nor collectively exhaustive, and deploying them risked results that are deductively tailored to the framework rather than inductively and organically rooted in the observations and insights from fieldwork. Because I was leading with an inductive-dominant approach (see section 3.2.2), Wright's (2015) conceptualization was preferred. That said, throughout the analysis I incorporate Lehner et al.'s (2022) and other theories and frameworks from the literature review, as they relate to these three categorizations of belonging. In this way, my chosen conceptual framework is both a means to analyze and categorize.

To conclude, this study responds to calls to identify "key forms of space and contact that might yield positive benefits" amid super-diverse settings, and to explore the complex interplays that shape "the dimensions along which different identities are expressed or represented" (Vertovec, 2007: 1046, 1050). It does so in a way that, contrary to other studies, looks beyond labels of 'us' and 'them', or 'majority' and 'minority', endeavouring toward a deeper understanding of what it means to feel, perform/enact, and co-develop a sense of belonging—topics on which there is little consensus in the literature.

3. Methodology
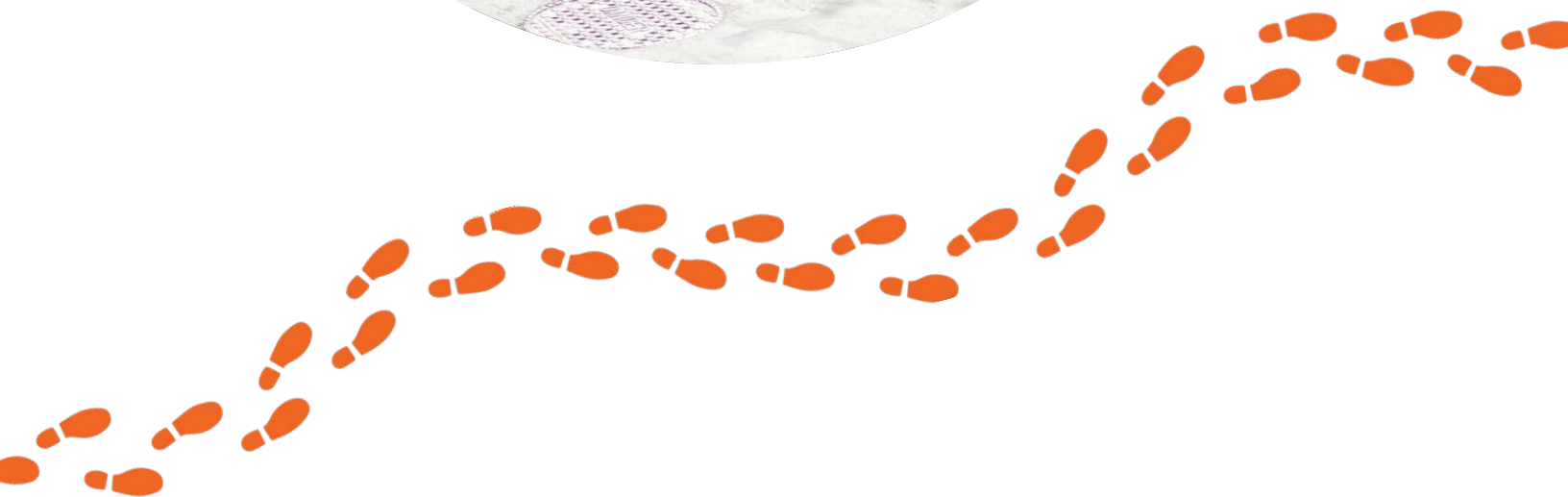
3.1 Research problem and research question

In considering the dynamic interplay between various categories of difference that occurs amid super-diversity, looking at questions of belonging can transcend questions of identity rooted in 'us' and 'them' and more intentionally take into account "the fluidity and multi-dimensionality of identification processes" (Lehner et al., 2022: 768).

In this study, I aim to move beyond research that implies cultural hegemony and dichotomies between natives and migrants. I seek to fill a gap in research by looking at the multi-layered identities and complex situatedness of individuals living amid super-diversity. I seek to understand not how individuals assimilate, integrate, nor conceptualize 'the other', but rather their associations with, conceptualizations of, and searches for, a sense of belonging. Finally, I aim to challenge well-established ideas of participation (Jupp, 2008), and investigate whether participation may breed sense of belonging—a link less commonly explored in the literature than its reverse.

My research explores: **how does involvement in community organizations and activities influence a sense of belonging for different individuals in super-diverse urban societies?**

The following sub-questions will also be explored:

1. What does it mean to belong in a super-diverse city? How is the feeling of belonging conceptualized and experienced by community members, and how do these findings contribute to scholarly debates on the tie between sense of belonging and community cohesion?
2. To what extent does the Jane's Walk festival facilitate feelings of belonging for certain community members over others? How do the observed effects compare to the organization's intended ambitions with regard to inclusion and community cohesion?
3. What are the strengths and limitations of ephemeral, transient community activities (versus those that are more permanent) in engendering connectedness to place?
4. What practices should be considered by festival organizers to facilitate a sense of belonging in super-diverse settings?

3.2 Research approach

3.2.1 Research design overview

Figure 2: Research design visual (own illustration, 2023)
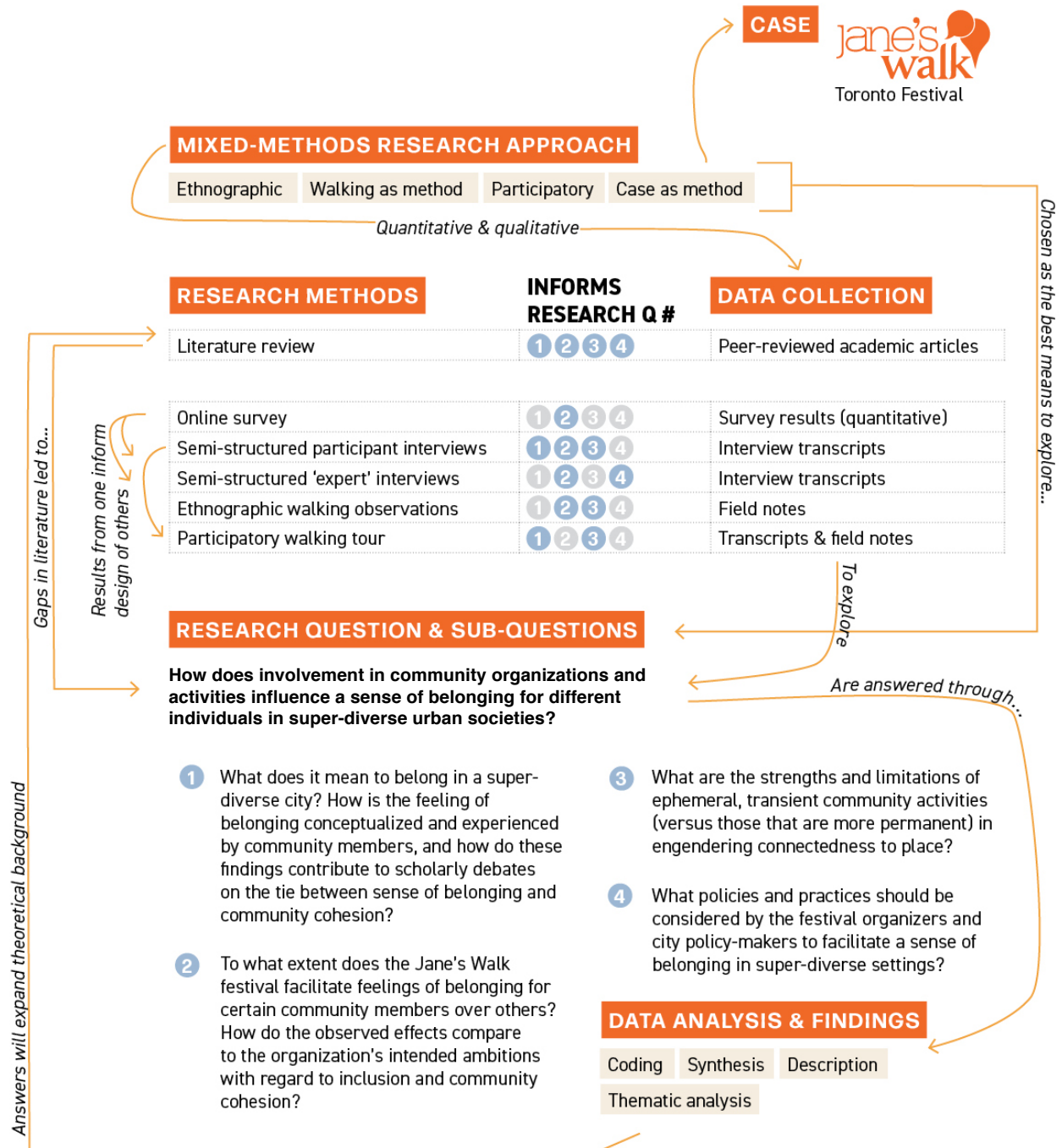
In this research, I employ case study as a method by selecting the Jane's Walk Toronto Festival as my case and hence, unit of analysis. I observe and analyze the influence it has as an urban actor in relation to my research questions highlighted above. I use four research methods to explore these questions: 1) Digital survey; 2) Participant & 'organizer' interviews; 3) Participant observations; and 4) Participatory walking tour. On the previous page (figure 2) is a visual diagram to better conceptualize the research approach, including how the various components interact with one another: for instance, how methods will be analyzed, how they inform the problem at hand, how they tie into the theoretical background, among other interactions.

The sequencing of the research was intentional (see rationale below), as follows:

Table 1: Summary of methods and data type

METHOD	DATE OF DATA COLLECTION	DATA TYPE	QUANTITY
Digital survey	February 2023 (pre-festival)	Survey responses	110 (90 used)
Participant interviews	March – April 2023 (pre-festival)	Interview transcripts	9
Organizer interviews	March – April 2023 (pre-festival)	Interview transcripts	6
Participant observations	May 2023 (mid-festival)	Field notes	5 (sets of notes from 5 walks)
Participatory walking tour	May 2023 (mid-festival)	Field notes	1

Rationale for mixed-methods approach

This study is mixed methods, meaning it involves more than one research method (usually a mix of qualitative and quantitative—see Ladner, 2019: 14) and asking questions that call on different paradigmatic approaches (Hesse-Biber, 2022: 620). My decision to mix methods was intentional. In research on belonging, scholars have made calls "for a qualitative leap forward in the conceptualization of place attachment and other related concepts" (Hernández et al., 2020: 97). Supplementing the frequently-used quantitative measurements with qualitative procedures and moving from analyzing 'what' and 'how much' to 'why' and 'how' can help researchers evaluate more precisely how place attachment manifests (Hernández et al., 2020: 105).

It is for this reason that I chose a sequential design, moving from quantitative (survey) to qualitative (interviews then observations and participatory walks). I started with a quantitative

survey to test which variables (e.g. certain demographics or type of participation in the festival) affect others (e.g. feelings of belonging in the city) and at what scale. Conducting the survey first allowed me to begin to observe certain patterns which were then analyzed and interpreted in a more detailed way (e.g. understanding 'how' or 'in what ways' the variables influenced each other) through the rich data obtained through interviews, ethnographic observations and participatory walking conversations. Belonging is a feeling. It is a highly nuanced, complicated concept that is experienced and understood differently across individuals. Because of this, I argue it is best understood not solely through a survey like so many scholarly studies have prioritized, but through rich discussion, interaction, and collaboration with participants.

3.2.2 Research nature, paradigm, and reasoning

In this section I describe some guiding frameworks for this research, describing in greater detail the following components:

NATURE	Descriptive
PARADIGM	Interpretivist (& intersectional)
REASONING	Inductive-dominant

Nature and paradigm

This research will be descriptive, attempting to describe what exactly it means to feel a sense of belonging in urban settings, and how such feelings may be influenced by participating in certain community activities. In terms of ontological orientation, this research takes a constructivist or interpretivist lens, interpreting reality as socially constructed, and taking the view that "the human world is not 'real' in an objective sense, but based on everyday interpretations humans make" (Ladner, 2019: 17). Additionally, I take an intersectional lens to this research (Crenshaw, 1991), seeking to understanding how gender, ethnicity, and class intersect to shape one's experiences of belonging. In line with Black feminist thought, I recognize that race, class and gender do not operate in isolation, but rather are experienced by individuals who exist at their intersections. I am of the belief that belonging cannot be concretely and effectively understood without understanding how their intersection influences the construction of identity (Christenson, 2009).

Reasoning

I conduct this research through an inductive-dominant approach, meaning that rather than going into the research with testable hypotheses to falsify or confirm a belief, I conduct this study with the aim of understanding what counts and allowing the theory to emerge from the data. Through gathering and analyzing data in my empirical case, I discover patterns, themes, categories, concepts, and theories (Thornberg, 2022: 246). I take an exploratory approach to focus on a "luxurious understanding of [my] subject matter" (Ladner, 2019, p.44): to understand what it truly

means to 'belong'; what factors are most important to the question of belonging; how such interpretations might differ between people of different genders, classes, ethnicities and of different lived experiences; and how such elements of one's identity are made sense of. While inductive-dominant, there are elements of deductive reasoning inherent to the research design as well. All of the research sub-questions (see figure 2) apart from number two will be analyzed through an inductive approach. For number two, I start with an assumption, hypothesizing that the Jane's Walk Festival creates feelings of belonging for certain individuals (notably white, middle-aged, middle/upper class individuals) over others, to reflect findings from literature on participation and who typically participates and who does not (Cornwall, 2008; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018; Jupp, 2008).

3.2.3 Participatory research

This research uses participatory methods, which aim to distribute "the researcher role and the control over the research agenda and process among a larger group of stakeholders" and enable those being 'researched' to become co-researchers and knowing research subjects rather than objects (Burns et al., 2022: 6). There are two different kinds of participants in this research study: Jane's Walk 'experts' (those who have been involved with organizing or founding Jane's Walk) and Jane's Walk 'participants' (those who have participated in the festival by attending one or more walk(s), leading one or more walk(s), or volunteering for the festival. While in the ideal paradigm of participatory research and investigation, participants will be involved at every stage of the research process (Burns et al., 2022: 6), this is difficult to achieve in practice, particularly in the scope of a master thesis due to timing and other capacity constraints. Rather than using participatory methods for the earlier stages of research, then, I used them primarily for the later stages of the research in the following ways:

Table 2: Participation of research subjects

PARTICIPATION OF JANE'S WALK ORGANIZERS	PARTICIPATION OF JANE'S WALK PARTICIPANTS
- Asked for input on the survey and promotional materials prior to their release - Invited to open 'research immersion workshop' to discuss and share input regarding the thesis research mid-data collection	- Survey respondents who provided contact information were asked for feedback on the survey process - Interviewees were sent summary notes from the sessions and asked if content was accurate - Participatory walk involved collaborative discussions and input on the research in real time

This research is inspired by and borrows from participatory methodology largely because of the research guiding principles I adhered to throughout this research process, outlined in section

3.2.4. I aim to deconstruct and reimagine the hierarchical relationships between researchers and the 'researched' and acknowledge that those I am researching are the experts when it comes to this topic area and their own experiences.

3.2.4 Research ethics

As a researcher, I have a responsibility toward the research community, to those who take part in my research, and to the rest of society. Throughout this research, I committed to respecting and preventing harm for those who took part in my research in the following ways.

Providing informed consent

I was transparent toward participants on details pertaining to the research including its purpose, who will have access to the information they provide me, the intended use of the results, and the details of participation in the study. For the survey, such information was detailed directly in its introduction (see Annex 1.2); for the interviews, consent forms were used (see Annex 2.3 and 2.4) and conversation summaries were sent to participants; and promotional materials for the participatory walk (see Annex 4.1) and interviews (see Annex 2.1 and Annex 2.2) made such information clear as well. See Annex 5.2 for a more detailed description of how informed consent was provided.

Respecting individuals' privacy and confidentiality

Participants partook in my research knowing that their identity would remain completely anonymous in the dissemination of results. In instances where I was made aware of participants' identity through information they provided in the survey, I kept it only for the purposes of entering them into the gift card draw or scheduling an interview with them. Several demographics questions were asked in the survey but they were never mandatory—respondents always had a way to opt out of answering them by selecting, 'prefer not to answer'. In instances where I was made aware of participants' identity through interviewing them, I used a code for their name (e.g. Interviewee P1 for 'participant 1' or O1 for 'organizer 1') in analysis. Participants were made aware that information would only be presented in aggregate (e.g. as insights, trends, and patterns from analyzing all of the data at once). If direct quotes were used, it was ensured that there was no personally identifiable information included in them, and a pseudonym was used in their presentation.

Ensuring participant data security

All data gathered in this research were stored on my personal laptop in my personal files—they were not put on any cloud platforms such as Google Drive or Dropbox in order to avoid breaches of confidentiality outside of my control. The information gathered and stored on my

laptop includes survey responses (anonymous unless respondents voluntarily offered their email address or phone number), interview recordings, interview transcripts (anonymized), field notes from observations (anonymized), and field notes from the participatory walk (anonymized). While the survey responses will also be visible on the Steering Committee's Typeform (survey platform) account, the responses for questions where respondents opt into offering their email address and phone number will be deleted after the research is complete—I am the only one who will have ever seen this information. All information listed will continue to be stored on my personal computer unless any participants specified they would like them to be removed, as per the consent forms (see Annex 2.3 and 2.4). The only data and documentation I have that may identify people is my personal email or text message correspondence with them (which only I will see), and the survey responses where individuals offered their email addresses and phone number. Individuals who participated in a way where their personal data were used (survey respondents and interviewees) were made aware of this data storage process prior to participating (see Annex 1.2, 2.3, and 2.4).

Compensating participants

As other practitioners adhering to the principles of design justice, I am of the belief that the research process is inherently extractive (Costanza-Chock, 2020: 89-90). No matter how inclusive or participatory the design (or in this case, research) process is, those conducting the research always benefit more than the communities (Costanza-Chock, 2020: 89-90). To participate in the research, participants dedicate time and effort which may have been spent on other activities and may make research-related expenses (for instance, traveling to the site of research or incurring an opportunity cost of money they could have made at work). Compensation—monetary or otherwise—is a simple gesture that acts as a token of gratitude and can also incentivize individuals to participate. Even if the insights from this research improve the festival and benefit participants, this benefit does not compare to the benefits I gain by obtaining my master's or that Jane's Walk gains by having more in-depth knowledge about its participants. It is for this reason that I tried to compensate individuals wherever possible, including:

- Enabling survey respondents to enter a draw for a $15 gift card (Amazon, VISA, or another place of their choice).
- Offering a $5 gift card to all interviewees and optional tailored advice on how to lead a Jane's Walk for the upcoming festival for all participant interviews.

No compensation was offered for research conducted during the Jane's Walk Festival (the ethnographic observations and the participatory walk) as this goes against the organization's principles (see Annex 5.1). I paid for all of the compensation mentioned above out of pocket.

I borrow from the Design Justice Network Principles (Costanza-Chock, 2020: 6), selecting those that are most relevant, applying them to a research context and use them as my guiding values and principles throughout the research:

1. I centre the voices of those who are directly impacted by the outcomes of the research process.
2. I prioritize the research's impact on the community over the intentions of myself, the researcher.
3. I view change as emergent from an accountable, accessible, and collaborative process, rather than as a point at the end of a process.
4. I see the role of the researcher as a facilitator rather than an expert.
5. I believe that everyone is an expert based on their own lived experience, and that we all have unique and brilliant contributions to bring to a research process.

3.3 Data collection methods

3.3.1 Case as method – overview

The Jane's Walk Toronto Festival is the case study in this research. Case study research is an empirical method that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon … in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (Yin, 2018: 15). I am investigating the *phenomenon* of belonging in super-diverse urban settings through the *context* of participation in a specific local community organization to see whether there is any relationship. While I cannot generalize statistically, or extrapolate probabilities in this research, I can expand and generalize theories that form the basis of this research design (Yin, 2018: 21). This single-case study is "embedded" (Yin, 2018: 52) due to its multiple subunits of analysis (the organization of Jane's Walk itself, those participating in the activities of this organization, the leaders of the organization) where data are coming from different sources such as surveys, interviews, observations and collaborations (see sections 3.3.3 to 3.3.6 below). While multiple methods were used in this study, the results centre primarily on insights derived from the survey and interviews, due to richness of data.

3.3.2 Literature review

The theoretical background of this research was achieved through the study of existing literature on super-diversity, encounters, belonging and participation. I researched these topics mostly through the University of Vienna's and the University of Copenhagen (KU)'s online library search platforms. I used snowballing techniques, meaning I looked at peer-reviewed scholars' reference lists to find new academic papers of interest. While most sources used were digital academic papers, physical books were also obtained through these searches and included in the analysis. Other books and documents were pulled from my own collections obtained

personally or through previous work experience. Various terms and keywords were used to search for sources, such as: "belonging in super-diversity", "community cohesion and belonging", "influence of community participation on belonging", "encounters and place attachment", etc. While I did not create any explicit constraints across publishing date and disciplines, I tried to prioritize more contemporary literature (e.g. published over the past five years) that would reflect theoretical advancements and more germane applications of belonging, super-diversity, and other topics of interest. Disciplines across fields of study were prioritized based on relevancy. I looked primarily at literature from the fields of (urban/human/social/cultural) geography, (urban/cultural) sociology, and urban studies, but also included psychology, third-sector research, and ethnic & racial studies.

3.3.3 Survey

Overview

The first part of the research was to release a digital survey comprising of 28 questions through the survey platform Typeform. This tool was used as the Jane's Walk Steering Committee has a subscription that it uses on an ongoing basis, and it would be relatively easy to store the questions and responses (anonymized) for the Steering Committee's future use. It was chosen over platforms like Google Forms, which are notoriously questionable when it comes to respondent data privacy and protection. The survey was also used as a way to recruit individuals for the participant interviews—it was completely anonymous but respondents had the opportunity to include their phone number or email address if they were open to having an interview with me, or if they wanted to be included in a draw for a $15 gift card as a thank you.

The research subjects for the survey were individuals who were currently living in Toronto and had participated in the Jane's Walk Toronto festival at least once since the first festival in 2006 by attending one or more walk(s), leading one or more walk(s), attending other festival events, or volunteering for the festival.

The survey was disseminated by 1) sending a newsletter to Jane's Walk Toronto's 3,718 subscribers (as of the date of sending: February 15, 2023); and 2) promoting it on the Jane's Walk Toronto Instagram channel (which had, at time of release, 3,175 followers). The survey was left open for approximately three weeks for individuals to respond to—it closed on March 6, 2023 after one last reminder was published by Instagram. Please see Annex 1.1 for these promotional materials and copy. For a full view of the questions included in the survey, please see Annex 1.2.

Objectives

The survey was released primarily to answer the second research sub-question, "To what extent does the Jane's Walk festival facilitate feelings of belonging for certain community members over others?" (shortened for brevity—see section 3.1 for full questions).

The specific research objectives were as follows:

- To understand if, in general, individuals who participate in Jane's Walk tend to demonstrate place attachment and place identity (e.g. indicate feelings of belonging in the city).

- To understand individuals' relationships with place (in this case, namely the city of Toronto rather than neighbourhoods) and whether participating in Jane's Walk has had an effect.

- To probe deeper into whether the chance encounters and exposure to super-diversity through Jane's Walks have impacted individuals' relationship with place.

- To observe any patterns (re: feelings of belonging) based on demographic backgrounds of respondents (especially longer-term residents vs. newcomers).

Conceptual frameworks and design

For the design of the survey, I leaned heavily on best practices I gained from having PhD sociologist and UX researcher Sam Ladner as a mentor in the four years I spent working at Doblin (see 'About Sam Ladner', 2012; and Ladner, 2019). In this time she hosted several sessions to teach myself and other colleagues about quantitative and qualitative research design and analysis. Specific principles of hers I used for the design of questions were:

- Mutually exclusive and exhaustive (ensuring no overlap between answers, and that all answers were possible)
- No double-barreled questions (e.g. "Participating in Jane's Walk has made the city feel more familiar" rather than, "Participating in Jane's Walk has made the city feel more familiar and comfortable")
- Closed-ended rather than open-ended (for ease of analysis and responding, maximum two open-ended questions)

The survey had three sections to inform the objectives above: 1) demographics and nature of Jane's Walk participation; 2) place attachment in Toronto; and 3) belonging through Jane's Walk people and activities. These sections were not made visible to respondents—they were simply for my ease of execution as researcher.

For section one (questions 1-16), the demographics questions were informed by ethical survey question standards and guidelines published by the UK government (Gov.UK, 2017), the University of British Columbia (University of British Columbia, 2022), and the Government of Canada (Government of Canada, 2020). As this research aims to be intersectional (see section 3.2.2, questions were asked around individuals' income level (to represent class), cultural background and language spoken most often at home (to represent ethnicity), and gender identity. These questions, however, were not mandatory. Respondents could opt out of answering any of them by selecting 'prefer not to answer'. In this section I also asked for the nature of individuals' participation in the festival (what type of participation and across which years).

In terms of the second section (question 17), there are several existing empirical studies that have proposed and employed quantitative scales for assessing place attachment, which vary in whether they conceptualize place attachment as one-dimensional (e.g. *one and the same as* place identity and other place constructs), or multi-dimensional (e.g. *informed by* place identity, place dependence, family bonding, and/or other factors)—see Hernández et al., 2020: 96, 97 & 99. The study I pulled from was one done by Lewicka (2005, 2010, 2011) who identified nine items (a list that initially started out as 24) to assess place attachment, and who measured it as one-dimensional. I chose this scale for three reasons: firstly for simplicity (both for ease of assessment and for limiting the survey response time); secondly for its validity (multi-dimensional scales that take into account various aspects like emotional bonds, identity, preference, or restorativeness tend to negatively impact validity—see Hernández et al., 2020: 101); and thirdly for its applicability (it was designed specifically for urban contexts). While the scale can be used to assess place attachment at the neighbourhood, city, or nation-level, I used it for the city-level for reasons described in section 3.4.1.

For the third section (questions 18-25), I devised my own questions to understand whether encounters or exposure to diversity may have impacted individuals' place attachment, and whether individuals associated their participation in Jane's Walk with feelings of community, connectedness or belonging.

3.3.4 Interviews

I conducted 16 virtual semi-structured interviews total across two types of stakeholders which, for simplicity, I label as 'participants' and 'organizers'. The interviews were semi-structured because even though I followed an interview guide (see Annex 2.5 and 2.7), I veered away from the predetermined questions at times based on where the discussion was going with the interviewee and what they felt the need to discuss. Interviews ranged from 40-110 minutes long. For all interviews I borrow techniques from Steve Portigal's book 'Interviewing Users' (2013). While rooted in user research design, the techniques are still applicable for academic research. All interviews were conducted through Zoom, as I was in Madrid and most interviewees were in Toronto or the Greater Toronto Area. All interviews were recorded via audio. I transcribed two manually and the rest were transcribed through third-party platform Otter AI.

Participant interviews

The subjects for the participant interviews were the same as the survey (as this is how they were recruited): those who have participated at least once in the Jane's Walk Festival since its inception in 2006, by leading one or more walk(s), attending one or more walk(s), or volunteering. Because I had 110 survey respondents and 34 indicated interest in being interviewed, I was aimed for diversity in those I reached out to for an interview across:

- Age
- Gender identity

- Place of birth: inside or outside of Canada
- Cultural background
- Time spent living in Toronto
- Area of residence in Toronto (e.g. diversity between inner and outer city)

I reached out to 19 individuals and had 9 interviews in total (one of which was with two people). For the interview guide, see Annex 2.5. The interviewees are summarized in the table below (pseudonyms are used to protect their identity):

Table 3: Participant interviewee demographics and pseudonyms

NAME	AGE RANGE	GENDER IDENTITY	MOVED TO OR BORN IN CANADA	YEARS IN TORONTO	CULTURAL BACKGROUND	RESIDENCE IN TORONTO
Holly	24-34	Woman/girl	Born	More than 10	European	Etobicoke
Sarah	35-44	Woman/girl	Born	More than 10	European & East Asian	North York
Sofia	55-64	Woman/girl	Moved	More than 10	European	Toronto/ East York
Fran	65+	Woman/girl	Born	More than 10	European	Toronto/ East York
Thais	25-34	Woman/girl	Moved	1-5	European & Latinx	Toronto/ East York
Taylen	25-34	Non-binary	Moved	6-10	European	Toronto/ East York
Jean	55-64	Woman/girl	Born	More than 10	European	Toronto/ East York
Thomas	55-64	Man/boy	Moved	More than 10	European	Toronto/ East York
Dmitri	35-44	Man/boy	Moved	More than 10	European	Toronto/ East York
Michael	65+	Man/boy	Born	More than 10	European	Toronto/ East York

The interviews were intended to inform research sub-questions one, two, and three (see figure 2). They built on insights gained from the survey, and had the following specific objectives:

- Better understand how individuals conceptualize belonging as a whole—what places, activities, or people does the concept elicit for them?
- Probe deeper into survey observations:
  - People who participate in Jane's Walk also display evidence of place attachment to Toronto, but…
    - … does participation in the festival deepen feelings of belonging or connection or do people who already feel a sense of belonging simply have a higher propensity to participate?
    - … why do these individuals feel a sense of place attachment? What is it that connects them to the city? (People, places, familiarity, etc.)
  - Respondents associate Jane's Walk with community and belonging, but…
    - Why? What is associated with feelings of community / belonging in the context of Jane's Walk? E.g. knowledge about the city / place-based knowledge, meeting 'like-minded' people, experiencing the kindness of strangers, etc.
- For all of the above, observe whether there are differences between people of different backgrounds.

Organizer interviews

The subjects for the organizer interviews were individuals who have a history with Jane's Walk in an organizational capacity. I spoke to six such individuals: two founders, three former Executive Directors (when the organization had paid staff), and one former Chair (when the organization transitioned to a non-profit model).

The interviews were intended to inform research sub-questions two and four (see figure 2). They had the following specific objectives:

- Better understand their own personal experiences of Jane's Walk—how and why did they get involved?

- Understand organizers' personal stories and experiences of how they have or haven't seen belonging manifested through Jane's Walks

- Better understand the evolution of Jane's Walk—who is the festival 'for' in theory/intent? Has this changed over time?

- The committee characterizes the festival as a platform 'for all voices to be heard'—how has it done so in the past? How has it course corrected when this doesn't come to fruition?

Table 4: Organizer interviewee information

NAME	ROLE	YEARS OF INVOLVEMENT
Organizer 1	Founder	2007 onward
Organizer 2	Chair, Steering Committee Member	2013 - 2021
Organizer 3	Executive Director	2007 - 2012
Organizer 4	Chair, Steering Committee Member	2008 - 2016
Organizer 5	Executive Director	2016 - 2018
Organizer 6	Founder	2007 onward

3.3.5 Participant observations

Throughout the Jane's Walk Festival, I attended five walks to observe the 'natural' behaviour of walk participants and leaders during the 2023 festival. I sought to attend a variety of walks in terms of location and topic, given the limited time I had. For the full descriptions of the walks, see Annex 3.1. For each walk I attended, I had a notebook that I carried with me to take field notes. These field notes were largely comprised of condensed accounts of my observations in sentences and quotations, as well as early impressions, interpretations, and questions as they related to the research questions (see Spradley, 1980: 69–72). My role was participant-as-observer—I played an "active part of the observed field" (Flick, 2018: 325). I was first-and-foremost a participant on the walks (or, walk attendee), who was simultaneously observing for research purposes and engaging in spontaneous conversation with other participants. Hence, I influenced what I observed due to my participation. I was transparent toward those I spoke to (walk leaders and participants) that I was attending the walk both out of personal as well as academic interest. I hesitate to apply the title of 'ethnography' to this method, as my participation was not 'extended' and did not go so far as observing the 'life worlds' of participants (Flick, 2018: 346), but rather a moment in time.

A map and table describing the walks I attended are on the following page. I sought to attend as many walks as I could. Transit time constraints, then, (between one walk and another) limited how far I could go and led to more 'clustering' in and around the city centre. This is one limitation of my study.

Table 4: Walks attended for participant observations

#	WALK NAME	TIME	LOCATION	'TYPE' OF WALK	# ATTENDEES
1	Who Walked in Willowdale	Fri., May 5 1:00-2:30 pm	North York	Historical tour	25
2	Local Library History: From Streets to Shelves	Fri., May 5 6:00-7:30 pm	Downtown Toronto	Historical tour	60
3	Ontario Place West Island Walk	Sat., May 6 10:00-11:30 am	Downtown Toronto	Political tour	250
4	My first day in Toronto	Sun., May 7 11:30-1:30 pm	Downtown Toronto	'Walking conversation'	9
5	Walls in flower & water flowing underground	Sun., May 7 3:00-4:30 pm	Downtown Toronto	Indigenous-led tour	10

Figure 3: Map of walks - participant observations and participatory walk (own illustration, 2023)
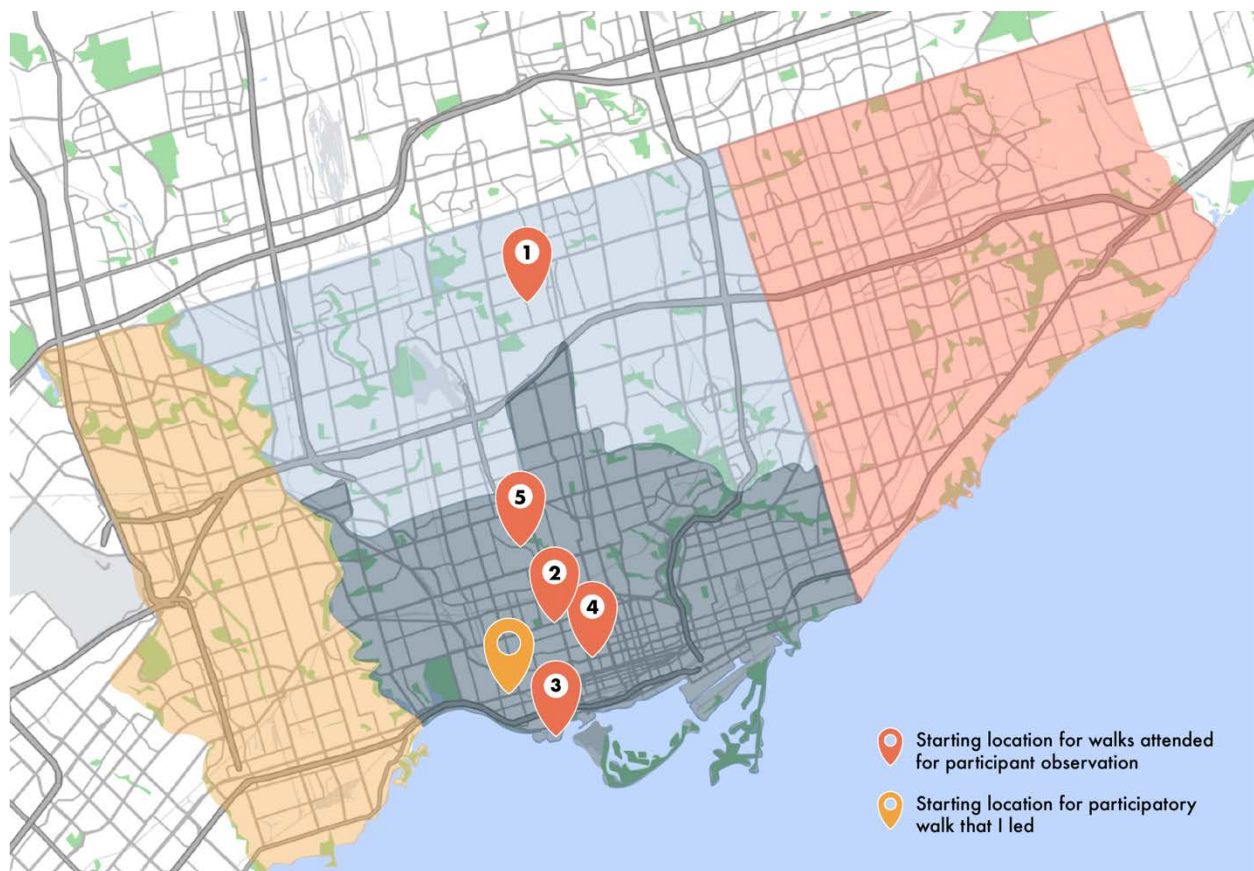
I conducted 'focused observation' (Flick, 2018: 329), narrowing my perspective on the areas that were most relevant to my research questions. Specifically, observations were intended to inform research sub-questions two and three (see Figure 2). They had the following specific objectives:

- Dig deeper into initial insights from interviews: were the walks more 'walking tour' style, or 'walking conversation' style, and did this appear to have any influence on the energy, perspectives, or takeaways of participants?

- Observe (without making any assumptions) the kind of people who showed up to walks—did they appear more popular among certain age groups or backgrounds?

- Notice my own feelings toward community cohesion and belonging—to what extent did the content of the walk and the engagement (or lack thereof) I had with strangers on the walk influence these feelings?

3.3.6 Participatory walking tour

Walking as a methodology has been well documented and utilized in the social sciences. From the late 1900s, influential thinkers in the field of urban sociology and cultural studies like Lefebvre and De Certeau stated that "walking enables one to 'listen' to 'a house, a street, a city" (Lefebvre, 1996: 229) and that "pedestrian movements give 'shape to spaces'" and "weave places together" through "tactile apprehension and kinesthetic appropriation" (de Certeau, 1984: 97). The literature shows a variety of use cases as to why a researcher may choose to use walking as a methodology—for instance, to create "new embodied ways of knowing" (Pink et al., 2010: 1), or produce shared understandings of space (O'Neill & Hubbard, 2010). The most relevant use case as it pertains to this study, however, is "to offer an embodied way of understanding individuals' relationship to place and history and how their movements and memories constitute the imaginary and material reality of the space" (Aoki & Yoshimizu, 2015). Walking is therefore a relevant research method not only because walking obviously serves as the basis of the case—a festival of walking tours—but also for its ability to reveal deeper understandings of individuals' connections to place.

The walking tour I led was called, 'Finding Belonging: Stories in and around Parkdale'. See Annex 4.1 for the full walk description and promotional materials. The intent of the walk was to explore research sub-question one (see figure 2) through a participatory discussion on what it means to 'belong' in Toronto, and to explore this topic by grounding ourselves in places in and around a neighbourhood called Parkdale.

Parkdale was chosen due to its relevancy on the topic of belonging, particularly the politics of belonging (Leitner, 2012). In large part due to the deregulation of mental healthcare in the province in the 1960s, Parkdale developed a reputation of a neighbourhood rife with poverty, crime, drugs, homelessness, and large numbers of people living with mental illness (Slater, 2004). It is now a quickly gentrifying neighbourhood with a declining immigrant population and high rates of resident displacement due to rapidly increasing rental costs and associated

evictions (Ostanel, 2020; Leon, 2019). Questions and negotiations of who belongs, then, are visible in the urban fabric of Parkdale: whether through signs protesting evictions or through the existence of organizations like PARC (Parkdale Activity and Recreation Centre) which, initially established in 1977 to provide a sense of belonging for psychiatric survivors released from institutions, continues to exist today. In Parkdale is also the neighbourhood Little Tibet, which is host to the largest Tibetan community in North America (Al Jazeera English, 2022). Questions of belonging amid super-diversity then, are also highly relevant in this neighbourhood.

The walking tour had six stops, with each stop focussing on a different component of belonging, as seen in figure 4 and table 5 below (see Annex 4.2 for the full walk plan/guide). There were two guest speakers on the walk—one which was planned (Peter Martin of PARC spoke to his lived experiences with the centre) and one which was not (Loga, the owner of the Tibetan momo (dumpling) shop, happened to be there while we were at the stop and said a few quick words on his experiences running the shop). The walk was documented in detailed field notes of one of the walk attendees—my sister—and these field notes formed the basis of my analysis.

Figure 4: Participatory walking tour map (own illustration, 2023)

| **1** Lisgar Park Introduction | **2** Gladstone House Belonging as emotional | **3** Parkdale Amphitheatre Belonging as political I | **4** Loga's Corner Belonging amid diversity | **5** PARC Belonging as political II | **6** Beaty Parkette Belonging as relational and more-than-human |

Table 5: Participatory walking tour stops

#	STOP FOCUS AREA	STOP LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	LITERATURE USED
1	**Intro – what is belonging?**	Lisgar Park	• Overview of the walk, my thesis and my role at Jane's Walk • Introductions—to the group and to one stranger • Discussion on 'what is belonging'	• Boyd & Richerson, 2009 (evolutionary importance of belonging) • Hang & Zhong, 2023 (importance of belonging for migrants) • Parkin & Ayer, 2022 (belonging in Toronto statistics)
2	**Belonging as emotional**	Gladstone House	• History of the Gladstone as a place of belonging • My story of belonging (as emotional) at the Gladstone House	• Wright, 2015 (belonging as emotional) • Yuval-Davis, 2004 (belonging as emotional) • Kalinowski, 2020 (history of the Gladstone)
3	**Belonging as political**	Parkdale Amphitheatre	• History of Parkdale as it relates to politics of belonging • Discussion on fighting for the right to belong in Parkdale	• Slater, 2004 (Parkdale history) • Whyte, 2020 (Parkdale history) • Ostanel, 2020 (Parkdale today) • Leon, 2019 (Parkdale rents) • Leitner, 2012 (politics of belonging)
4	**Belonging amid diversity**	Loga's Corner (Tibetan momo (dumpling) shop)	• Overview of Toronto and its diversity • Overview of Little Tibet in Parkdale • Surprise guest appearance from Loga, the owner of Loga's Corner • Discussion on how diversity impacts belonging • Theories of how diversity impacts national and in-group belonging	• City of Toronto, 2022 (diversity statistics) • Statistics Canada, 2022 (diversity statistics) • Al Jazeera English, 2022 (Little Tibet information) • Wu et al., 2011 (contact, constrict and conflict theories)
5	**Belonging as political**	Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC)	• Overview of PARC – a centre to support people with issues related to mental health and substance use • Guest speaker Peter Martin shares his story of belonging in Parkdale (Treasurer and Board Member of PARC)	• N/A – this stop was led by Peter Martin
6	**Belonging as relational and more-than-human**	Beaty Avenue Parkette	• Overview of belonging as relational and more-than-human • Volunteer reading out loud of bell hooks quote	• hooks, 2008 (belonging to the earth and nature) • Wright, 2015 (belonging as relational and more-than-human)

Figure 5: Stop 2 – belonging as emotional at the Gladstone House

Figure 6: Stop 3 – belonging as political at the Parkdale Amphitheatre

Figure 7: Stop 4 – belonging amid diversity outside of Loga's Corner

Figure 8: Stop 4 – guest appearance from Loga, the owner of Loga's Corner

Figure 9: Stop 5 – belonging as political at PARC with guest speaker Peter Martin (PARC Treasurer and Board Member)

Figure 10: Stop 5 – belonging as political at PARC with guest speaker Peter Martin (PARC Treasurer and Board Member)

Figure 11: Stop 6 – belonging as relational and more-than-human

Figure 12: Walking between stops 5 and 6

Figure 13: Walking between stops 1 and 2

3.4 Data analysis methods

3.4.1 Case study

Description

Jane's Walk is a global festival of community-led walking conversations, created in 2006 as a tribute to urbanist and writer Jane Jacobs (*About Us*, 2023). The founders of the group believed that a festival that encouraged people to go out and explore their cities was a more suitable way to honour Jacobs and her legacy compared to, for instance, a statue, because the act of walking, observing, and getting involved with one's city was a core tenet of Jacobs' beliefs that 'everyday people' must be put at the centre of urban planning decisions (conversation with Jane's Walk founder, 2022). While the festival was initiated in Toronto, Canada by some of Jacobs' friends and colleagues after her passing, it has since grown and is now present in approximately 500 cities across the world (*Cities*, 2023).

Cities around the world are free to lead the festival in whatever way makes most sense for them. The global Jane's Walk organization encourages cities to host their festivals the first weekend of May each year (in honour of Jane Jacobs' birthday, May 4th), although some cities choose to host walks throughout the year or host the festival at a different time during the year (*About Us*, 2023). The essence of the festival is that "anybody can lead a walk" in any neighbourhood, about any topic they like, and the festival is completely free (*About Us*, 2023). This is a core component of their six guiding principles (*About Us*, 2023), which every city organizer must adhere to (list below has been amended for brevity—see Annex 5.1 for the list in its full detail):

Jane's Walk…

1. Is volunteer-driven
2. Is inspired and informed by the world around us
3. Is done in whatever way makes sense for you
4. Creates an opportunity to hear all voices
5. Encourages critical engagement with the ideas and legacy of Jane
6. Recognizes cities are living ecosystems with a past, present and future

The global Jane's Walk presence is maintained and led by its Steering Committee, which comprises eleven volunteers who, apart from three individuals in Europe or other parts of Canada, are based out of Toronto, Canada (*About Us*, 2023). I am the Co-Chair of the Jane's Walk organization (see section 3.5 on positionality). Responsibilities of the Steering Committee include maintaining the global website and social media accounts, answering enquiries from various city organizers pertaining to the festival, and enabling collaborations across global Jane's Walk city organizers by using platforms like Facebook to connect them or scheduling global/national video calls. The Steering Committee is also responsible for overseeing the Toronto festival. Each year, the Committee hires one or more contractor to lead the festival, paying them to do so. Because the organization is entirely volunteer-run and donor-funded, most of the money it raises goes toward running the Toronto festival, which typically requires at

least $20,000 (personal knowledge). The rest goes toward maintaining its global presence (for instance, website, domain, e-newsletter, and other subscriptions). The organization was not always structured in this way. For many years (up until 2018), it operated as a registered charity with paid staff.

Jane's Walk is supported by MakeWay—a charitable organization that hosts over 70 community-led projects across Canada, providing them with administrative support and eliminating the need for these organizations to secure charitable status (*About*, n.d.). Any reference moving forward to "Jane's Walk" refers to the Toronto festival, but it should be noted that it and the global movement are overseen by the same 11-person volunteer Steering Committee.

Rationale

Jane's Walk represents a compelling case for several reasons. Firstly, when it comes to research on encounters, urban scholars have focused primarily on outdoor public spaces like streets and public squares (Keith, 2005 in Matejskova & Leitner, 2011), leading to calls for researchers to turn their attention to spaces like sports/music clubs, drama/theatre groups, communal gardens, community centres, and the like, as such sites of purposeful group activity can lead to new ways of relating to one another, and inculcate a sense of common benefit (Amin, 2002). Jane's Walk represents an interesting blend between these two kinds of spaces, or between what Schuermans (2018) calls 'public' and 'parochial' space. It combines the fleeting encounters of the street with the deeper sense of shared purpose of a community organization. When it comes to the *type* of encounters, research has been largely premised on fleeting encounters (Schuermans, 2018), but literature on whether such fleeting encounters can become more sustained over time, and the impact this may have on one's feelings of belonging, has been relatively limited.

Secondly, questions around the connection between participation in community- or neighbourhood-oriented activities and community cohesion or place attachment have typically focused on involvement with non-profit organizations, and specifically through the activities of donating or volunteering (Jones, 2006 in Wenlin & Seungahn, 2022). In the way I intend to analyze it through this study, participation in Jane's Walk differs from participation in other non-profit organizations' activities because it is presumably less driven from a place of wanting to 'give back' one's finances or time and more from a place of wanting to share stories about one's neighbourhood or community. The acts of leading or participating in a community walk are therefore unique and different than, for instance, community gardening or a local sports club, because they are more place-based, and there is no common interest nor talent individuals must share prior to joining apart from a genuine interest in the neighbourhood or city they live in. Additionally, studies tend to focus on whether a deep sense of community can lead to civic participation, rather than the other way around (Chavis & Pretty, 1999; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006).

Thirdly, Jane's Walk claims that it "creates an opportunity to hear all voices" (*About Us,* 2023) and "helps knit people together into strong and resourceful communities, instilling belonging and encouraging civic leadership" (*Jane's Walk Principles,* 2023). It is undeniable that grassroots, community-oriented organizations like Jane's Walk play a pivotal role in fostering a sense of community cohesion in cities and neighbourhoods. The question is, however, is to what extent and for whom?

Finally, as an annual festival, Jane's Walk Toronto's ephemeral nature makes it both a compelling case study and one with limitations. One might call it both an "extreme case" and a "common case" (Yin, 2018: 50). There is an interesting question of whether fleeting, ephemeral connections produced through the festival can still enable feelings of connectedness to place and to community despite their temporality. Its ephemeral nature makes the Jane's Walk Festival an unusual or extreme case, deviating from the theoretical norms we see in research on belonging and community involvement, as they typically revolve around cases like community organizations or gardens which inherently have a higher degree of permanence. That said, the Jane's Walk Festival may also be conceived as a "common case", because in rooting itself in the day-to-day interactions with strangers on sidewalks, the festival captures circumstances and conditions of an everyday situation. Combined, these elements make the Jane's Walk festival a compelling case.

A note of caution, however, must be considered with respect to analytic generalization. With 117 walks occurring over three days in the city, it was difficult for me as a researcher to achieve a truly holistic view of the festival. I had to be selective about the walks and events that I chose, and as such, generalizations to the festival as a whole or broader community organizations must be made with caution.

Toronto and geographical scope

If super-diversification in a region is typically characterized by immigration-related factors such as diversification of countries of origin and an increase in the number of languages spoken at home (see Vertovec, 2007 and section 2.1), then Toronto can certainly be characterized as super-diverse. With 46.03% of its population born outside of the country (Statistics Canada, 2022), as of 2020 it had the second-highest percentage of foreign-born residents of all cities in the world after Miami (Raco & Taşan-Kok, 2020). 44.90% of its residents speak at least one non-official language at home (City of Toronto, 2022), and over half (55.01%) identifies as racialized, or, in other words, a visible minority (Statistics Canada, 2023), with the latter pointing to a "majority-minority" context characteristic of super-diversity (Crul, 2016). This influx and these patterns of immigration experienced by the city over recent years bring with them more variable combinations of traits, lived experiences, and general situatedness among the population, shaping the way individuals connect with space and others around them (Vertovec, 2019).

Toronto has a population of 2,794,356 (Statistics Canada, 2023) and became one of the largest cities in North America in 1998 when its six constituent municipalities (Etobicoke, Scarborough,

York, East York, North York, and the City of Toronto) were dissolved by the province, amalgamating them all into what today is the City of Toronto (Chidley & Hawaleshka, 1997). One of the most controversial moves in the city's history, this historical context is relevant given questions of belonging in the city. As it happened only a couple of decades ago, stigma toward certain 'suburbs' such as Scarborough and Etobicoke can still be found, as can vast differences in income levels and wellbeing of communities outside of the City of Toronto core. For a visual depiction of the city, see the map below.

Figure 14: Map of Toronto (own illustration, 2023)
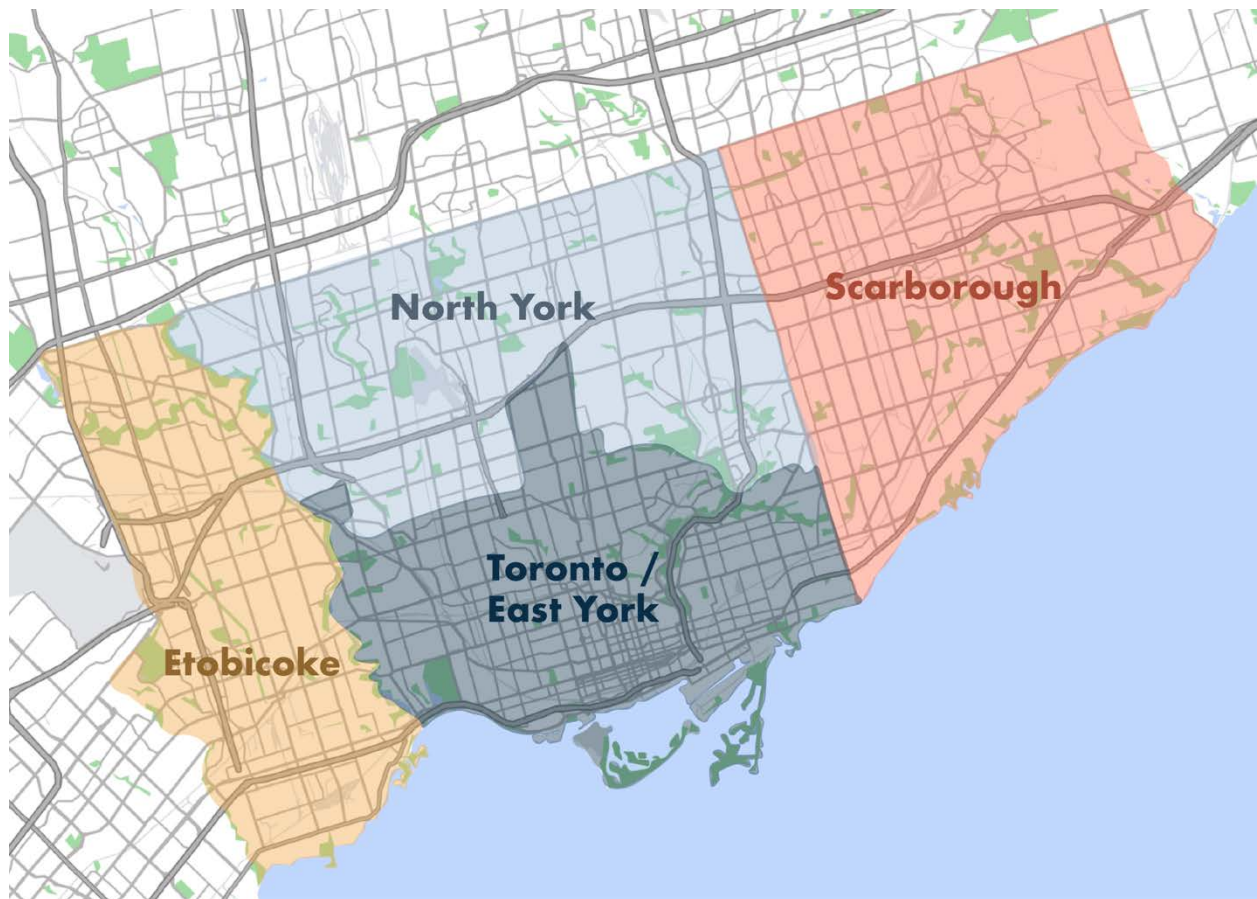
I chose to explore the question of belonging at the city level rather than the neighourhood level for a few reasons. Firstly, Jane's Walks occur across the entire city, with individuals going on walks both within and outside of the neighbourhood they call home. To choose a neighbourhood and investigate whether partaking in Jane's Walk in that neighbourhood helped individuals feel a sense of belonging there leads to logistical issues (do I look at residents and/or non-residents of the neighbourhood, and how can I determine residential status when conducting certain methods like observations) and limits the sample size. Secondly, as I mentioned in the literature review (section 2.1), understanding whether neighbourhoods are super-diverse is complicated,

whereas for cities it is more straight-forward. Thirdly, even Jane Jacobs herself has noted the limitations of conceptions of the 'neighbourhood', questioning whether it "has any meaning at all", pointing to the fact that city people are mobile, navigating the entire city and beyond for various resources such as jobs, shops, entertainment, and schools (Jacobs, 1961: 151). While the idea of a certain neighbourhood might be clear in my mind when operationalizing the study, it might not be the case for research participants.

3.4.2 Survey analysis

The first step to analyzing the survey was to clean the data (Toepoel, 2017: 198). I removed responses if individuals were not living in Toronto, had not participated in the festival before, and/or were involved in an organizational capacity (on the steering committee, as an Executive Director, or as a founder). 20 responses were removed—while 110 survey responses were received, only 90 were analyzed.

After this, I conducted basic calculations to assess the breakdown of respondents by demographics and participation in the festival (for instance percentage of respondents under or above Toronto's median income, percentage of respondents by age range, percentage living in the city centre versus the outskirts, etc.).

For sections on place attachment with Toronto and experiences with Jane's Walk, I conducted two forms of analysis. First, I simply calculated the percentage of respondents at each level of the likert scale (for instance, percentage who agreed, disagreed, etc.) to enable comparison across questions. Then, I prepared certain data for deeper analysis. Recognizing that the options 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' are ordinal data (Johnson & James, 2004: 151), I assigned a score for each level, where 'strongly disagree' was -2, 'disagree' was -1, 'neutral' was 0, etc. I also created scores to imply sequence to other ordinal or categorical data like age ranges (e.g., 25-34 was given 1, 35-44 was given 2, etc.), and to imply categorical data to whether somebody was born in Canada (where a 0 was given) or outside of Canada (where a 1 was given). This process served two purposes. Firstly, I was able to calculate participants' average 'place attachment score' and 'Jane's Walk experience score' based on how they rated each statement and compare averages across demographic background—for instance, did averages differ based on individuals' cultural background or income level? Secondly, I was able to run a multi-variate regression (Johnson & James, 2004) to provide a model of probability for whether certain demographics (age, gender, place of residence in Toronto, income level, birthplace, cultural background, length of time in Toronto, and number of Jane's Walk festivals attended) could predict one's attachment to Toronto.

Findings derived through the regression model should be interpreted with caution. Given both my amateur background in qualitative data and statistical analysis as well as the limited sample size (only 90 responses), it should be taken as an exercise in unearthing patterns between belonging and other demographic data rather than statistical representative data suggesting empirically derived patterns of causation or correlation.

Finally, qualitative analysis was conducted for the one open-ended question around whether—and if so, how—Jane's Walk has led participants to feel part of a community. Each response was coded inductively as in the process described in section 3.4.3 below, and then patterns between responses emerged as their own analytical categories (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019: 66), the findings of which can be seen in section 4.1.

3.4.3 Qualitative analysis: interviews, observations, and walking tour

As shown in figure 2, the data analyzed for interviews, observations, and the walking tour were in the form of interview transcripts and field notes. I followed a three-step qualitative analysis process (Miles et al., 2014) to analyze each:

1. Reduce the data
2. Visualize the data
3. Draw conclusions and verify with the data

Reducing the data involved first categorizing—applying a code to the data that implies a bigger phenomenon. I used MAXQDA to analyze the data for each method: transcripts for the interviews, and field notes for the observations and walking tour. While coding in MAXQDA, I conducted a deductive category (or 'code') formation, followed by an inductive subcode formation (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019: 97). For the interviews, the deductive formation of categories stemmed from the interview questions I developed for the interviews (see Annex 2.5 and 2.7). The categories can be understood either as structural coding (Saldaña, 2021: 130-131) as they act as a labeling or indexing device, or as descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2021: 134), as the categories identify the topic rather than the content.

For the subcodes ("a second-order tag assigned after a primary code to detail or enrich the entry"—Saldaña, 2021: 121), I primarily use a mix of affective coding methods including in vivo (to investigate subjectivities of the human experience—see Saldaña, 2021: 159) and content-based or thematic categories (to structure the content—see Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019: 66). Analytical categories (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019: 66) also began to emerge in this stage of analysis.

3.5 Positionality

I am a master's student in urban studies in Europe but will be conducting this research on the unceded and occupied territory of Tkaronto, a territory colonially known as Toronto. The original caretakers of this land are the Huron-Wendat, Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and most recently, The Mississaugas of the Credit River First Nations. I acknowledge that this environment represents a highly charged context of settler-Indigenous

relations, opening up tensions as well as possible new forms of engagement across ways of being, ways of knowing, and communication (Jimmy et al., 2019).

I do not claim to be an objective observer of social phenomena—I acknowledge that my research design, process, and analysis are informed by the multiple positions I embody: cis-gendered, able-bodied, white settler woman born in Canada, consumer of arts and culture within a neoliberal context, precarious student, former non-professional/community actress, former business student and corporate consultant, and Co-Chair of Jane's Walk—the object of study. None of these positions render me an objective observer, but rather a situated participant with connections to and interests in grassroots urban movements in Toronto.

In researching the topic of belonging in Toronto, I am in a position of privilege in being a cis-gendered, able-bodied, nomadic-by-choice, white settler woman born in Canada. The people involved in my research may come from different backgrounds from myself—whether they moved to Canada without speaking either official language; experience discrimination due to their race, ethnicity, or gender identity; experience limitations because of not being able-bodied; or otherwise. Such lived experiences certainly influence one's ability to find a sense of belonging in the city and are completely foreign experiences for me. Additionally, while I may have experienced difficulty in finding a sense of belonging in foreign places, such experiences are primarily reserved to my experiences in this master's program, where I lived in four different cities (Brussels, Vienna, Copenhagen, and Madrid) over two years, or when I moved to Toronto from Vancouver. These are privileged experiences of self-inflicted uprooting for the sake of professional or academic pursuits and are very different from those who, for instance, were forced to move from the place they call home to Toronto. These differences in lived experience between myself and those I am connecting with for my research is bound to influence various components of the research: for instance, the questions I ask and the way I ask them, the power dynamics between us, and/or individuals' comfort levels with opening up to me on certain topics.

My role as Co-Chair of Jane's Walk brings with it subjectivities. There are many advantages and reasons for why I chose to study a group with which I have close ties (see Holmes, 2020: 6). I have easier access to resources that would help with research (for instance, mailing lists, founders of the group for interview purposes, etc.), I can ask more meaningful questions due to a priori knowledge, and individuals may be more trusting that the research is taken seriously when somebody from Jane's Walk is leading the research. That said, being an insider also means that I may be unknowingly biased, individuals might perceive that my research is self-serving, they may have perceptions that I 'know more' than them about the organization hence creating uncomfortable power dynamics; and as a result they may have a fear of saying something 'stupid' that renders them less willing to share sensitive information or ask certain questions.

I acknowledge that I may not be fully aware of how I and others have constructed their identities, and that understanding my own positionality is an ongoing work-in-progress that takes considerable conscious reflection, self-awareness, and effort. I am committed to anti-racist, anti-colonial, and anti-oppression in my work, and will remain committed to the work even when I fail or it becomes difficult or uncomfortable.

4. Findings

4.1 Profile of a Jane's Walker – survey insights

As described in section 3.3.3, the purpose of the survey was largely to better understand the typical 'profile' of a Jane's Walk participant in terms of demographics and to begin observing any patterns in Jane's Walk participants and their relationship with place. A total of 110 responses were received through the survey but after cleaning the data, only 90 were used.

This section walks through the survey findings in a similar structure that was used for the survey itself. I start with section 4.1.1, which provides an overview of the demographic background of respondents (and hence, Jane's Walk participants). In 4.1.2, I summarize associations between Jane's Walk participants and general place attachment/identity to Toronto (and hence, belonging). In 4.1.3, I identify connections made between participation in the festival and belonging or sense of community in Toronto.

4.1.1 Who participates in Jane's Walk?

While the survey responses cannot be extrapolated to account for the entire pool of people who have attended or led a Jane's Walk, it can serve as a general proxy for the general type of individuals who participate. In doing so, we can extrapolate that a 'typical Jane's Walker'—e.g. somebody who has attended or led walks from 2007 to now—is more likely to be middle aged, female identifying, living in the 'inner city' of Toronto (rather than Etobicoke, Scarborough, or North York), a Toronto resident for over 10 years, and of European cultural descent. The graphs below illustrate these findings.

Figure 15: Age of survey respondents
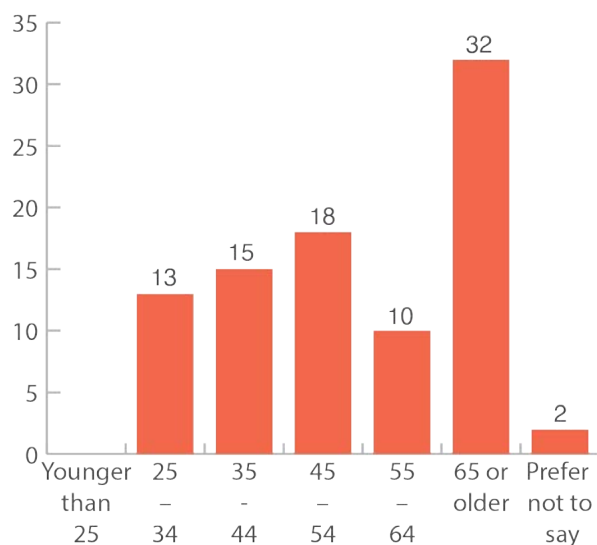
66.7% (n=60) of respondents were 45 or older (with over a third being 65 or older) and none were under 25. This suggests that Jane's Walk is popular among those who are middle-aged or older.

Figure 16: Gender identity of survey respondents
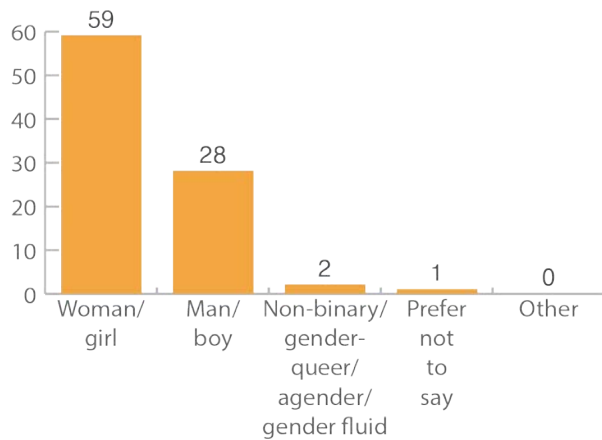
65.6% (n=59) of respondents self-identified as woman/girl—a surprising finding that suggests Jane's Walk may be more popular among female-identifying people. Note that transwoman/girl and transman/boy were also included as options but nobody selected them, hence they are not shown here.

Figure 17: Survey respondents' time spent living in Toronto
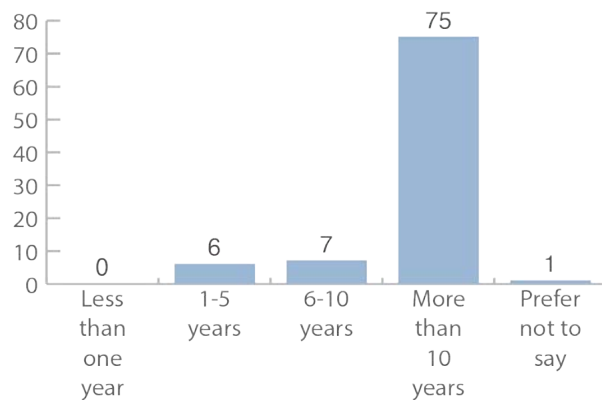
The fact that 83.3% (n=75) respondents have lived in Toronto for more than ten years leads to questions around whether Jane's Walk is most attractive to individuals who are already settled in and familiar with Toronto, rather than newcomers.

Figure 18: Survey respondents' total household income
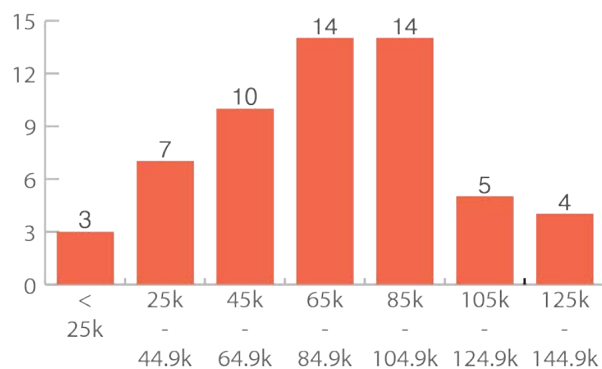
Of those who disclosed their income (17 did not, and are not shown in this graph), 46.6% (n=36) were below Toronto's median income ($85,000 as of 2021 – City of Toronto, 2022) and 53.4% (n=39) were above, suggesting that those who participate in Jane's Walk may lean toward very slightly higher income levels, although the difference is small.

Figure 19: Survey respondents' place of residence

- Etobicoke York
- North York
- Scarborough
- Toronto / East York
- Prefer not to say
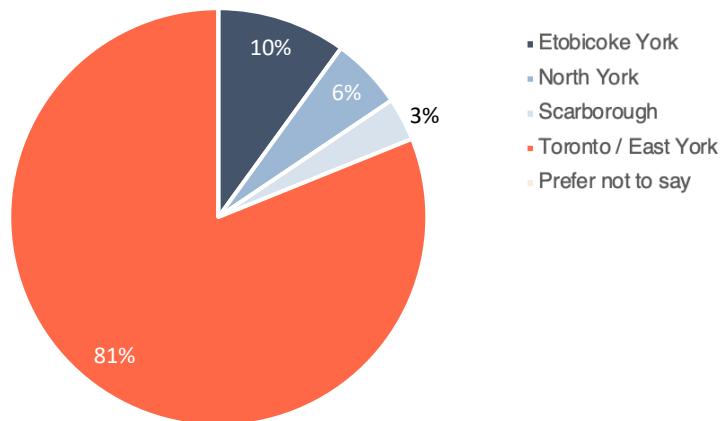
81% (n=73) of respondents live in Toronto/East York, which aligns with the fact that most walks during the festival tend to occur in the Toronto/East York area and the downtown 'core' rather than the outskirts of the city (see section 3.4.1 for a map and description of Toronto geography).

Figure 20: Survey respondents' language(s) spoken at home

- English
- English & other language
- Other language(s)
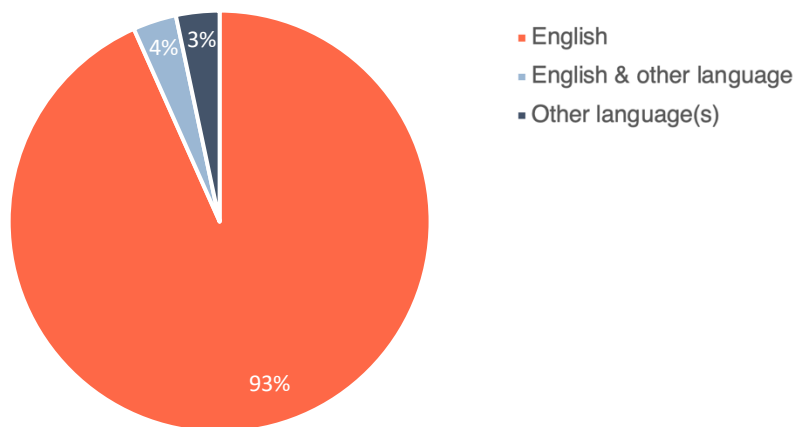
93% (n=84) of respondents mentioned English was the language spoken most often at home. In Toronto, 44.90% of people speak a non-official language at home (City of Toronto, 2022). This finding cannot be used as a direct comparison: the survey simply asked for the language spoken *most often* at home, not *all* languages spoken at home.

Figure 21: Survey respondents' cultural origins

- African
- European
- East Asian
- South Asian
- Southeast Asian
- First Nations or Indigenous
- Latinx
- Middle Eastern
- Caribbean
- Other
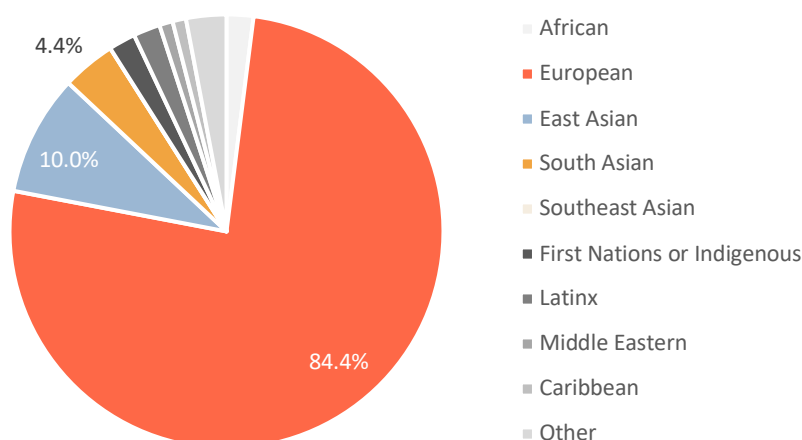
Respondents were asked to identify their cultural origins, and to select all that applied. 84.4% (n=76) of respondents selected European. East Asian was the second most selected option at 10% (n=9), then South Asian at 4.4% (n=4). We can extrapolate from these findings the assumption that most respondents are Caucasian, of European descent.

Figure 22: Survey respondents' place of birth

66.3% (n=60) of respondents were born in Canada, which is over 12% higher than the Toronto average (53.97% - Statistics Canada, 2022). Like the insights gleaned from knowing most respondents have lived in Toronto for over 10 years, this suggests that people who participate in Jane's Walk are perhaps likely to be already well established and settled in not just the city, but the country as well.

These survey insights suggest that people who participate in Jane's Walk may not reflect the diversity of the city particularly in terms of gender identity, cultural background, income/class level, and country of origin. If the pool of nearly 100 individuals who responded to the survey are somewhat representative of the entire pool of Jane's Walk participants, then we may begin to wonder whether people who gravitate toward Jane's Walks are more likely to come from a place of privilege (white and upper-class), and, because of this and their age (more likely to be in or near a stage of retirement), have more time and resources to be able to participate in these community walks.

Such connections must be made with caution given the limited sample size and the limitations in the survey being released through only social media and email newsletters. That said, regarding the second research sub-question (see section 3.1), around whether Jane's Walk might create a sense of belonging for some over others, we can start hypothesizing that this may be the case. Such findings would be in line with literature on participation, that sees the 'usual suspects' in community, non-profit or civic participation activities as those of a middle or upper class, with time and resources to spare (Jupp, 2008; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). This section of the survey, however, simply explored *who* participates in Jane's Walk and not whether through it, they find a sense of belonging. This topic is explored in the next two sections: 4.1.2 and 4.1.3.

4.1.2 Jane's Walk participants and general place attachment

In the survey, Lewicka (2005, 2010, 2011)'s likert scale for assessing place attachment—a critical component of belonging—was used to assess the extent to which people who participate in Jane's Walk are attached to Toronto. The graphs below display the findings.

Figure 23: Survey respondents' place attachment to Toronto
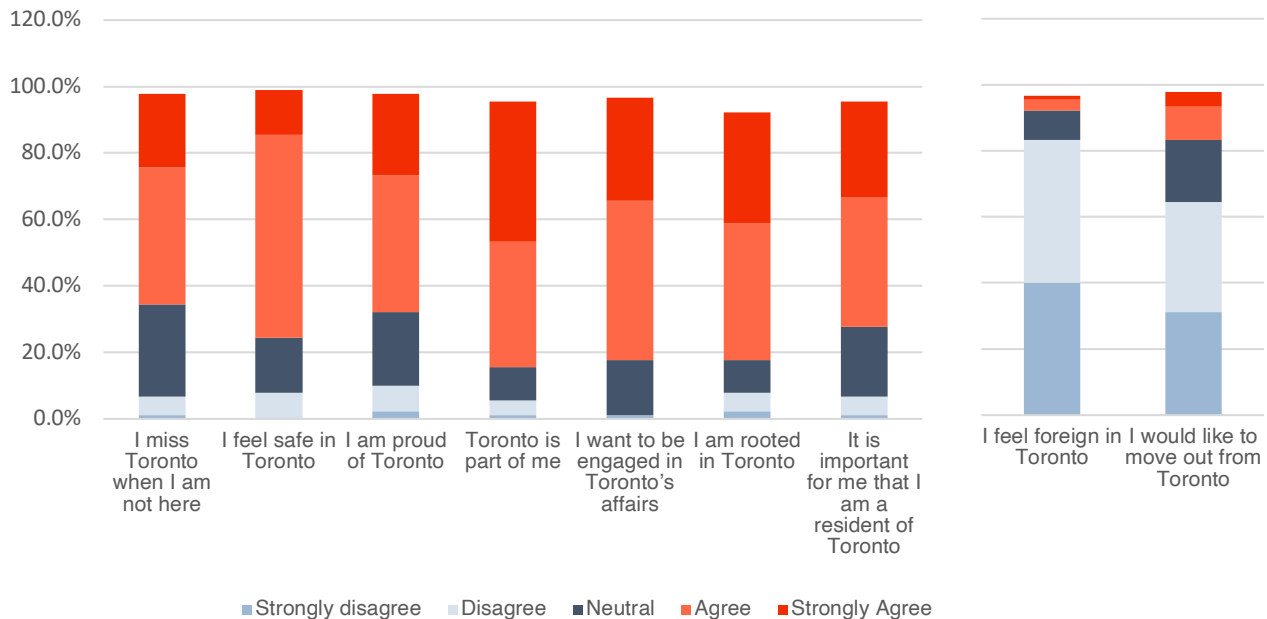
People who participate in Jane's Walk display evidence of place attachment, as seen in the above graph. But might there be characteristics that determine whether individuals have greater propensity for attachment to the city? I ran a multi-variable regression analysis to assess whether the following factors could predict whether somebody felt attached to the city: 1) age; 2) gender identity; 3) place of residence in Toronto; 4) income level; 5) place of birth (inside or outside Canada); 6) cultural background; 7) length of time in Toronto; and 8) number of Jane's Walk festivals attended. The only factor that had any power to possibly predict whether one felt attached to Toronto (p-value of 0.035—see Annex 1.3 for full regression results) was the length of time they had lived in the city (people who have spent more than 10 years in the city feel more attached to it). Additionally, while it didn't show up as a significant factor in the regression analysis, ratings for Toronto attachment were also on average lower for those with below-median income, than for those with above-median income. These findings can be seen in the graphs on the following page.

Figure 24: Survey respondents' place attachment 'score'[1] based on years lived in Toronto
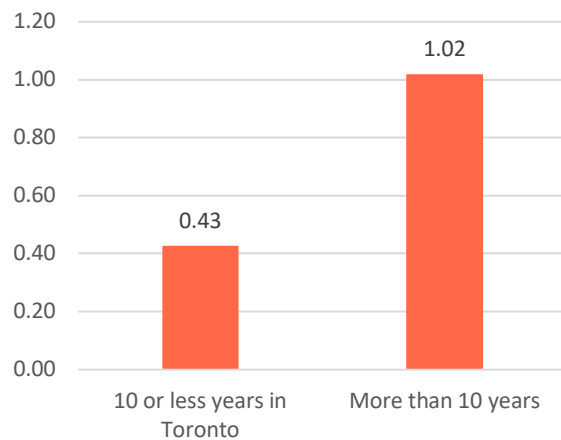
Figure 25: Survey respondents' place attachment 'score'[1] based on total household income level
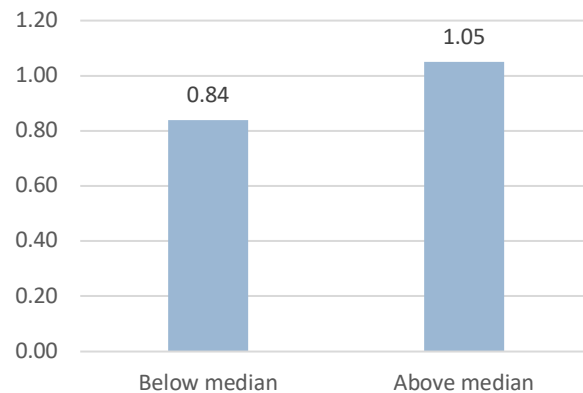
While this is by no means statistically significant analysis, these graphs show that those who have spent more than ten years living in the city and those with above median income on average display stronger place attachment to Toronto. These findings support insights from other studies, where, as individuals stay longer in a community, they develop stronger social ties and associated perceptions of togetherness with others (Manzo & Perkins, 2006; Ryan et al., 2005; Wenlin & Seungahn, 2022). They contradict findings that attachment doesn't differ based on one's length of time spent living there (Savage et al., 2004b). They also support findings from research studies in Toronto, where sense of belonging was found to be higher among those who describe their income as "good enough" and lower among those who say their income is "not enough" (Parkin & Ayer, 2022).

Through this analysis, we see that people who participate in Jane's Walk are naturally attached to the city. The question becomes whether people who are *already* more attached to the city are more likely to participate in Jane's Walk (a finding we see frequently in literature on participation—see Wenlin & Seungahn, 2022; Benoit et al., 2022; Chavis & Pretty, 1999; Kim & Ball-Rokeach, 2006), or if participation in Jane's Walk can help *deepen* attachment to the city. Such a question is difficult to unearth through a survey—while the next section (4.1.3) describes insights from the survey that explored the general connection between participation in Jane's Walk and deeper feelings of belonging, the question was assessed more thoroughly in the next portion of fieldwork—interviews. Findings can be found in sections 4.3-4.5.

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[1]The place attachment 'score' was determined by assigning the following numbers based on individuals' responses to the place attachment statements highlighted in figure 23: strongly disagree (-2); disagree (-1); neutral (0); agree (1); strongly agree (2). For the last two statements ("I feel foreign in Toronto" and "I would like to move out of Toronto"), the scores were flipped so that strongly agree received a -2, strongly agree a 2, etc.

4.1.3 Jane's Walk participants & community/belonging through Jane's Walk

Respondents were asked to assess the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with a range of statements connecting Jane's Walk participation to community and belonging. As shown in the graph below, respondents agreed with most statements, demonstrating a tie between individuals' participation in the festival and connection with the surrounding community. The statement that didn't seem to resonate as strongly with participants was the second one below, on whether through Jane's Walk they have developed more empathy from people who are different from them. Subsequent interviews led to a finding that organizers' and participants' opinions on this statement differed—see section 4.4.3.

Figure 26: Survey respondents' associations between Jane's Walk and community
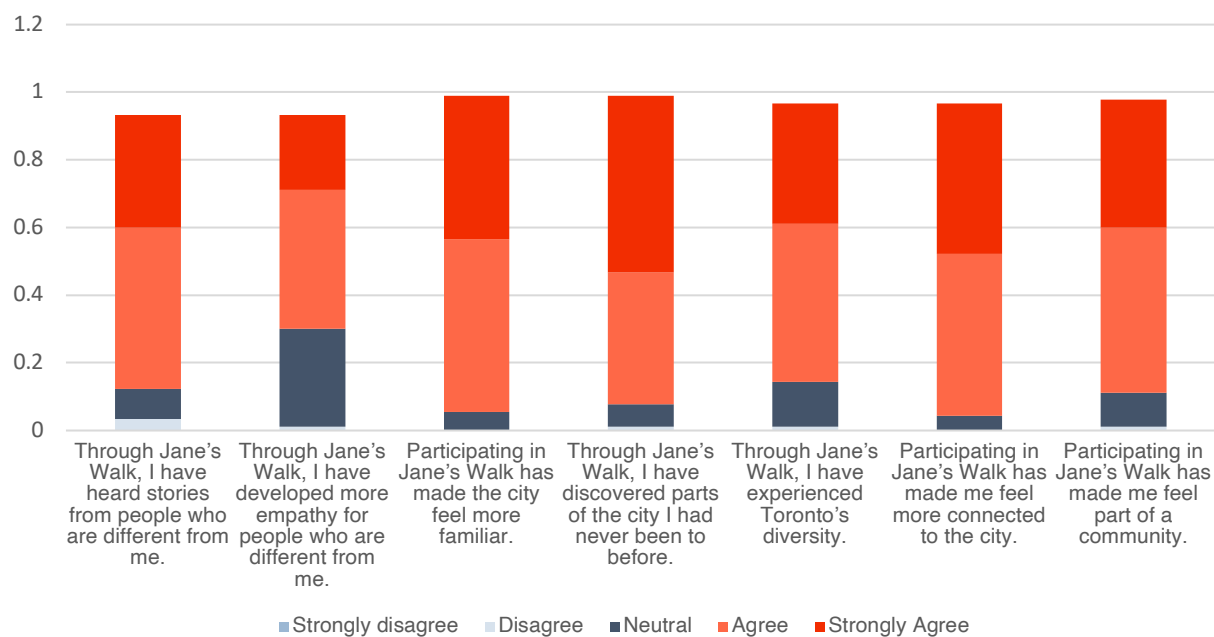
Figure 27: Survey respondents' feelings of being part of a community through Jane's Walk by cultural background
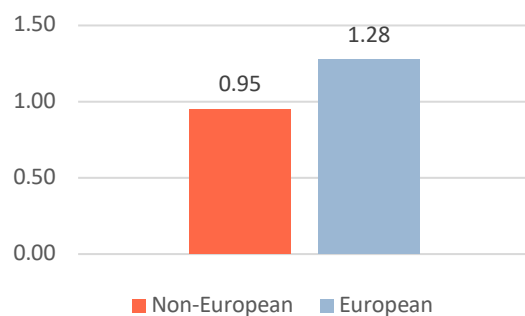
Numbers represent average rating across respondents, where strongly disagree = -2; disagree = -1; neutral = 0; agree = 1, & strongly agree = 2.

In the final statement in the graph, 86.7% (n=78) of respondents stated Jane's Walk has made them feel part of a community. A multi-variable regression analysis showed no statistically significant results indicating that certain demographics made people more likely to agree with this statement. However, figure 27 to the left shows that on average, those from a European background rated this statement higher than others, leading to questions on experiences of the festival for racialized vs. non-racialized people.

A follow-up open field question was asked after respondents rated this last statement on the likert scale. They were asked to "Please explain briefly your response to the last statement, 'Participating in Jane's Walk has made me feel part of a community.' Why or why not?". The qualitative responses were analyzed through coding, and the following themes emerged:

Learning & developing awareness

Learning about the city/neighbourhood, resources available to me, city history

Meeting people

Meeting like-minded people, people I wouldn't have met otherwise, passionate walk leaders

Relating with others

Relating to others' experiences, hearing stories that resonate with me, feeling that 'other people care too'

Discovering

Discovering unfamiliar parts of the city, discovering difference, discovering places I normally only pass by

Familiarizing

'Getting to know' Toronto, contextualizing the city, making it feel less anonymous

Contributing

Feeling like I'm contributing to the community

Sharing

Sharing stories, sharing/opening my community with/to others

Deepening appreciation

Deepening my appreciation for my city/neighbourhood, for its history, for the city's diversity

Being part of something bigger

'Taking ownership' of the city together, building civic society, festival as a political force, citizen-led movement

Feeling connected

Feeling connected to place, to history, to the future

Celebrating

A celebration of Toronto, of diversity

Recognizing the limitations in using survey responses to provide a generative definition of complex concepts like 'belonging' and 'community', these themes merely acted as a starting point for how individuals conceptualize the meaning of community as well as general reasons for partaking in Jane's Walk activities. We see reinforcement of the idea that 'feeling part of a community' evades rigorous definition and is interpreted differently by everyone. Jane's Walk has helped people feel part of a community for reasons that might be tied to commonly held conceptualizations of community (e.g. meeting people, relating to others or some element of 'togetherness' as in Lehner et al., 2022; Ball-Rokeach et al., 2001; Manzo & Perkins, 2006; Vogl, 2016), and others less commonly held (e.g. discovering unfamiliar parts of the city, getting to know the city). Probing on perceptions of community and belonging, including understanding why 13.3% of respondents were neutral toward or disagreed that Jane's Walk made them feel part of a community, was part of interviews, the next stage of fieldwork.

4.2 Conceptualizing what it means to belong (amid super-diversity)

A portion of the fieldwork (namely the interviews and participatory walk) was aimed at better understanding the notion of belonging itself and what it means to belong in super-diverse urban contexts given the lack of research in this realm (see first research sub-question, section 3.1). As discussed in the literature review (section 2), the term super-diversity emphasizes the multi-dimensionality of diversity beyond ethnicity and requires consideration of the situatedness of a diversity of individuals (Vertovec, 2007). In this section, then, I move beyond essentialist dichotomies of newcomers/'outsidedness' versus natives/'insidedness' (and associated questions of assimilation and inclusion), to discuss belonging in super-diverse Toronto inductively, as experienced by my interviewees (participants) and walk attendees. This section and my findings from this part of the research could serve as a thesis in and of themselves—only high-level insights are shared based on relevancy to the research question.

Interviewees describe feeling accepted and understood as an essential component to feeling a sense of belonging. It was important for individuals that, even if they have different perspectives from somebody else, that they felt that they were in a place where those differences and they as a person were understood and accepted, naturally leading them to feel like they were in a place they could be their true selves. Toronto was often described as a place that is open and welcoming toward difference, and so most individuals had described experiencing a sense of belonging first-hand in the city. One interviewee described an example of this when one of her colleagues was made aware of the correct pronunciation of her name:

> *"… he was like, 'oh my god, this is how we say your name. I didn't know ... So I'm gonna do that now' … This gives that warm feeling 'awwwwe', it's nice! You know, it's a very small little thing. That's like, okay, people [in Toronto] are worried, people are interested in making this right … they are able or open to accept me, you know?"*
>
> *- Thais*

Another described feelings of being welcomed into cultures that were not her own:

> *"I'm coming from this mixed-race family. And so my odd looking family, we'll go into any random restaurant, like the amazing restaurants in Scarborough … I have not generally experienced the sense of like, 'you're not who this restaurant is for'."*
>
> *- Sarah*

In this way, the degree to which individuals feel welcome and accepted in the city seems influenced by the city's super-diversity itself. When people in the city are accustomed to difference—of background, opinion, language spoken, or other factors—the idea of diversity not only becomes "commonplace" (Wessendorf, 2013) in that it becomes 'the norm', but it can subsequently lead people to be more accepting of others who are different from them. While it's difficult to extrapolate Toronto's accepting and welcoming attitude across all individuals and lived experiences, it is a perspective that was reflected quite unanimously across both interviewees and walk attendees.

That said, during the stop on my participatory walking tour that focussed on belonging amid diversity, there was a discussion where some attendees expressed a more critical view. I asked, "how do you think living amid diversity impacts belonging?", and the first woman to answer (a Black woman from South Africa) answered, "isolating", describing how while there are many different groups of people from all over the world in Toronto, they largely stick to people from their culture, and that she hadn't been able to find many South African groups of people to be part of. She said, "All the little communities get along but are also so separate at the same time." Others shared similar views. Somebody who grew up in Scarborough felt that while Toronto is diverse, specific neighbourhoods remain insular. A self-described "old white lady" described how although she lives in Parkdale, she doesn't fit in with the Tibetan community there, so feels she doesn't really belong either.

Apart from these perspectives, however, others' contributions were more in line with perspectives shared in the interviews—that they do feel Toronto is a welcoming place, in large part due to the diversity of individuals who live there. A Filipino man who grew up in Switzerland in a town where there were only about "ten other Asian families" described having "a distinct home in Canada", as there were more ethnicities present than in the international school he went to. A man from the United States felt that in his home country and hometown there's more of a 'melting pot' mentality with pressure to conform and assimilate with those around you, rather than recognizing that everybody "has their own spice" they can add to the mix (which is more the mentality in Toronto). A man with an Iranian background who had just moved to Toronto described Vancouver, the place he moved from, as far more homogenous in terms of interests, and that the move to Toronto was quite stimulating because he believed it offered a group for everyone to find belonging in, no matter how niche the interest.

Apart from this last man, all individuals' associations with diversity were specific to ethnicity which is merely one component of super-diversity. I argue this shows that it's impossible to think of super-diversity without acknowledging ethnicity given that it (an influx of migration) forms the basis of the concept (Vertovec, 2007). Furthermore, the perspectives shared mirror some scholarly debates on the influence of ethnic diversity on individuals' feelings of both in-group and national belonging (Wu et al., 2011). We might connect the South African woman and others with similar perspectives with the idea of *conflict perspective*—that ethnic diversity creates competition for different groups, leading to a higher sense of belonging to one's ethnic group and a lower sense of belonging to Canada (or in this instance Toronto). We might connect the others' perspectives to contact theory (Putnam, 2007; Allport, 1954), where

"exposure to diversity fosters a superordinate sense of belonging and deemphasizes the importance of in–group/out–group distinctions" (Wu et al., 2011: 376).

When I brought up these theories on the walk, there was some chuckling and headshaking. Particularly after the rich discussion we just had, it seemed impossible to encapsulate the entirety of belonging amid diversity into a framework that describes it as 'either this or that', particularly in a way that seemingly pinned individuals against one another's cultures. The reality is that, as I learned in interviews and on my walk, true to the crux of super-diversity, whether and how one finds a sense of belonging in Toronto and the ways that they define it, are informed by a variety of factors and lived experiences—from how long they've lived in Toronto, to where they moved from, to the nature of their upbringing. In other words, "Belonging takes into account the fluidity and multi-dimensionality of identification processes" (Lehner et al., 2022: 768). While most individuals I engaged with would describe Toronto as a welcoming, open place, and would agree that they 'belong' in Toronto, feeling welcome does not necessarily equate belonging. We see this as well in the South African walk attendee's comments—Toronto is welcoming but she hasn't personally found belonging there.

Despite naturally varied experiences and opinions of belonging, common themes across research participants exist. Belonging as *becoming* or a process (Wright, 2015) was something that came up consistently although in different ways, particularly among newcomers, who spoke to processes they associate with their own search for belonging, regardless of whether they define themselves as currently belonging to the city:

Table 5: Stories of belonging as becoming from fieldwork

NAME	MOVED FROM	MOMENTS AND PROCESSES ASSISTING WITH BELONGING
Taylen	Chicago, USA	***Familiarizing themselves with the city*** and knowing where to go for certain things—from good bread to dental services to annual arts and culture festivals.
Sofia	Athens, Greece	***Learning the proper 'protocols' in Toronto***: for instance, how to navigate winter attire in Toronto after, as a child, she was made fun in school for not bringing an extra pair of shoes to wear inside.
Sarah	N/A – born in Toronto	Similar to Sofia above, ***getting to know the "social codes" of the city*** and feeling as though there's no "hidden curriculum" for how to behave.
Thais	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	***Building a social circle*** both for practical (e.g. job-hunting) purposes as well as social (e.g. having a community of people who, even if they don't come from the same place as you, accept you and are interested in you).

Additionally, individuals associate certain common *feelings* as indicative of belonging: accepted, safe, comfortable, familiar, understood, and 'at home'. They describe certain human and more-than-human *relations* (Wright, 2015) as critical to finding belonging: relations with those who

accept them unconditionally like friends or family, relations with those who help them find their footing in a new place, or even relations with themselves (migrants in particular) through questions of where they truly 'are from'.

The question of what it means to belong amid super-diversity in Toronto is one that warrants in-depth empirical analysis that was outside the scope of this thesis. Looking beneath the superficial dichotomy of either belonging or not, into the emotions, relations, and processes that one experiences when navigating personal identifications with others and places (Wright, 2005) is more revealing. Impossible to encapsulate into definitive categories articulating the causal effects of diversity on belonging, definitions and experiences of belonging amid super-diversity are just as diverse as those who inhabit the super-diverse locale.

4.3 Jane's Walk and feelings of belonging

The findings in this and the next two sections (4.4 and 4.5) derive primarily from interviews with participants and organizers, but also in some instances the survey. They provide insights relevant to the primary research question, on how participation in Jane's Walk might influence feelings of belonging. As belonging is conceptualized as emotional, relational, and a process (Wright, 2015—see section 2.4.2), and hence was split into three sections.

I begin with belonging as an emotional affiliation (Wood & Waite, 2011: 201), analyzing whether people associate their involvement in the festival with *feeling* a sense of belonging. When asked directly, participants are hesitant to connect their Jane's Walk experiences with such feelings, although some do. Organizers, on the other hand, see the clear *potential* for a direct tie, both in theory through the mission of the organization and in practice through their personal experiences leading and attending walks. They acknowledge, however, that because of the organic and non-prescriptive nature of the organization and festival, some walks may achieve this in practice, while others do not.

4.3.1 Belonging beyond or 'deeper than' Jane's Walk

Jane's Walk unassociated with feelings of belonging

As demonstrated in the quotes below, participants often associate Jane's Walk with the opportunity to explore and learn more about their neighbourhood or city, and rarely do they see participating in walks as leading to anything deeper than that.

> *I don't really see them as a thing about... going on a Jane's walk I feel like I belong. … Other people who maybe are more recent newcomers or something might find it helps them feel like they belong? I'm just guessing here. For myself, as I say, I*

*go, learn about different aspects that I haven't known about
before or that strike my fancy."*

- Fran

*"I think [Jane's Walk] does make me feel connected to the city
or neighbourhood, but it's not always top of mind, it's more just
like oh yeah, this is going on and it could be really interesting."*

- Sarah

*"When I think of Jane's Walks, I think of … like the ones on the
east end, which were like, very interesting, like, historical walks
around the area. And it was super interesting … but I don't
know that that, to me, is what gives me that feeling of
community or belonging. Like, it's still valuable. And I like it. But
it's something else."*

- Taylen

Interviewees sometimes had caveats to their answers. For instance, one interviewee saw the *potential* for Jane's Walk to elicit feelings of belonging but felt that because she wasn't the kind of person to follow up or actively reach out and connect with others (organizers or other people on walks, for instance), she had never built a community through it. This leads to an interesting insight that building a community and finding a sense of belonging are active rather than passive acts—they do not happen *to* someone, but require effort on their part. Another shared that she doesn't quite feel as though she belongs anywhere, due to a history of strained relationships with family, colleagues, and others. If finding a sense of belonging with close connections has been so difficult, she felt, finding a sense of belonging through transitory walks like those offered through Jane's Walk was highly improbable. Finally, Taylen (from the last quote above) felt it was disingenuous to say that Jane's Walk doesn't go "deeper than" simply learning more about one's surroundings and that there is naturally some sort of connectedness or community that ensues. So while Jane's Walk does lead to something deeper than 'just learning', they questioned whether they want it to, whether it 'needs' to, and whether this would even be possible "through a festival of that sort".

Similar perspectives can be seen in the survey responses. While most open-ended survey responses were individuals' descriptions of how Jane's Walk made them feel more part of a community, there were a few that were ambivalent toward this connection just as many of the interviewees:

*"Walks have been interesting and great to hear different
perspectives and experiences but hasn't [sic] necessarily made
me feel more of an active connection to other community
members and initiatives."*

- Survey respondent

*"[Jane's Walk has made me] more knowledgeable about my
neighbourhood / city. but, i [sic] already have my communities"*

- Survey respondent

Limitations due to nature of the festival

The nature of Jane's Walk is that anybody can lead a walk on any topic, and the organizers are intentionally 'hands off' or non-prescriptive when it comes to setting rules for how walks should be. Both organizers and participants expressed that Jane's Walk's organic nature is one of the things that makes it most difficult to find feelings of belonging through it—it may happen on some walks and not others, as described by this Jane's Walk organizer:

*"I think that the organization ultimately has to accept that
Jane's Walk will be effective in creating greater community
cohesion and a sense of belonging some of the time and in
other cases not, because it is such an organic, self-organized,
initiative. And that's the beauty of it. And it can happen because
it is like that. But I think the trade-off is that there will be some
walks that are amazing and really contribute to sense of
belonging and community engagement … but it could also not
be that."*

- Organizer 4

But what is it exactly, that makes some walks impactful in terms of cultivating a sense of belonging, and others not? One organizer describes it as being simply a matter of those who are attending the walk:

*"Jane's walk is all about alchemy. You know, it's sometimes
you get the right people in the right moment who are meant to*

connect, and sometimes you get just like, you know …'Hello',
then you go."

- Organizer 2

Other organizers, like the ones below, describe that it could also be a matter of the extent to which the walk truly mirrors a 'community-led walking conversation' over a walking tour, and whether the walk leader cultivates a space for organic conversation between strangers:

"I think there's always a risk that it turns into simply a tour, a
walking tour, and there's one person designing the tour and
leading it and doing all the talking … Really facilitating and
encouraging others to speak up and share is critical to that—
both for sense of effectiveness and a sense of belonging. … To
have a meaningful walk, it isn't just a tour, it's a walking
conversation."

- Organizer 4

"And you see, like, people seem to be standing in line and
deferring to the walk leader, and still acting like strangers in the
context of the walk itself, missing the community building kind
of aspiration of the movement and treating it like a commercial
walking tour, which has a very different social expectation. "

– Organizer 5

Additionally, the transitory nature of the festival places barriers on the extent to which participants are able to connect with each other or the surrounding community. The limitations due to Jane's Walk's ephemeral nature was described by both organizers and participants, such as Sofia below, who, when asked why other involvements she is part of (like volunteering) have led to feelings of belonging but involvement with Jane's Walk hasn't, said:

"I guess it's the regularity. And as I say more intimate, more
concrete, you get to talk to people, you get to kind of do more
things with them. Outside of the volunteering, I guess it's in
events … whether it's demonstrations, or going to a panel
discussion, and having some way to contribute in the city."

- Sofia

One of the organizers echoed the limitations of the ephemeral festival and its associated walks, describing any feelings of belonging or community cohesion that do ensue as temporary and fleeting:

"I think Jane's Walk puts us in a spontaneous, like, emergent community that then dissipates, and so you have … the whole spectrum of human feelings that emerge. Where you feel quickly bonded, and then you kind of lose everyone or you don't feel bonded at all."

– Organizer 5

Feelings of unbelonging through Jane's Walk

Not only might Jane's Walk *not* contribute to feelings of belonging, it may also contribute to feelings of *un*belonging. One participant felt as though he was excluded or not part of the 'in-group' at one of the festival's launch parties, which was a virtual trivia night during one of the festivals mid-COVID-19 pandemic:

"There was a launch party with ... a quiz …there was a sort of an in-group that knew one another and, and just didn't have much attraction for me … It's just that they all seemed to know one another and would laugh at the in-jokes. Which I had no idea what they were."

– Michael

An organizer described some instances of her feeling a sense of unbelonging—whether because the tour was more like a walking tour where she simply deferred to the walk leader and didn't engage with those around her, or because she wasn't recognized as someone involved with Jane's Walk from an organizational capacity:

"I have felt sometimes very much like, enriched in my belonging, and equally, there have been other moments where I have felt so alienated … In those walks [that are more like walking tours], especially in other cities, especially where I'm not known as somebody who's connected to the organization at all, I get a very different kind of perspective, which has sometimes been, yeah, lonely, or alienating."

- Organizer 5

4.3.2 Feelings of belonging as possible through Jane's Walk

While participants were relatively unanimous in their hesitations to attribute their involvement with a sense of belonging, there were instances where direct associations between the two were made. Organizers, for instance, see the notion of belonging as central to the mission of Jane's Walk, describing it in a way that almost directly opposes the quotes in the section above where participants describe Jane's Walk purely as a way to explore the city, devoid of anything deeper:

"And Jane's Walk is similar where notionally it's like 'oh yeah, what a nice thing to do. That must be fun, people talking about the history of the city' or whatever. No, that's not what it's about. It's about going with an open heart and open mind with a bunch of other people, sometimes three, sometimes 80. And sort of aligning your consciousness and your focus and seeing what happens."

– Organizer 2

Organizers also described some instances where, through Jane's Walk, either they themselves connected to feelings of belonging to and in the city, or they saw this connection in others. One organizer, for instance, associates feelings of belonging through Jane's Walk with feelings of devotion to the city:

"I do think that, you know, anytime I've been on one of those walks, I've had a greater sense of devotion to the city, of understanding a part of the city better. I mean they're really, really fantastic."

– Organizer 6

Another organizer told a story where she saw feelings of belonging manifested in youth, during a youth-led walk in Scarborough—one of the former suburbs outside of Toronto that has been historically quite negatively stigmatized (see section 3.4.1). This organizer was part of the Jane's Walk team that conducted outreach to and trained them to lead this walk:

"And so a lot of people did come to those things, they're places in the city they'd never discovered. So it was helpful for the population to get to know the city better, but it was really, really impactful on those kids who suddenly had a sense of belonging, and that they had a place. This was their place."

- Organizer 3

While most participants in interviews were hesitant to connect involvement with Jane's Walk with feelings of belonging, there were a few instances where they did. For example, when asked about feelings of belonging through Jane's Walk, one individual who has led several walks over the years describes how he used to feel a deeper sense of belonging and community in the earlier years of his involvement:

> *"I remember the first year ... I felt a little more part of the team, so to speak. I remember trucking over to I think it was a church on Bathurst Street to pick up a little flag that said, 'Jane's Walk' that I could fly … And, you know, I'd converse, they're always young, like you are. So conversing with those young folks. It was kind of fun ... And I felt a little more part of it."*
>
> *– Michael*

Michael felt a sense of belonging during the earlier days of the festival because he felt part of something bigger, like he was more deeply connected to the organizing team, was known and appreciated, and was integral to fulfilling the mission of Jane's Walk. He liked being part of the chaos and scrappiness of Jane's Walk—he said the festival had a "rough edge to it" and that him and the organizing team "were all kind of flying on the seat of our pants" together to make it happen.

To conclude, what is clear is that the importance and role of belonging as emotional (Wright, 2015) cannot be understated. The feelings that participants offered up generatively when openly discussing how it feels to belong in interviews (see section 4.2)—acceptance, comfort, familiarity, 'like home'—were notably absent from individuals' descriptions of participation in Jane's Walk. When people do attribute involvement with Jane's Walk to feelings of belonging, there are a few underlying reasons: they felt part of something bigger (in line with Hagerty et al.'s definition of belonging whereby one *feels* an "integral part of a system or environment" (1992: 173); they had the opportunity to connect more deeply with others on the walk as it evaded the typical schema of a 'walking tour'; or they developed deeper empathy with others from different lived experiences (in line with Manzo & Perkins' definition of belonging whereby one feels a sense of "mutual trust, social connections, shared concerns, and community values" (2006: 339)—more on this in section 4.4 below).

If these conditions are essential to fostering a sense of belonging through the festival—at least based on participants' and organizers' immediate associations with what a sense of belonging is or means—then the question becomes whether it is possible through a model like Jane's Walk which is by its nature ephemeral, non-prescriptive, and self-organized. The ephemeral nature as an impediment to fostering belonging supports findings from other studies where in order for (intercultural) interactions with others to be truly effective and lasting, they must be more habitual or frequent (Amin, 2002; Matejskova & Leitner, 2011) through places like clubs or community centres (Amin, 2002; Wessendorf & Phillimore, 2019).

4.4 Jane's Walk and relations of belonging

In this section, I extend beyond participants' and organizers' associations between Jane's Walk and sense or feelings of belonging, to explore belonging in relational, emergent ways (Wright, 2005). In attending Jane's Walks, individuals build relations with their surroundings—both human and non-human—deepening their connection to place and to others. In the previous section (4.3.2), we started to see interviewees connecting some of these relations (e.g. with the organizing committee, with the city, with others whose stories are different from theirs) to a deeper sense of belonging. Even if this connection is not made, however, rather than conceptualizing belonging as a status to hold or a state to embody, this section takes the view that "there is no pre-existing world to be reflected, to belong to", but rather, "we belong in deep relation to each other and our worlds" (Wright, 2015: 402-403). The relations built by and through Jane's Walk influence and shape the relationships participants have with their neighbourhood, their city, and their world. They are therefore integral to conceptualizing and understanding one's sense of belonging.

During analysis, all instances of relations built through Jane's Walk were coded thematically as relational, then inductively to form the following categories explored in this section: relations to place (4.4.1), relations to the city and its diversity (4.4.2), and relations to each other (4.4.3).

4.4.1 Building relations to place through Jane's Walk

From the survey results as well as interviews that in general, people who participate in Jane's Walk seem to demonstrate place attachment to the city—they feel a sense of comfort, security, and inclusion in this environment (see section 4.1.2). They also display place identity, because they often describe themselves in terms of belonging to Toronto. One goal of interviews was to understand whether participating in Jane's Walk can help build a sense of place identity and place attachment—two essential components to belonging (see Segers et al., 2021: 118)—or if people who already display those characteristics are predisposed to participating in Jane's Walk.

Jane's Walk is naturally associated with exploring the city and its neighbourhoods. When shown a visual with various reasons for attending Jane's Walk (see Annex 2.6), interviewees unanimously selected two that resonated with them the most: 'to learn more about my city or neighbourhood', and 'to see parts of the city I've never seen before'. Participants often expressed the sense of delight, wonder, or curiosity that can come from seeing a place they know well or visit often in a new light:

> *"We saw The Lost Rivers of Flemington Park. I was like, 'wow'.*
> *I go through there, you know, twice a week, and I had no idea*
> *that there were lots of rivers there. And sure enough, this*
> *young fellow put together this walk and, you know, we went*
> *under roads that… I didn't know that there was tunnels*
> *underneath. We looked down and saw water running under the*

ground … I mean, it's things that … in our busy lives we don't pick up on and it's really, really enlightening."

- Thomas

"One guy who took us into … one of those complicated curves around the 401 where like all the different on and off ramps happen and he took us into a spot where he was saying … how these roads could be designed better … He said … they're already building in three dimensions but not really thinking in terms of that. So that was kind of neat."

- Sarah

Additionally, participants described different ways that Jane's Walk had provided them the opportunity to discover new places:

"There's some neighborhoods that I've never spent any time in before and because of Jane's Walk, I was like, 'oh, that might actually be kind of interesting'. And I learned a lot more than I thought I was going to."

– Holly

"So mostly, I've been going [to walks in my neighbourhood], but then … I went to Islington village, which I didn't know anything about, that's in Etobicoke. And then I went on the other end to Danforth and Woodbine, so really looking at the east end. Both of those are neighborhoods that I just don't, you know, spend a lot of time in my life."

- Sofia

In this way, Jane's Walks appear to broaden the horizons of walkers, enabling them to look at the city—both places they know well and places they don't—differently. One of the organizers describes the sense of delight that can come from this kind of connectedness to place, even for newly gained knowledge or stories that might on the surface appear small or inconsequential:

"[Jane's Walk] reconnects us to a sense of wonder. Because you realize that part of why we live in cities is to have these really bespoke kind of individual and collective experiences. And it makes you look at the city differently, because you're like, 'oh, my God, someone had like, a really special moment

*on that bench. And like it changed their life'. So it fills you with
this sort of hope for cities that I think we need right now."*

– Organizer 2

Sometimes, however, the new knowledge gained about the context of a place can be less
'wonderful' and more harrowing. That said, learning about the distressing violent or conflict-
ridden realities of a place can be just as influential and informative as the stories above. One
participant describes how it felt to learn about the family a street in the city was named after:

*"If it wasn't for Jane's Walk, I would have never learned like,
the horribleness of the Jarvis family. And a street that I often
feel a bit unsafe walking along but a street I do like. … You
learn, like who these streets were named after and who they
could have been."*

- Holly

Sofia, another participant, mentioned that learning about certain communities' fights against
injustice can ignite a willingness to contribute to a certain cause and become more actively
involved in one's community:

*"[Jane's Walk] really lets you understand what's at stake, like
what we might be losing in terms of the heritage … but also the
communities if they're getting pushed out, you know, because
of economic reasons … It lets you know who's fighting to
preserve something and maybe you can support that."*

- Sofia

Developing place-based knowledge—whether related to threats to a place's heritage, the dark
history of the person a street was named after, the unknown natural wonders of a place, or
simply a stranger's story of a place—deepens participants' context of the city. But does it lead to
greater attachment or a sense of belonging? In terms of place attachment, one could argue that
this deeper context and knowledge of certain parts of the city can lead to "an affective and
secure link" (Segers et al., 2021: 118) with the city—a greater sense of comfort, security and
inclusion. Perhaps the newly gained familiarity through these walks breeds comfort, or the
inspiration they ignite to be more involved in certain causes in the community builds a sense of
purpose or inclusion. But as participants did not offer that connection themselves, nor did they
provide any indication of feeling that they became an integral part of their community,
neighbourhood, or city through these walks (which would be indicative of place identity—the

second component to belonging alongside place attachment as per Segers et al., 2021: 118), extending the relatedness to place engendered through Jane's Walk to a sense of belonging in participants, I would argue, is presumptuous and overreaching. These findings support those of Lehner et al. (2022), who, in their study of young volunteers in super-diverse cities, found that "belonging is … more social than spatial" (p. 771), because belonging can emerge in different locations, but it is most strongly associated to how individuals feel among those around them.

4.4.2 Building relations to the city and its diversity through Jane's Walk

In interviews, participants were asked about their associations with Toronto, firstly through the question, "If Toronto were a person, what would they be like?", which then led to conversation about perceptions of the city more generally. Two of the most common associations participants had with the city were its diversity and its welcoming and open attitude toward a variety of cultures, people, and opinions. In every interview except one, interviewees mentioned Toronto's diversity and/or general attitude of openness to and acceptance of difference—themes that were also reflected in participants' experiences of Jane's Walk. Participants described walks that were centred on the diverse communities that make up Toronto, for instance on: the history of an originally Black neighbourhood from the 1800s; Little Ethiopia and its seeking official designation as a community; ethnic grocery stores along the Danforth; the cultures and foods of immigrants in the Woodbine area as well as their stories of displacement; and 'the world in ten blocks' introducing participants to immigrant-run businesses and their owners along Bloor Street West.

Although in the survey 84.1% (n=74) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that through Jane's Walk they had "experienced Toronto's diversity", interviewees didn't emphasize this as any standout feature of Jane's Walk or reason to partake in the walks, suggesting that diversity in Toronto is quite commonplace (Wessendorf, 2013). In living in Toronto, one lives amid diversity so it's natural that one also experiences it on a weekend of community-led walking tours.

While most people associated Toronto as a welcoming, open and accepting place, there were certain negative associations—notably, that there is a 'big city' tendency to be cold toward strangers and to 'keep to yourself'. Additionally, organizers also described that many years ago, Torontonians held very negative stereotypes of the suburbs and people who lived there. In interviews, stories were shared of these perceptions being challenged or actively fought through Jane's Walks, again leading participants to perhaps change their image of the city.

For one participant, for example, Jane's Walk was one of her first experiences of the city—she discovered it through her work at one of the BIAs (business improvement areas), which hosted or facilitated walks for the festival every year. She described how attending these walks in her first year in Toronto made her see the city in a certain way:

> *"And this walk series, people were, you know, they have a*
> *connection with their neighborhood and they're willing to get to*
> *know people instead of just buying something and then walking*

away. It was really nice to see this connection with people, and
the organizations and small businesses. It was kind of what
opened my eyes to 'oh my God, there's so much sense of
community … in Toronto.'"

– Thais

To her, the mere fact that an organization and initiative like Jane's Walk existed and that it could facilitate the interactions and experiences she saw through the festival gave her the impression that Toronto offered a sense of community. She was inspired by a woman who, through the BIA was dedicated to taking people on an edible flower tour every year, and by the interest she saw residents taking toward getting to know their local businesses and community members. This was surprising to her. Given that Toronto was the biggest city in the country, she was expecting an absence of community which is how she described her hometown—the biggest city in Brazil.

Just as Thais's assumptions of the city were challenged, so were those of certain participants on walks in certain areas of the city. One walk leader, Michael, told a story about how, on one of his walks near the Dundas and Sherbourne area (an area he described as "shimmy", "unpredictable", and "unsafe") a man from the area joined the walk spontaneously:

"And by golly, somebody joined us and I said, uh oh, I'm in
trouble now. This guy's gonna cause trouble. He didn't one bit,
not one bit. He joined, he asked questions, he came right to the
end, he had his picture taken with us. And it was actually a
delight, he was perfectly well behaved and it surprised me."

- Michael

Participants were similarly surprised on walks in the suburbs, at least in the earlier days of the festival. In this time, there were more resources available to Jane's Walk to conduct outreach to areas outside the downtown core (that were often stigmatized and lower income) and support them to lead walks. One organizer describes the impetus and impact of reaching the suburbs:

"The city was experiencing greater division and disconnection.
There was a lot of attitude and judgment about the suburbs and
a superiority complex of the urbanites, the downtowners
thinking that people in the suburbs were somehow subpar. …
Jane's Walk was very effective for creating a shared
understanding. And therefore, you know, the onus to do better
in the suburbs, as well as to have greater compassion for what
people were experiencing if they live in the suburbs."

– Organizer 3

Statements from organizers on this topic extended beyond general statements of how walks like these create 'shared understanding' or 'greater compassion', with several telling stories where they witnessed first-hand participants' change in attitude, opinion, or perspective toward a place and the people who live there (more on this in section 4.4.3 below). Here we see the concept of 'politics of belonging' coming into play (Leitner, 2012) and belonging as it relates to degrees of 'insidedness' and 'outsidedness' (Relph, 1976) in the context of super-diversity. Prevailing attitudes that those living in the suburbs are not 'true' Torontonians because of the sheer difference in their area's infrastructure or ways of living came up both in organizers' Jane's Walk stories of the past as well as participants' current perceptions (where one interviewee who lives in a suburb, for example, stated, "I guess it's hard because a lot of people will argue that Etobicoke is not Toronto, but I will always argue it is"). If, based on these organizers' stories and statements, Jane's Walk has the power to shift stereotypes of these places, it may have the power to alter politics of belonging—negotiations of who belongs and who doesn't—in Toronto.

4.4.3 Building relations to each other through Jane's Walk

Relating to each other as 'everyday experts'

Participants are intrigued by the way Jane's Walk positions community members or 'everyday people' as experts on their neighbourhood, encouraging both walk leaders and participants alike to see themselves in this way. Walk leaders are not the 'experts' we see typically leading urban walking tours, such as planners, architects and the like, and walk participants are seen as experts themselves as they are—on some walks, at least, as described in section 4.3.1— encouraged to contribute to the walks with their own knowledge and experiences.

Participants are drawn to the opportunity to connect to the city or neighbourhood through the tales and perspectives of those who they perceive as not usually included in history books or tour guides. This was mentioned frequently in interviews, with just two examples below:

> *"That's one of the aspects I like about Jane's Walks too, that it's not the kinds of things that you'd find in tourist guides. It's something that someone who lives there and knows the community would know about and just be like, 'yeah, it's grocery stores.'"*
>
> *– Sarah*

> *"I think it's like hidden history. I mean, yes, there are some books about Toronto … but they also tend to be a lot about, you know, 'here's where the Governor General was', you know what I mean? Like, it's more about those people that history has been written about. And I feel like [Jane's Walk] is the*

history of the community, of the people that maybe are not
going to be in the history books."

– Sofia

Additionally, the more participatory a walk is, the greater the potential organizers see for walk attendees to see themselves as experts or feel part of something bigger. One organizer, for instance, described a walk that she led on queer spaces on Yonge Street (one of Toronto's main streets in the core of the city), where people who were present during monumental moments in Toronto's history of queer rights advocacy spoke up about their experiences:

"I just thought it was this extraordinary way that history came
alive for people, it was personified in people. And even if
people weren't there, they felt it was so special. And I think it
had that effect of making people realize, you know, everyone's
got history. And history is everywhere in the city, you don't
have to be … at the head of the parade, making the speeches
to be part of history."

– Organizer 3

Other walk leaders described instances where their walk content was supplemented by others attending the walk, who had additional context beyond what they knew. Organizer 2, for instance, led a walk called "Teach me about my neighbourhood" after she recently moved to a new area in the city (the Junction). She brought a map for people to mark down their favourite places in the neighbourhood and said, "it was a really nice way to meet my neighbours, but also to learn about things that I wouldn't have known otherwise." Similarly, a walk leader named Michael also described instances where, on his walk, he "missed" the context of certain sites completely (such as a mural) and would have skipped past them had people attending his walk not shared information on them.

Relating to each other through chance encounters

According to participants, connection to others happens through Jane's Walk mostly in the way described above—through associating each other as 'everyday experts'—more than it does through chance encounters with other individuals attending the walk(s). While chance encounters naturally happen, they're an occurrence that individuals describe as rarely leading to anything deeper (e.g. closer friendships). While connections might be built and feelings of mutual interest in the walk topic might exist, the fact that they are temporary limit the sense of deeper attachment or meaning individuals tie to them, contradicting findings by some scholars that chance encounters can engender feelings of belonging (Blokland & Nast, 2014; Wu et al., 2011). These findings are shown in the quotes below:

"To meet people [through Jane's Walk]? I thought originally that might be an opportunity, but it hasn't really happened. I mean, yes, you learn of the people who are working on it, but to actually meet people that become friends with or anything like that, it's not possible."

– Sofia

"It's kind of interesting just to meet other people. And, you know, we start with the walk as an area of general interest, and then you find that you're pretty similar anyway."

- Jean

The survey reflects similar findings. 61.1% of respondents indicated that of the people they had met through Jane's Walk, they had become closer *acquaintances* with none of them. 77.8% said that they had become closer *friends* with none of them.

There was also little evidence to suggest that participants perceive difference differently through encounters with people on walks, which is a core tenet of conceptualizing belonging through chance encounters. In the survey, while nearly half (48.9%, n=44) of respondents indicated that through Jane's Walk, they were led to see issues of class disparities differently, only one third (n=30) said the same about racial inequality and 14.4% (n=13) for gender inequality. Nearly a third (28.9%, n=26) indicated that they were neutral toward the statement, "Through Jane's Walk, I have developed more empathy for people who are different from me." Along with statements asking whether Jane's Walk introduced respondents to people who helped them get access to certain resources like finding a job or daycare for their children, this was one of the statements that had the least proportion of respondents agreeing to it. Taking these findings together, as in section 4.3.2, we see alignment with some of the literature that suggests that more regular and sustained encounters through activities or projects might be needed to engender the types of connections needed for a deeper sense of empathy toward others and belonging (Amin, 2002; Askins & Pain, 2011; Matejskova & Leitner, 2011).

Relating to each other through empathy toward difference

While these types of connections and encounters might not be perceived as deep enough by *participants* to elicit feelings of belonging, *organizers* see a clear and direct tie. Organizers see Jane's Walk's capacity to build 'connective tissue' and social cohesion in Toronto as the main way in which it contributes to a sense of belonging—both conceptually and for themselves personally. To them, Jane's Walks enhance 'connective tissue' and community cohesion in the city, by introducing walkers to people with different lived experiences than their own and creating a sense of shared understanding of places and people of difference. One organizer describes this intent of Jane's Walk broadly:

"I think that we don't have informal spaces to just get to know strangers, people who seem like strangers, people who seem extremely different. And that, to me, is part of the opportunity Jane's Walk provides, is that it puts us in some cases adjacent to people who have wildly different lived experiences than us, whether it's intergenerationally, whether it's socioeconomic, whether it's race, whether it's class."

– Organizer 2

Organizers also described several stories where they experienced this first-hand. One described a story of a walk (around 2015) led by a woman named Kelly, who was precariously employed and navigating the city's shelter system. At one of the stops she spoke of access to the internet and asked whether individuals on the walk felt it was a 'want' or a 'need'. People were divided, with some thinking of it as a 'want' and others as a 'need', with one woman stating 'I can turn it off any time—it's a want'. After people attending the walk shared their opinions, Kelly described her personal experiences in developing workarounds to access technology and the internet that she typically didn't have access to, that was now increasingly becoming a necessity for everything—from applying for a driver's license to helping her child finish their homework. After sharing this, the woman who originally perceived it as a 'want', shared that she changed her mind, saying, 'thank you, I didn't think of it that way. And I think I'm going to change that.' The organizer described the impact of this:

"I think these moments where you are … standing in a physical space outside of an electronic store, where you are talking to somebody who has a different experience of that same place than you do … this is a place you walk by a lot. There's something that is connective about you and the place, you and your neighbour, that's gonna make you understand it differently … if that person were to now go out and vote, they might consider some of those dimensions of the experience of a city that are not within their lived experience."

- Organizer 5

Another interesting point raised in this organizer's quote is related to participation. While she highlights the potential for empathy toward others gained through Jane's Walk to influence voting specifically, we might question whether participation in Jane's Walk can also motivate individuals to engage more or engage differently when it comes to civic or neighbourhood participation. In other words, is participation in Jane's Walk a form of participation that, while unconventional in the current literature, can enable one to feel "an integral part of [a] system or environment" (a component of belonging—Hagerty et al., 1992: 173), and thereby want to

influence this system or environment for the betterment of themselves and others? While outside the scope of this research, this question supports calls to broaden our understandings of participation (Jupp, 2008) and points to areas where belonging and community cohesion may be an outcome rather than solely a precursor to participation.

There were several other stories in this vein. One organizer described one where a shy, young Latina woman living with a disability was leading a walk in the North Finch area—one of the suburbs—and attended a high school there, where there had recently been a shooting. When asked about the school by one of the attendees, she said, "It's the nicest. It's the friendliest school I've been to because I've never been at a school before where anyone invited me to sit at their table for lunch." The organizer described the impact of this:

> *"That woman could barely speak, could barely participate in the walk. She told one of the most powerful stories I've ever seen told on a Jane's Walk. About a neighbourhood that kids wouldn't believe anyone wanted to hear about... you know, you only hear bad things. And this is the nicest and most friendliest school she's ever been to."*
>
> *– Organizer 3*

These stories lead to the opposite finding from the participants' perceptions on Jane's Walk's ability to generate deeper connections between each other in the city, especially toward people that are different from them. They demonstrate that Jane's Walks have the potential to foster moments of intercultural exchange and gestures of care and recognition that, even if fleeting, can create feelings of connection with diverse residents in the city, complementing findings by Wise (2005). While they contradict certain findings by other scholars that fleeting encounters are not enough to generate more connectedness and empathy toward others of difference, they simultaneously support their findings that mere *co-existence* on Jane's Walks isn't enough (Amin, 2002; Askins & Pain, 2011; Matejskova & Leitner, 2011). In this case, it was the personal stories shared by the walk leaders with different backgrounds and lived experiences than those on the walk, that led to greater empathy and feelings of connectedness.

Stories like these were largely from earlier on in Jane's Walk history—between 2007 and 2016—when the organization had full-time staff dedicated to reaching out to people whose stories are not often heard, and providing them with the support and resources to share their stories. A question then arises whether this organizational structure is needed for Jane's Walk to generate the kind of connective tissue that organizers see as a critical component to the movement's mission.

4.5 Jane's Walk and processes of belonging

Jane's Walk plays a role in the practices and processes individuals may take to "enact" belonging or "make their own place in the world" (Wright, 2015: 400). Similar to the previous section 4.4, rather than understanding belonging as a status to hold, this section looks at the ways in which Jane's Walk has aided or sought to aid individuals in enactments of belonging—whether for immigrants looking to familiarize themselves with the city, or individuals sharing their cultural practices and rituals with others. As Wright points out, "places and institutions become important players in constituting and performing belonging", (2015: 401) so here, we look at how Jane's Walk might facilitate or hinder some of these 'performances'.

4.5.1 Jane's Walk as a means to get acquainted with the city

As discussed in section 4.2, an important process for newcomers in particular in finding a sense of belonging in Toronto was familiarizing oneself with the city culturally, geographically, and otherwise (see table 5). Over time, many walks have had the aim of helping newcomers become acquainted with the city. In section 4.4.3 above, for instance, an example was shared of an organizer who led a walk on the neighbourhood they had just moved to, to learn the best spots from the 'locals' (her new neighbours). An organizer described another one called 'Day One Refugee Walk' that helped refugees from countries of conflict know where to go on their first day in the city—from where to find certain services, to getting their children fed, to finding their cultural community in a way that was affordable and safe.

In my fieldwork during the festival, I also attended a walk that was on this very topic. A woman from Peru named Susan, who had lived in Toronto for only five months led a walk in Spanish for Spanish-speakers called "My first day in Toronto", where she shared the place-based knowledge that she wished she had had when she first moved to the city. Her description of the event included the following excerpt:

> *"As immigrants, many of us are alone and speak a different language, so we tend to isolate ourselves and not participate in the new city. Because one feels like they don't belong, building a new life takes time. By not belonging, one does not participate. An immigrant is in limbo, no longer belonging to their country and not feeling part of the new one. My goal is to bring new people together to share their first impressions of Toronto and show them the interesting facts that I discovered while exploring it."*
>
> **- Susan Patricia Diaz Blanco**

On this walk (which had nine attendees including myself), Susan explained various elements of Torontonian and Canadian culture with attendees. She explained the Remembrance Day

memorials in the main square downtown and what the wreaths and poppies symbolize, she shared her own personal perceptions that Canadians and Torontonians love shopping and consumerism, and we also had a brief discussion about the history of Indigenous rights and how education on them in Canada differs from where walk participants were from. Of all the walks I attended during the festival (not including the one I led), it was the only one that was truly a participatory 'walking conversation'. Participants were fascinated by some of the information shared (they had seen the poppies before but didn't know what they meant, for example) and there was constant dialogue between walk attendees between and at the stops. One other woman and I were the only two who were not from a Spanish-speaking country—she was from Chicago and attended because she wanted to meet more Spanish-speaking friends in the city.

This, to me, was a perfect example of Jane's Walk being used to establish roots in the city and find a sense of belonging both through meeting people going through the same adjustment process as you, and through getting to know the city through the eyes of somebody with the same set of lived experiences as you. The walk itself plays a role in its attendees performing belonging—the walk leader, the other walk attendees, and the places attended on the walk all intertwine in attendees' negotiations with themselves and with the city as to whether they belong. They co-constitute and can help preclude or engender belonging, in line with many of the stories shared by interviewees when talking about their own personal processes of belonging in Toronto, outside of the Jane's Walk festival (see section 4.2).

4.5.2 Jane's Walk as a way to share cultural rituals or practices

Certain rituals like preparing and consuming food together, particularly for migrants, can serve as intimate expressions of the collective and the self, and hence serve as "embodied belonging" (Wright, 2015: 402). Some walk leaders have used Jane's Walk as a platform to share activities like this with others in their community.

One organizer gave an example of a part historical and part autobiographical walk of different mosques in the city:

"… he was talking about his experience of belonging and what it's like to be Muslim in the city and where he has felt like an outsider and where he has felt like he truly belongs … It became a conversation not just about being about Islam or being Muslim, it became a conversation about everybody's faith … by offering his story or of himself, it was an opportunity … for everybody else to contribute what they were seeing in themselves."

– Organizer 5

In another example, a walk in the Jane & Finch area (part of North York—see figure 14 in section 3.4.1) ended with the mothers of the youth walk leaders cooking lunch for everybody who attended the walk, explaining the different dishes from their culture. Two organizers separately spoke of this same walk.

Sharing these rituals—practicing one's faith, cooking a meal—in an intimate setting with strangers, can prompt feelings, emotion, and affective ties to people and places (Johnston & Longhurst, 2012). While I can't speak to the experiences of these walk leaders and participants as I did not speak to them directly, we can glean from organizers' comments the potential emergence of a space on these walks for individuals to not only immerse themselves in another's cultural background and stories of belonging, but to share their own as well.

4.5.3 Jane's Walk and the self-searching of belonging

Whether used by participants intentionally for the purpose or not, Jane's Walk can play a part in people's internal seeking of and negotiations with belonging. Sometimes, the content developed by walk leaders and/or consumed by attendees can also have an impact on individuals' assessment of belonging in the city and on the fluidity of their identification processes. One organizer for example, described a story where a Jewish woman from New York had just moved to the city after marrying her husband who was from Toronto, and led a walk on Jewish history in the city first and foremost as an exercise in understanding reflections of her own faith embedded in the city's history. Similarly, a participant described that one reason she loves going on historical walks is because through them, she reckons critically with her own ancestry and her role as a descendent of settlers—questions inherent to the question of belonging in Canada among Indigenous peoples.

In examples described already in sections 4.4.2 and 4.4.3, Jane's Walk organizers have conducted outreach to areas outside the downtown core which have been heavily stigmatized, to show individuals that the place they call home matters, and that they do too—that they do belong here:

"… there was also some skepticism voiced by the people in the suburbs, who said, 'people don't want to come here. They don't want to know our stories. They don't want to explore our neighborhoods' … And it was very uplifting for people to notice, like 60 people came to walk around your neighbourhood and hear your stories. Because … they want to know other stories about your neighborhood than the ones they hear in the news."

– Organizer 3

There are many stories of people outside of the suburbs as well, who carry similar perceptions that belonging in Toronto is a prerequisite to leading a walk or at least that because they don't feel yet that they belong in the city, they don't have anything worth sharing, as one participant describes below:

> *"It's funny, because [leading a walk has] never even occurred*
> *to me. I think it's part of that not really feeling belonging … it's*
> *like, 'what do you mean, I'm not from Toronto'."*
>
> *- Sofia*

One organizer describes how another organizer was similarly hesitant to lead a walk as she was a recent newcomer to the city at the time:

> *"She said, 'well, how can I lead one, like, is this my*
> *neighbourhood?' That question rung in my head and my heart*
> *for like, a year after that. 'Is this my neighbourhood?' Like, at*
> *what point do you move from being an outsider to belonging to*
> *a place? And then she led the walk anyway, and it took an act*
> *of courage to put herself out there…"*
>
> *- Organizer 5*

I unfortunately didn't speak to anybody who went through this transition of feeling they didn't 'belong enough' in the city to lead a walk, to ultimately deciding to lead one, to assess whether their feelings of belonging shifted during the process. That said, what is clear with these examples is that Jane's Walk can play a role in individuals' processes of assessing and navigating their own sense of belonging in the city, and in some of these examples organizers have pointed to ways they can be a tool to reaffirm a sense of belonging to those who are doubting it. As an urban actor and a non-human institution, then, Jane's Walk can promote practices of belonging that were only possible due to the nature and presence of the organization (Wright, 2015: 401; Curtis & Mee, 2009: 359).

5. Discussion

In this section, I return to the research question and sub-questions to connect the findings. Then, I discuss the limitations of the study and suggest areas for further research.

Tying to the research questions

How does involvement in community organizations and activities influence a sense of belonging for different individuals in super-diverse urban societies?

While not necessarily associated with feelings of belonging nor attributed with instilling deeper place attachment among its participants, Jane's Walk is an urban actor that can influence the relations that individuals build, and the processes or enactments that they embody in their personal negotiations with, searches for, and identifications with belonging. Its greatest potential lies in its ability to build social cohesion and connectivity across people and places of difference, creating a sense of shared responsibility and belonging to each other, and thereby to the city.

Sub-question 1: What does it mean to belong in a super-diverse city? How is the feeling of belonging conceptualized and experienced by community members, and how do these findings contribute to scholarly debates on the tie between sense of belonging and diversity?

Despite scholars' attempts to define belonging as a state to embody, and to categorize it as one thing or another, my research shows that there is no 'formula' for a sense of belonging, particularly in contexts of super-diversity where a variety of backgrounds lead to a variety of lived experiences in navigating belonging. Amid contexts of super-diversity, where diversity is "commonplace" (Wessendorf, 2013), individuals perceive the city as having an open, welcoming, accepting culture that at times translates to feelings of belonging, and at other times doesn't. Whether or not it does depends largely on "the fluidity and multi-dimensionality of identification processes" (Lehner et al., 2022: 768) including their gender identity, upbringing, country of origin, ethnicity, and other factors.

Sub-question 2: To what extent does the Jane's Walk festival facilitate feelings of belonging for certain community members over others? How do the observed effects compare to the organization's intended ambitions with regard to inclusion and community cohesion?

Former organizers are more likely to draw an explicit link between Jane's Walk and belonging than participants, suggesting firstly that deeper involvement with the organization creates a deeper passion for the mission and feelings of being an "integral part of an … environment" (Hagerty et al., 1992: 173), and secondly that former governance structures of the organization are more conducive to providing the support, time, and resources needed to help others find a sense of belonging through walks. Those who display place attachment to Toronto (and, by association, potentially already feel a sense of belonging to the city) appear more likely to

participate in it, as do individuals who have spent more than ten years in the city. If participating in Jane's Walk opens the door for developing belonging in relational, process-oriented ways, then the predisposition of these individuals to participate also predisposes them to finding a sense of belonging. That said, the organization does not make any explicit 'promises' to inclusion and community cohesion that it can't meet—they acknowledge the self-organized, non-prescriptive nature of a festival where "anyone can lead a walk", and the varied experiences that can entail. They are transparent on ways a sense of community has been built and differences have been bridged, and ways they have not.

Sub-question 3: **What are the strengths and limitations of ephemeral, transient community activities (versus those that are more permanent) in engendering connectedness to place?**

The ephemeral nature of Jane's Walk was highlighted merely as a limitation to engendering belonging, with individuals pointing to more regular, sustained involvements and connections like those offered through volunteering or clubs as necessary to build deeper connectedness to the city and to others. This supports findings from other scholars that chance encounters or mere co-existence are simply not enough to build community and belonging (Amin, 2002; Askins & Pain, 2011; Matejskova & Leitner, 2011). The transience of Jane's Walk, on the other hand, was perceived as a strength, as it offers to individuals the chance to explore and build connections with various parts of the city, some of which they have very little context.

Sub-question 4: **What practices should be considered by festival organizers to facilitate a sense of belonging in super-diverse settings?**

The support that Jane's Walk was once able to provide to walk leaders, particularly those in areas outside the downtown core with less resources at their disposal and more stigma against them, was integral to reaffirming a sense of belonging for those leading the walks and instilling a sense of mutual connectedness, empathy, and shared values for those attending. Such outreach efforts occurred between the years 2007-2018 when Jane's Walk had paid staff and was not fully volunteer-operated, making it difficult for such outreach and outcomes under their current governance model. That said, the impact of outreach to these areas as it relates to belonging cannot be understated.

Limitations & areas for further research

The individuals who participated in this research are not necessarily reflective of the entire population of people who have been involved in Jane's Walks. My interviewees did not reflect the diversity of the city—while I tried to have as diverse a sample as possible, I was limited by those who filled out the survey (which itself was not the most diverse sample) and those who responded to my queries. This is a significant limitation—to study belonging amid diversity, it is critical to obtain perspectives from individuals with a range of lived experiences. I was also

limited by the number of walks I could attend for participant observations due to time and travel constraints. Extrapolations and generalizations, then, of research findings to the entire community of individuals who have participated in Jane's Walk, or to all forms of community involvement (as the research question implies) should be made with caution, especially considering the uniqueness of Jane's Walk as a case. Future research could benefit from narrowing the research subjects in focus—for instance, by focusing on lived experiences of belonging among racialized or under-represented individuals as initiatives like The Urban Belonging Project has done (*The Urban Belonging Project*, 2021).

Future research could dig even deeper into the question of *how* exactly (e.g. beyond connections with others) involvement in community organizations (or parochial spaces as per Schuermans, 2018: 11, or micro-publics as per Amin, 2002) might influence belonging, and further exploring the cause-and-effect (does belonging lead to involvement or vice versa?). While my research provided early insights into such questions as they relate to the feelings, relations, and processes people experience, analysis of case studies other than Jane's Walk would be a beneficial supplement. Researching belonging through a longitudinal study (for instance, through diary studies or cultural probes) to assess individuals' relationships and experiences over time, could be helpful. Such methods also have the benefit of drawing deeper connections between people and place by, for instance, probing real-time on where and when individuals feel a sense of belonging throughout the day, rather than relying on recall.

While Jane's Walk is a unique form of community involvement and hence a unique and perhaps peculiar case study, this research has deepened conceptualizations of belonging as emotional, becoming (a process), and relational. Future research could borrow from the structure of this study's results as in the table below, using them as a framework to explore how various forms of community involvement and participation might impact individuals' experiences of belonging amid diversity.

Table 6: Summary of findings and conceptual framework contributions

BELONGING AS EMOTIONAL	BELONGING AS RELATIONAL	BELONGING AS BECOMING (A PROCESS)
• Feelings of belonging as difficult to achieve through involvement • Feelings of belonging as possible through involvement	• Building relations to place through involvement • Building relations to the city and its diversity through involvement • Building relations to each other through involvement	• Getting acquainted with the city through involvement • Sharing cultural rituals or practices through involvement • Self-searching for belonging through involvement

6. Conclusion

In this study, I have investigated the influence that community organizations and involvement may have over individuals' sense of belonging in super-diverse contexts. I have done so by using Jane's Walk Toronto as a case study—an annual festival of free, community-led walking conversations or tours characterized by the idea that "anybody can lead a walk" (*About Us*, 2023). This research is particularly germane in Toronto, a super-diverse city (Vertovec, 2007) that has seen recent declines in its population's feelings of belonging and social cohesion (Parkin & Ayer, 2022) and ongoing negotiations within the politics of belonging (Leitner, 2012) and associated questions of who 'belongs' and who doesn't.

The results of this research show the merits in using a weak-theory approach (Wright, 2015) to better conceptualize belonging. Looking through the lens of emotions, relations, and processes enables a deeper and more nuanced analysis than is possible with frequently-used attempts to solve the 'riddle' or the 'puzzle' of what it means to belong, and interpreting it as a status to hold (Wright, 2015).

I support the need to, in conditions of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007), understand identification processes as fluid and multi-layered (Lehner et al., 2022). Seeking to understand the conceptual messiness of belonging, then, rather than seeking to understand essentialist notions of assimilation or integration inherent to the native and newcomer or insider and outsider binary (equally important to understand but also overwhelmingly present in the literature) can be a useful and pertinent contribution. Although researchers have been studying super-diversity for nearly two decades, the connection between it and belonging remains relatively absent.

This study shows the complex emotions, relations, and processes inherent to one finding a sense of belonging amid super-diversity, and the role that the community-led walking tours enabled by a grassroots, self-organized, community organization can play in facilitating or inhibiting their navigation. We see that even if not explicitly associated with engendering feelings of belonging, a community organization like Jane's Walk can help individuals explore processes and relations of belonging in a myriad of ways—whether by enabling them to share cultural rituals with others, enhancing their sense of familiarity of the city, acting as a tool for the self-searching of personal belonging, or deepening their empathy toward those with different lived experiences.

The self-organized, ephemeral, transient nature of Jane's Walk comes with caveats—in some instances, deep connection with place and with others is achieved on walks, and in others, it's not. While perhaps a limitation through the lens of the literature and perceptions that more consistent and sustained structures are necessary for engendering belonging (Amin, 2002; Askins & Pain, 2011; Majteskova & Leitner, 2011), the serendipity, surprise, and wonder that Jane's Walk can generate is also a clear point of attraction. It is a rare example of emergent community-building that, while deeply and commonly associated with 'community', fosters as wide an array of connections with others as the that of definitions and interpretations of belonging itself.

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Annexes

1. Survey

1.1 Survey recruitment

Newsletter released by email to Jane's Walk Toronto subscribers

Have you participated in the Toronto Jane's Walk Festival? Perhaps you've attended a walk, led a walk, or volunteered?

Are you interested in receiving a $15 gift card in exchange for sharing your experiences? We want to hear from you!

Share your thoughts on Jane's Walk

In part to conduct research for her Master's thesis, and in part to help improve the Jane's Walk Toronto Festival for years to come, Co-Chair of Jane's Walk Celia Beketa has prepared **a quick, anonymous survey** to gather perspectives from people who have attended the festival.

To fill out the survey you must be currently living in Toronto *and* have participated in any Jane's Walk Toronto festival by doing at least one of the following:

- Leading one or more walk(s)
- Attending one or more walk(s)
- Attending other festival events (such as panels or launch events)
- Volunteering

How will responses be used?
Survey responses will be anonymized and shared only in aggregate. If you respond to the survey you will have the option to enter a draw for a $15 VISA or Amazon gift card (or to a place of your choice) by sharing your email address or phone number.

What else is new with Jane's Walk?
Our 2023 festival preparations are in full swing! Stay tuned for updates on the upcoming festival as well as the launch of our beautiful new global website. We couldn't be more excited to unveil what we have in store for you. Now is as great a time as any to help our 2023 and future festival visions come to life.

Interested in sharing your thoughts?

Fill out the survey

Want to support Jane's Walk in another way?

Donate today!

Have questions about the survey?

Email Celia at **cbeketa@gmail.com** or **chair@janeswalk.net**

Instagram post on @janeswalkto

janeswalkto

janeswalkto Have you ever participated in the Toronto Jane's Walk Festival? Perhaps you've attended a walk, led a walk, or volunteered? Are you willing to share your experiences with the festival, as well as on your feelings of belonging in Toronto? We want to hear from you!

In part to conduct research for her Master's thesis, and in part to help improve the Jane's Walk Toronto Festival for years to come, Co-Chair of Jane's Walk Celia Beketa has prepared this survey to gather perspectives from people who have attended the Toronto festival.

The survey should take less than 10 minutes. Responses will be anonymized and shared only in aggregate. If you fill out the survey you will have the option to enter a draw for a $15 VISA or Amazon gift card (or to a place of your choice) by sharing your email address or phone number. If you have any questions,

Liked by **project.home.stories** and **others**

FEBRUARY 15

1.2 Survey questions

[Text in grey was not visible to respondents.]

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey! It should take less than 10 minutes and will ask you questions about your experiences with Jane's Walk and the degree to which you feel a sense of belonging in Toronto.

This survey is being led by Jane's Walk Steering Committee Co-Chair Celia Beketa for her Master's Thesis, but will also help Jane's Walk better understand its participants and improve the festival for years to come. All responses will be anonymized and shared only in aggregate.

At the end of the survey, you have the option to enter your email address or phone number 1) to be entered into a draw for a $15 Amazon or VISA gift card (or to a place of your choice), and/or 2) if you are interested in having a conversation about your experiences with Jane's Walk and belonging. Celia is the only person who will see this contact information.

If you have any questions, please email Celia at cbeketa@gmail.com.

Section 1: General information

The first few questions are to better understand whether the diversity of Jane's Walk participants reflects the diversity of the city, and how feelings of belonging and experiences of the festival might differ from person to person. You can opt out of any of them by selecting the option "prefer not to say".

1. How old are you?
   a) Younger than 18
   b) 18 – 24
   c) 25 – 34
   d) 35 – 44
   e) 45 – 54
   f) 55 – 64
   g) 65 or older
   h) Prefer not to say

2. How do you describe your gender identity?
   a) Woman/girl
   b) Man/boy
   c) Transwoman/transgirl
   d) Transman/transboy
   e) Non-binary/genderqueer/agender/gender fluid
   f) I don't know
   g) Prefer not to say
   h) Other

3. What part of the Greater Toronto Area do you live in, and what ward are you part of? If you're not sure, visit this link:

https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/neighbourhoods-communities/ward-profiles/

[Drop-downs for neighbourhoods appear once respondents select one of the four GTA areas].

    a) Etobicoke York
        i. Etobicoke Centre
        ii. Etobicoke North
        iii. Etobicoke-Lakeshore
    b) North York
        i. Don Valley East
        ii. Don Valley North
        iii. Don Valley West
        iv. Eglinton-Lawrence
        v. Humber River-Black Creek
        vi. Willowdale
        vii. York Centre
        viii. York South-Weston
    c) Scarborough
        i. Scarborough-Agincourt
        ii. Scarborough Centre
        iii. Scarborough-Guildwood
        iv. Scarborough North
        v. Scarborough-Rouge Park
        vi. Scarborough Southwest
    d) Toronto and East York
        i. Beaches-East York
        ii. Davenport
        iii. Parkdale-High Park
        iv. Spadina-Fort York
        v. Toronto Centre
        vi. Toronto-Danforth
        vii. Toronto-St. Paul's
        viii. University-Rosedale
    • Prefer not to say

4. What language do you speak most often at home?
    [Open text field]

5. Were you born in Canada or did you move here?
    a) I was born in Canada
    b) I moved here
    c) Prefer not to say
    d) Other

6. What is your cultural background? Select all that apply.
    a) African
    b) European

c) East Asian
d) South Asian
e) Southeast Asian
f) First Nations or Indigenous
g) Latinx
h) Middle Eastern
i) I'm not sure
j) Prefer not to say
k) Other

7. Which of the following best describes your total household income last year?
   This would be the income of all household members combined, before taxes.
   a) Under $25,000
   b) $25,000 to just under $45,000
   c) $45,000 to just under $65,000
   d) $65,000 to just under $85,000
   e) $85,000 to just under $105,000
   f) $105,000 to just under $125,000
   g) $125,000 to just under $145,000
   h) $145,000 and above
   i) I'm not sure
   j) Prefer not to say
   k) Other

8. How many years have you lived in Toronto?
   a) Less than 1 year
   b) 1-5 years
   c) 6-10 years
   d) More than 10 years
   e) I don't live in Toronto *[disqualifier]*
   f) Prefer not to say
   g) Other

Section 2: Jane's Walk involvement

9. In what ways have you been involved with the Jane's Walk Toronto Festival? Select all
   that apply.
   a) I have led one or more walk(s)
   b) I have attended one or more walk(s)
   c) I have attended other events (launch party, virtual panels, etc.)
   d) I have volunteered
   e) I have been on the Jane's Walk Steering Committee *[disqualifier but keep in mind for interviews]*
   f) I have been the Toronto city coordinator *[disqualifier but keep in mind for interviews]*
   g) I have never participated in the Jane's Walk Toronto Festival *[disqualifier]*
   h) Other

10. How many Jane's Walk Toronto Festivals do you estimate you have participated in? The festival started in 2006, and this year (2023) will be the city's 18th festival.
    a) Every festival (approximately 17)
    b) Nearly every festival (approximately 11-16)
    c) Quite a few festivals (approximately 6-10)
    d) A few festivals (approximately 2-5)
    e) One festival
    f) I have never participated in the Jane's Walk Toronto Festival *[disqualifier]*
    g) I'm not sure
    h) Other

11. In what years did you participate in the Jane's Walk festival? Select all that apply.
    a) 2006-2010
    b) 2011-2015
    c) 2016-2020
    d) 2021-2022
    e) I'm not sure
    f) I have never participated in the Jane's Walk Toronto Festival *[disqualifier]*
    g) Other

Section 3: Belonging

12. *Place attachment:* Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.
    [5 point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with additional option 'does not apply'].
    a) I miss Toronto when I am not here
    b) I feel foreign in Toronto
    c) I feel safe in Toronto
    d) I am proud of Toronto
    e) Toronto is part of me
    f) I would like to move out from Toronto
    g) I want to be engaged in Toronto's affairs
    h) I am rooted in Toronto
    i) *[Place identity]* It is important for me that I am a resident of Toronto

Section 4: Belonging and Jane's Walk

4.1 People

The next few questions ask you about people you have encountered through Jane's Walk. These could be people attending the same walk, people leading the walk, people attending the same event (such as the launch festival), people organizing the festival, or people you were volunteering with.

13. When I met strangers through Jane's Walk, most of my interactions with them were…
   Sliding scale: negative / neutral / positive / does not apply

14. Of the strangers I have met through Jane's Walk, I have become closer **acquaintances** with…
   Sliding scale: none of them / some of them (5 or less) / many of them (more than 5) / does not apply

15. Of the strangers I have met through Jane's Walk, I have become close **friends** with…
   Sliding scale: none of them / some of them (5 or less) / many of them (more than 5) / does not apply

16. People I met through Jane's Walk have made me feel…
   Sliding scale: less comfortable in the city / neutral / more comfortable in the city / does not apply

17. Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.
   [5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with additional option 'does not apply'].
   a) People I met through Jane's Walk have introduced me to certain services or resources in the city (for instance, tips on finding/applying for jobs, on securing childcare support, on starting my own business, etc.).
   b) People I met through Jane's Walk have provided such services or resources to me themselves (for instance, have helped me apply for jobs, take care of my children, or start my own business).
   c) Through Jane's Walk, I have heard stories from people who are different from me.
   d) Through Jane's Walk, I have developed more empathy for people who are different from me.

4.2 Experiences of the city

18. Please rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.
   [5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with additional option 'does not apply'].
   a) Participating in Jane's Walk has made the city feel more familiar.
   b) Through Jane's Walk, I have discovered parts of the city I had never been to before.
   c) Through Jane's Walk, I have experienced Toronto's diversity.
   d) Participating in Jane's Walk has made me feel more connected to the city.
   e) Participating in Jane's Walk has made me feel part of a community.

19. Please explain briefly your response to the last statement, "Participating in Jane's Walk has made me feel part of a community." Why or why not?
[Open text field]

20. Has participating in Jane's Walk led you to see any of the following issues in the city differently? Select all that apply.
    a) Environmental issues
    b) Political issues
    c) Issues related to gender inequality
    d) Issues related to racial inequality
    e) Issues related to class disparities
    f) Issues related to the local arts & culture scene
    g) Issues specific to areas outside of the downtown core
    h) Yes, but another issue(s):
    i) No, I don't see any issues in the city differently

Section 5: Closing

21. If you would like to be entered into a draw for a $15 gift card for Amazon, VISA, or to a place of your choice, please enter your email address or phone number here. You can also add your name if you like.
[Open text field]

22. If you would be interested in having a 30-60 minute conversation on Jane's Walk and belonging, please enter your email address or phone number here. You can also add your name if you like.
[Open text field]

23. Anything else you'd like to mention?
[Open text field]

1.3 Survey regression results

The following table represents the multi-variate regression model that was run to assess whether any of the x variables listed had the ability to predict respondents' place attachment to Toronto. The y variable used for place attachment was respondents' individual place attachment scores (an average of their responses to the 9 questions that assessed place attachment, where a -2 was given for 'strongly disagree', -1 for 'disagree', 0 for 'neutral', 1 for 'agree', and 2 for 'strongly agree').

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.46748956
R Square	0.21854649
Adjusted R Square	0.11435269
Standard Error	0.55449856
Observations	69

ANOVA

	df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	8	5.159323854	0.64491548	2.09749992	0.049942
Residual	60	18.44811934	0.30746866		
Total	68	23.60744319			

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	0.09324808	0.391938841	0.23791487	0.81275773	-0.6907463	0.87724249	-0.6907463	0.87724249
X Variable 1 - Age	-0.07883	0.052622598	-1.4980266	0.13936927	-0.1840909	0.02643082	-0.1840909	0.02643082
X Variable 2 - Gender identity	0.08117409	0.137290537	0.59125774	0.55656877	-0.1934479	0.35579606	-0.1934479	0.35579606
X Variable 3 - Area of residence in Toronto	0.26481513	0.188005439	1.40855035	0.16412926	-0.1112517	0.640882	-0.1112517	0.640882
X Variable 4 - Income	8.4769E-07	1.82917E-06	0.4634286	0.64473393	-2.811E-06	4.5066E-06	-2.811E-06	4.5066E-06
X Variable 5 - Born in or moved to Canada	0.03085334	0.153626832	0.20083303	0.84150838	-0.2764461	0.33815276	-0.2764461	0.33815276
X Variable 6 - Cultural origins	0.25134834	0.201695853	1.24617505	0.21754392	-0.1521034	0.65480011	-0.1521034	0.65480011
X Variable 7 - Length of time in Toronto	0.49290276	0.228035439	2.16151825	0.03465538	0.03676397	0.94904155	0.03676397	0.94904155
X Variable 8 - Number of JW festivals attended	0.06476631	0.083841203	0.77248788	0.44285788	-0.1029411	0.23247369	-0.1029411	0.23247369

For the ordinal/categorical x values, the following values were applied:

X1: Age	Code
25 – 34	1
35 – 44	2
45 – 54	3
55 – 64	4
65 or older	5

X2: Gender ID	Code
Woman/girl	0
Man/boy	1
Non-binary/genderqueer	2

X3: Area in TO	Code
Etobicoke York	0
North York	0
Scarborough	0
Toronto / East York	1

X4: Income	Code
0 - $84,999	0
$85,000 above	1

X5: Place of birth	Code
Canada	0
Outside of Canada	1

X6: Cultural origins	Code
Non-European	0
European (only)	1

X7: Length of time in Toronto	Code
10 years or less	0
More than 10 years	1

2. Interviews

2.1 Interview recruitment – participants

Subject line: ***Jane's Walk thesis survey follow-up***

Interview request messaging

Hi [name],

Thank you so much for filling out the survey on Jane's Walk and belonging and for taking an interest in this research! Your participation has already helped us at Jane's Walk better understand our participants.

While unfortunately you were not randomly selected to win the $15 gift card (there were over 100 survey responses, so it was tight competition!), I'm reaching out to ask if you would you still be interested in having a conversation with me about the topics covered in the survey? The conversation would be 45-60 minutes long and would take place virtually, over Zoom. As a thank you for your time, I will offer a $5 gift card for Walmart, Tim Hortons, Uber Eats, LCBO, Mastercard or elsewhere (there are several places to choose from), as well as tailored advice on designing and leading a walk in the upcoming festival if this would interest you.

I am hoping to schedule interviews between **March 19th and April 2nd** at various time slots between **8:00 am and 3:00 pm EST**. If you are interested, please select a timeslot at this link: https://calendly.com/cbeketa/janeswalk or, if you prefer, email me back with one of the times below that works for you:

- **Sunday, March 19th**
    - 8:00-9:00 am
    - 9:30-10:30 am
    - 11:00 am-12:00 pm
    - 12:30-1:30 pm
    - 2:00-3:00 pm
- **Monday, March 20th**
    - 8:00-9:00 am
    - 9:30-10:30 am
    - 11:00 am-12:00 pm
    - 12:30-1:30 pm
    - 2:00-3:00 pm
- **Tuesday, March 21st**
    - 1:30-2:30 pm
- **Wednesday, March 22nd**
    - 1:30-2:30 pm
- **Tuesday, March 28th**
    - 9:30-10:30 am
    - 11:00 am-12:00 pm
    - 12:30-1:30 pm
    - 2:00-3:00 pm
- **Wednesday, March 29th**

- o 9:30-10:30 am
- o 11:00 am-12:00 pm
- o 12:30-1:30 pm
- o 2:00-3:00 pm
- **Thursday, March 30th**
  - o 1:30-2:30 pm
- **Friday, March 31st**
  - o 8:00-9:00 am
  - o 9:30-10:30 am
  - o 11:00 am-12:00 pm
  - o 12:30-1:30 pm
  - o 2:00-3:00 pm
- **Sunday, April 2nd**
  - o 8:00-9:00 am
  - o 9:30-10:30 am
  - o 11:00 am-12:00 pm
  - o 12:30-1:30 pm
  - o 2:00-3:00 pm

If none of these dates and times work for you, let me know and we will find an alternative.

Thanks again for your interest! I hope to speak to you soon.

Celia

Post-interview request messaging

Hi [name],

Thanks for selecting a time! I've sent you a calendar invite with a Zoom link—please let me know if you didn't receive it.

Over the next couple of days I will send you a document and consent form that has more information on the research. This documentation includes details on the purpose of the research, what your participation in the study entails, and what will be done with the information you provide. Stay tuned for that!

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions, concerns, or hesitations regarding the study.

I hope you have a great weekend.

Consent form messaging

Hi [name],

In advance of our conversation, I'm sending over an information sheet about the research and a consent form for you to sign.

In a nutshell, the information sheet explains what will be done with the information you share with me and how I will protect your personal data, and the consent form is for you to indicate

that you agree with the process. Specifically, the information sheet mentions the following points:

- I will be the only one who sees your contact information
- The conversation will be audio-recorded and transcribed for note-taking purposes
- A summary of insights from all my conversations will be seen by certain individuals in my master's program and from the Jane's Walk Steering Committee, and this summary will be anonymized (e.g. no interviewees will be able to be personally identified from this summary)
- It is also possible that some of the summary insights will be made available to the general public through the website of my master's program and/or on the Jane's Walk global website
- After our conversation I will send you a summary of my main takeaways to ensure I haven't misinterpreted anything, as well as any direct quotes I am considering using in the thesis final deliverable to make sure you are comfortable with me using them

I know it's a lot of information so if you have any questions or concerns whatsoever, please let me know!

Once you've had a chance to read everything over (no rush at all), **please sign and send back the consent form to me at any point before we speak.**

Thank you so much again for taking the time to participate in the research. I really appreciate it and I look forward to speaking with you.

Celia

Survey thank you but no interview messaging

Hi there,

Thank you so much for taking the time to fill out the survey on Jane's Walk and belonging! I apologize for the delay in responses—you might not even remember filling out this survey as it was a couple of months ago now. That said, your participation has already helped us at Jane's Walk better understand our participants.

With over 100 responses, I received much more interest in both the survey and interviews than I anticipated. This means two things: firstly, unfortunately it is impossible for me to interview everybody who indicated interest, so for the time being I will not be scheduling a conversation with you (if this changes though, I will certainly reach out!). It also means that unfortunately, if you indicated interest in receiving the gift card, you were not selected. I'm sorry to be the bearer of bad news!

The good news is that there are still many ways to get involved in the research and in Jane's Walk:

- **Still interested in participating in the research?**
  During the festival on Saturday May 6th from 3:30-5:30 pm I will be leading a walk on the topic of belonging in the city, open for all to attend. I'd love to see you there!
- **Have feedback on the survey process?**
  I'm very keen to hear it! This is a learning process for both myself and the Jane's Walk

team—feel free to respond to this email with any comments or critiques you might have. I'm also hoping to publish a summary version of the survey insights for anybody to access. If/when this happens, you'll be one of the first to see it—I'll send it via email.

- **Want to get involved in the upcoming festival?**
  Follow the Toronto festival on social media if you haven't already, and keep checking back at our 2023 festival website. There are so many exciting events including:
    o Wednesday, May 3rd panel (6:00-7:30 pm) on Youth-Led City-Building
    o Over 110 walks between May 5-7!
    o Movie screenings that you can watch on your own time

Thanks again so much for your participation, and happy walking!

Celia

2.2 Interview recruitment – organizers

*Subject line: **Jane's Walk thesis research – interview request***

Hi [name],

My name is Celia Beketa and as you may know, I'm the current Co-Chair of Jane's Walk. I'm also in the middle of my final semester of my master's in urban studies, for which I'm doing my thesis on Jane's Walk Toronto. Specifically, I'm looking at how participating in the festival might influence individuals' feelings of belonging in the city.

I'm reaching out to you because as part of my research, I'm looking to speak to individuals who have been involved with Jane's Walk in a founding and/or organizational capacity and have seen it evolve from the early days. I'd love to hear more about your personal experiences with the festival (e.g. how you became involved and why) and your perspectives on the festival's ability to build community.

The conversation should take around 45-60 minutes and I'm aiming to schedule them between **March 19th and April 2nd** at various time slots between **8:00 am and 3:00 pm EST.** It will take place virtually, over Zoom. If you're available and interested, please select a time slot here: . If you're interested but unavailable during these timeslots, please let me know and we can find another time.

Once a time slot has been selected, I'll send you a calendar invite with a Zoom link, as well as a more detailed research information sheet and consent form.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please let me know.

Thanks so much in advance—I hope to speak to you soon!

Celia

2.3 Interview consent form – participants

Information Sheet: Participating in Jane's Walk Thesis Research

Who is conducting the study, and why?

My name is Celia Beketa and I am a master's student in urban studies through the program 4CITIES. I am also the Co-Chair of Jane's Walk. The master's program I am in takes place in four different cities over two years, but I am originally from Vancouver, Canada, and lived in Toronto, Canada before starting this program.

I am conducting my thesis on the topic of belonging in diverse cities and trying to understand how Jane's Walk might influence individuals' feelings of belonging in Toronto. Specifically, I am curious to know 1) what it means to 'belong', particularly in cities that are highly diverse; and 2) whether Jane's Walk Toronto facilitates feelings of belonging for certain community members over others. I have asked to speak to you because I am looking to better understand your first-hand experience in this area—your experiences with and opinions of both the Jane's Walk Toronto festival and of what it means and feels like to belong in Toronto.

What does participation in the research study entail, and why?

Participation in the research study requires you to participate in the following activities and provide me with the following information:

Contact Information

Sharing contact information with me, so I can follow up with you as needed to coordinate your participation in the study (you have provided this to me through the survey).

Demographic Information

Sharing your basic background/demographic information with me, so I can ensure that I have selected a diverse group of Torontonians to participate in the study (you have provided this to me through the survey).

Interview

Participating in a 45-60-minute virtual interview with me so that I can understand your experiences and perspectives. Please note that the session will be audio recorded. I do this because it allows me to spend less time writing notes and more time focusing on the discussion with you. It also enables me to recall exactly what you said and how you said it, rather than interpreting it based on my memory of the conversation, which risks a biased interpretation. These audio recordings will be transcribed either by myself or by a third party transcription company.

You will be compensated a $5 gift card (for Mastercard, Tim Hortons, Walmart, Esso, Indigo, Uber Eats, Uber, LCBO, Winners/HomeSense/Marshalls, or Sobeys) in exchange for your full participation in the research study as outlined above. I am also offering tailored advice on how to lead a walk for the upcoming 2023 Jane's Walk Toronto festival.

Who will you share my information with?

Only I will see your contact information and only I will be able to connect it to the information you shared with me in the survey and the details you share with me in the interview. Only I (and a third party transcription company, if I choose to use one) will see the transcript of the interview—interview transcripts will not be included in my final thesis deliverable in order to protect your identity and information.

Certain information from the survey and interview will be shared with others, but the information shared won't be attributable to you. It will be shared in aggregate in the form of summary themes and insights and potentially direct quotes. If in my thesis I need to refer to you or any other individual I spoke to, or attribute a quote to a name, I will use pseudonyms (fake names).

The following groups or people will see this information:

- The Jane's Walk Steering Committee (currently 9 individuals who volunteer their time to be part of this Committee)
- Some classmates and professors from my master's program, notably my thesis supervisor and second reader who evaluate my final thesis submission, and the students who are in the room for my thesis defense
- The general public:
  - Depending on the grade I receive on my thesis, it may be made visible on the 4CITIES website for anybody to access
  - On our new Jane's Walk global website, we may have a webpage with the summary insights from the research for individuals to view

After the interview, I will send you an email with my key takeaways from the conversation to ensure I didn't misinterpret anything. Once the interview has been transcribed and analysis has been conducted, I will also send you any direct quotes from the conversation I may use to ensure you are comfortable with them (again, quotes will not be attributable to you and any information in the quote that could potentially identify you will be adjusted or redacted).

What happens to my information after the study?

The survey responses (minus contact information provided by respondents, which will be removed) will remain available to the Steering Committee for future years on their Google Drive and potentially on their Typeform (survey platform) account. Survey and interview insights will also be made available on the Committee's Google Drive. I will keep the raw survey responses, survey analysis documents, interview recordings and interview transcripts securely stored on my personal computer. If you wish for any of your data in these documents to be permanently removed after the study is over and my degree is complete (by December 2023), you can let me know and I can permanently delete them from my computer.

What are my rights?

You have a right to request a copy of the personal information I hold about you. You can ask that I update or correct your personal information. If you wish to remove any information you have put forward through this study, you can let me know and I will exclude it from my analysis. You are free to withdraw from the study before May 1st, 2023, without giving a reason for your withdrawal. You can decline to answer any particular questions in the study without any consequences.

Jane's Walk Participant Research

CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM

Please review the below Consent and Release carefully and sign to indicate your agreement with these terms.

I, _____, acknowledge and agree that I am agreeing to participate in this Jane's Walk Participant Research Study ('Research Study') on a voluntary basis.

By signing this Consent and Release form, I acknowledge and affirm the following:

- I have read the Information Sheet for this Research Study and have had details of the study explained to me.
- My questions about the Research Study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study within the time limits outlined in the Information Sheet, without giving a reason for my withdrawal or to decline to answer any particular questions in the Research Study without any consequences.
- I agree to provide information to the researcher under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Information Sheet.
- I wish to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.
- I understand that my participation in the Research Study may be recorded via audio and consent to such recording.

I have read, understand and agree to the agreements and undertakings in this Consent and Release.

_____ Signature

_____ Full Printed Name

_____ Date

2.4 Interview consent form – organizers

Information Sheet: Participating in Jane's Walk Thesis Research

Who is conducting the study, and why?

My name is Celia Beketa and I am a master's student in urban studies through the program 4CITIES. I am also the current Co-Chair of Jane's Walk. The master's program I am in takes place in four different cities over two years, but I am originally from Vancouver, Canada, and lived in Toronto, Canada before starting this program.

I am conducting my thesis on the topic of belonging in diverse cities and trying to understand how Jane's Walk might influence individuals' feelings of belonging in Toronto. Specifically, I am curious to know 1) what it means to 'belong', particularly in cities that are highly diverse; 2) whether Jane's Walk Toronto facilitates feelings of belonging for certain community members over others; and 3) what Jane's Walk festival organizers can do to help facilitate a sense of belonging in diverse cities. I have asked to speak to you because I am looking to better understand your first-hand experience in this area—your experiences with both the Jane's Walk Toronto festival (including its mission/vision and evolution over time) and of what it means and feels like to belong in Toronto.

What does participation in the research study entail, and why?

Participation in the research study requires you to participate in the following activities and provide me with the following information:

Contact Information
Sharing contact information with me, so I can follow up with you as needed to coordinate your participation in the study.

Interview
Participating in a 45-60-minute virtual interview with me so that I can understand your experiences and perspectives. Please note that the session will be audio recorded. I do this because it allows me to spend less time writing notes and more time focusing on the discussion with you. It also enables me to recall exactly what you said and how you said it, rather than interpreting it based on my memory of the conversation, which risks a biased interpretation. These audio recordings will be transcribed either by myself or by a third party transcription company.

Who will you share my information with?

Only I will see your contact information and only I will be able to connect it to the information you shared with me in the survey and the details you share with me in the interview. Only I (and a third party transcription company, if I choose to use one) will see the transcript of the interview— interview transcripts will not be included in my final thesis deliverable in order to protect your identity and information.

Certain information from the interview will be shared with others, but the information shared won't be attributable to you. It will be shared in aggregate in the form of summary themes and insights and potentially direct quotes. If in my thesis I need to refer to you or any other individual I spoke to, or attribute a quote to a name, I will use pseudonyms (fake names).

The following groups or people will see this information:
- The Jane's Walk Steering Committee (currently 9 individuals who volunteer their time to be part of this Committee)
- Some classmates and professors from my master's program, notably my thesis supervisor and second reader who evaluate my final thesis submission, and the students who are in the room for my thesis defense
- The general public:
    - Depending on the grade I receive on my thesis, it may be made visible on the 4CITIES website for anybody to access
    - On our new Jane's Walk global website, we may have a webpage with the summary insights from the research for individuals to view

Once the interview has been transcribed and analysis has been conducted, I may send you any direct quotes from the conversation I may use to ensure you are comfortable with them (again, quotes will not be attributable to you and any information in the quote that could potentially identify you will be adjusted or redacted).

What happens to my information after the study?

Interview insights will be made available on the Committee's Google Drive for individuals on the Steering Committee to have access to over future years. I will keep the interview recordings and transcripts securely stored on my personal computer. If you wish for any of your data to be permanently removed after the study is over and my degree is complete (by December 2023), you can let me know and I can permanently delete them from my computer.

What are my rights?

You have a right to request a copy of the personal information I hold about you. You can ask that I update or correct your personal information. If you wish to remove any information you have put forward through this study, you can let me know and I will exclude it from my analysis. You are free to withdraw from the study before May 1st, 2023, without giving a reason for your withdrawal. You can decline to answer any particular questions in the study without any consequences.

Jane's Walk Research

CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM

Please review the below Consent and Release carefully and sign to indicate your agreement with these terms.

I, _____, acknowledge and agree that I am agreeing to participate in this Jane's Walk Research Study ('Research Study') on a voluntary basis.

By signing this Consent and Release form, I acknowledge and affirm the following:

- I have read the Information Sheet for this Research Study and have had details of the study explained to me.
- My questions about the Research Study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study within the time limits outlined in the Information Sheet, without giving a reason for my withdrawal or to decline to answer any particular questions in the Research Study without any consequences.
- I agree to provide information to the researcher under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Information Sheet.
- I wish to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.
- I understand that my participation in the Research Study may be recorded via audio and consent to such recording.

I have read, understand and agree to the agreements and undertakings in this Consent and Release.

_____ Signature

_____ Full Printed Name

_____ Date

2.5 Interview guide – participants

1. Introduction

Thank you so much for taking the time to chat today and for filling out the survey! My name is Celia and as you probably know, I'm the Co-Chair of Jane's Walk and a Master's Student in urban studies.

This interview and the survey both form part of my Master's thesis, which is about how participation in the Jane's Walk festival might influence individuals' feelings of belonging in the city. While that's the primary purpose, I'm also hoping it will help us improve the festival for years to come.

Think of this as more of a conversation rather than an interview. There are no right or wrong answers and anything you tell me will be kept fully confidential. You don't have to answer any question if it makes you uncomfortable.

Insights from my conversations with people will be seen by other students or professors in my program, and perhaps by members of the Jane's Walk Steering Committee. That said, any insights I share will be in the form of common themes or patterns that I heard from my conversations as a whole and will not be attributable to any individual. The interview will be audio recorded for note-taking purposes. I may use direct quotes from our conversation, but any personally identifiable information in them will be removed. Sometime after this interview I will share with you a summary of our conversation as well as any direct quotes I am thinking of using in my final documents to make sure my interpretations of it are accurate.

That was a lot of information! All of this was also covered in the consent form I sent you by email—did you have any questions about any of this?

Great. The conversation will take around 60 minutes. There are three parts: the first will be about getting to know you and your experiences in Toronto. The second is about your experiences with Jane's Walk and the third will be about what it means to feel a sense of belonging.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. To start off, can you tell me a bit about yourself?

2. You indicated in the survey that you've lived in Toronto for *[x]* years. Tell me more about this—did you move there or have you always lived there?

    a. *If moved here:*
        i. Can you transport yourself back to your first weeks or months in Toronto—was the transition difficult or easy? What sorts of things were you feeling?
        ii. *If difficult:* Was there anything that made your transition easier? Any place, person, or activity?

3. Have you ever had thoughts of leaving Toronto? Why or why not?

4. If Toronto were a person, what would they be like?

2. Jane's Walk involvement and experiences (20 mins)

5. Off the top of your head, what are the first few words that come to mind when I say "Jane's Walk"?
    a. *Probe into answers:* Tell me more about why you mentioned *[word]*.

6. If you had to describe Jane's Walk to somebody who had never been before and was thinking of attending, how would you describe it?

Early days

7. Can you tell me a bit about how you first heard about Jane's Walk?
    a. *Probing questions:*
        i. When was it?
        ii. What was it that made you want to participate in the festival? What about it made it sound appealing?
        iii. Take me back to that first festival you took part in—what was it like?

Continued relationship

8. How have you been involved with Jane's Walk since this first time?
    a. Has your relationship with Jane's Walk changed? In what ways?
    b. What keeps you coming back /
       what stopped you from participating as much?

9. Why do you (or have you in the past) attend(ed) Jane's Walk?
    a. The steering committee and I came up with a few ideas for why people might attend the festival. I'm going to show these on the screen. Which ones resonate most with you, if any?

       Show screen with a few 'cards' with the title, 'I attend Jane's Walk...' and the following prompts:
       - *To learn more about my city*
       - *To learn more about my neighbourhood*
       - *To see parts of the city I've never seen before*
       - *To connect with like-minded people*
       - *To connect with people who are different from me*
       - *To feel part of a community*
       - *To share my story or opinion*
       - *Other*

3. Belonging and Toronto (20 mins)

10. How would you describe a feeling of belonging? What words come to mind?

    a. *Probing questions:*
        i. How do you know if you belong to a group or community?

11. Can you think back to the last time you felt that sense of belonging? Describe it for me.
    a. Probing questions:
        i. What were you doing?

      ii.   Where were you?
      iii. Who were you with?

12. Is there a certain place in Toronto that gives you those feelings?

13. What about the opposite? Has there been a time recently where you felt a sense of *un*belonging? What did that feel like?

14. As you know, my thesis investigates the connection between Jane's Walk and belonging. Based on your personal experiences, do you feel there's a connection?

4. Closing

14. If you could wave a magic wand and change anything about the Jane's Walk festival, what would it be? Why?

15. Is there anything else you'd like to mention that you feel we haven't had the chance to discuss?

16. Do you have a preference for what gift card you would like?

    a. Mastercard
    b. Tim Hortons
    c. Walmart
    d. Esso
    e. Indigo
    f.   Uber Eats
    g. Uber
    h. LCBO
    i.   Winners/HomeSense/Marshalls
    j. Sobeys

2.6 Interview artefact – participants

I attend Jane's Walk...

1 To learn more about my city or neighbourhood

2 To see parts of the city I've never seen before

3 To meet people

4 To contribute to the community

5 To share my story or opinion

6 To feel connected to the city or neighbourhood

7 To be part of something bigger

8 To celebrate Toronto

9 Other...

2.7 Interview guide – organizers

1. Introduction

Thank you so much for taking the time to chat today! My name is Celia and as you probably know, I'm the Co-Chair of Jane's Walk and a Master's Student in urban studies.

This interview and the survey both form part of my master's thesis, which is about how participation in the Jane's Walk festival might influence individuals' feelings of belonging in the city. While that's the primary purpose, I'm also hoping it will help us improve the festival for years to come.

Think of this as more of a conversation rather than an interview. There are no right or wrong answers and anything you tell me will be kept fully confidential. You don't have to answer any question if it makes you uncomfortable.

Insights from my conversations with people will be seen by other students or professors in my program, by members of the Jane's Walk Steering Committee, and potentially published on our website as well. That said, any insights I share will be in the form of common themes or patterns that I heard from my conversations as a whole and will not be attributable to any individual. The interview will be audio recorded for note-taking purposes. I may use direct quotes from our conversation, but any personally identifiable information in them will be removed. Sometime after this interview I will share with you a summary of our conversation as well as any direct quotes I am thinking of using in my final documents to make sure my interpretations of it are accurate.

If, after this conversation ends you find yourself wanting to 'take back' something you said, just send me an email and I'll exclude it from my analysis.

That was a lot of information! All of this was also covered in the consent form I sent you by email—did you have any questions about any of this?

Great. The conversation will take around 45 minutes.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. Can you start off by telling me your personal experiences with Jane's Walk? When did you first get involved with the organization?
   a. *Probing questions:*
      i. Take me back to the first festival you were involved with—what was it like?

2. I've heard a few different 'origin stories' of Jane's Walk—from your experiences, how did the organization come to be?

3. What was the need for Jane's Walk? Beyond honouring Jane, why was it created and what does it bring to the city?
   Probe into any words like 'community', 'platform for voices to be heard', etc.
   a. Do you think the festival succeeds in achieving this? Why or why not?
   b. Do you think there's any disconnect between who Jane's Walk says it's 'for' in theory, versus who it's actually for in practice?

4. Has the festival changed since these early days? How?

5. As you know, my thesis is looking at whether participating in Jane's Walk could affect one's feelings of belonging in the city. When I say, 'Jane's Walk' and 'belonging', what comes to mind for you?
   a. Do you think there's any connection between Jane's Walk and belonging?
   b. How have you seen this manifest? Are there any stories that come to mind?

6. What are some of the biggest challenges you've faced in making this festival happen over the years?

7. Has being part of Jane's Walk impacted your feelings of belonging? In what way(s)?

8. Jane's Walk is coming up on its 20-year anniversary in a few years. If you transport yourself 20 more years into the future, what's your hope for Jane's Walk? What will it look like?

9. Is there anything else you'd like to mention that you feel we haven't had the chance to discuss?

3. Participant observations

Walk 1: Who Walked in Willowdale *(screenshot and website feature incorrect walk title)*

Gibson House Museum Staff

By Toronto History Museums.

Friday, May 5
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM
Saturday, May 6
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM &
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM
Sunday, May 7
1:00 PM - 2:30 PM
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

DETAILS

Language: English
Theme: History and Community
Accessibility: Uneven terrain, Busy sidewalks, Family-friendly walk, Walk leader will use audio amplification

WALK DETAILS:

Walk the streets of Willowdale with us to learn about the rich tapestry of characters who have called our neighbourhood home. Together, we'll meet rebels and rock stars, authors, architects, and of course, a famous mayor. Our walk will offer a glimpses into Willowdale's time as a rebellious farming settlement far north of Toronto. Then, Willowdale became a mostly quiet suburb that was punctuated by steamy double bills at the local movie house, and rowdy teenagers at the local burger shack. And, we'll hear about modern times, as Willowdale has transformed into the "Miracle on Yonge Street".

- Walk Start Location: **Cummer Burial Grounds 2 Church Avenue / northeast corner of Yonge Street and Church Avenue. Walk leaders will be wearing red t-shirt.**
- Walk End Location: Gibson House Museum, 5172 Yonge Street, North York Centre TTC station.

Local Library History: From Streets to Shelves

By Emily Macrae

Friday, May 5
6:00pm - 7:30pm

DETAILS

Language: English
Area: Downtown
Theme: Advocacy and Politics, Arts and Culture, Architecture and Urban Planning, History and Community
Accessibility: Breaks encouraged, Busy sidewalks, Dog-friendly walk, Family-friendly walk, Will look for and offer outdoor seating as often as possible

WALK DETAILS:

This Jane's Walk explores the origins and evolution the world's busiest urban library system: from the architectural styles of landmark buildings to the changing role of technology.

We'll start outside the Lillian H Smith library near College and Spadina then end at the Toronto Reference library. Along the way we'll find out how puppets, protests and 3D printing have shaped the city's public library system and share stories about the role of libraries in civic life.

Walk Start Location: Outside Lillian H Smith Public Library (Spadina/College, south of Spadina Stn).
Walk End Location: Toronto Reference Library.

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Walk 3: Ontario Place West Island Walk

Ontario Place West Island Walk

By Norm Di Pasquale, Francesca Bouaoun, Ontario Place for All

WALK DETAILS:

Ontario Place: Public Space or Private Spa?

- Walk Start Location: Lakeshore Blvd. W. & Remembrance Drive. Look for the "Ontario Place for All" Pins.
- Nearest Public Transit: 509 Streetcar of the 29 Dufferin Bus.
- Walk End Location: Ontario Place West Island Beach

Saturday, May 6
10:00am-11:30am

DETAILS

Language: English
Area: Downtown
Theme: Advocacy and Politics, Architecture and Urban Planning, Environment and Sustainability
Accessibility: Uneven terrain, Stairs or other barriers, Dog-friendly walk, Family-friendly walk, Walk leader will use audio amplification

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My first day in Toronto

Susan Patricia Diaz Blanco.

May 7, 2023
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Language:

Spanish

Theme:

Architecture and Urban
Planning, History and
Community.

Accessibility:

Busy sidewalks, Indoor stops,
Dog-friendly walk, Family-
friendly walk

"My first day in Toronto" is a walk focused on showing newcomers to this city the emblematic places and a little bit of Toronto's history. Coming as a tourist and coming as an immigrant are two different experiences. As immigrants, many of us are alone and speak a different language, so we tend to isolate ourselves and not participate in the new city. Because one feels like they don't belong, building a new life takes time. By not belonging, one does not participate. An immigrant is in limbo, no longer belonging to their country and not feeling part of the new one. My goal is to bring new people together to share their first impressions of Toronto and show them the interesting facts that I discovered while exploring it.

Walk Start Location:

Grange Park.
I am with a red cap.

Walk End Location:

Harbourfront Centre

Walls in Flower & Water Flowing Underground

Elder Peduhbun Migizi Kwe (Catherine Brooks). Indigenous Peoples Solidarity Group

May 7, 2023
3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Language:

English

Theme:

Arts and Culture, Environment and Sustainability, History and Community, Indigenous Knowledge Sharing.

Accessibility:

Stairs or other barriers, Family-friendly walk, Walk content may be triggering

Starting from the Tollkeeper's Park National Healing Forest project, this walk will follow Gete-Onigaming (now called Davenport Road) past the beginnings of Ziibiing (now called Taddle Creek) in Wychwood Park, then turn left down Christie Street to view the 2021 underpass murals by Red Urban Nation (RUN) Art Collective, founded by artist, chef, and entrepreneur, Johl Whiteduck Ringuette. Elder Catherine Brooks will then lead us south along Shaw Street, as we listen for what is now called Garrison Creek and learn about Water as Life.

From Shaw Street, we will cross Christie Pits Park to the Bickford Centre, recognizing the shape of the creek and its banks in what was once called Willowvale. Johl Whiteduck Ringuette's vision for re-Indigenizing this area will be further explored at the Centre's Miinikaan Indigenous Teaching Garden, designated part of the coast-to-coast-to-coast National Healing Forest movement in 2022. We will not only celebrate the biodiversity in this demonstration Medicine and pollinator patch, but also the stunning RUN murals that surround it, ultimately leading into Bickford Park with its dozens of native tree species.

Walk Start Location:

Tollkeeper's Park, Davenport Rd. and Bathurst St.
Orange Shirts

Walk End Location:

Bickford Park, Bloor St. W. and Christie St.

4. Participatory walk

Link to walk featured on Jane's Walk website

Finding belonging: stories in and around Parkdale

By Celia Beketa

Saturday, May 6
3:30pm - 5:30pm

DETAILS

Language: English
Area: Parkdale
Theme: Advocacy and Politics, Arts and Culture, History and Community
Accessibility: Breaks encouraged, Busy sidewalks, Dog-friendly walk, The total amount of walking will be about 2.5 km and we will go at a pace that works for everyone. While the walk is listed as 2 hours, the length will largely depend on how much discussion we have as a group—feel free to stay for as little or as long as you like! There will be time for a short break in the middle, and at least one stop has a seating area.

WALK DETAILS:

Belonging is a feeling. When we say we feel like we belong, what do we mean? How are these feelings influenced by the people and space around us?

In this walk, we explore questions like these by using the neighbourhood of Parkdale as a starting point—a neighbourhood known for many things including its ability to mobilize in the face of gentrification and exploitation, create connections across difference, and provide a sense of home for those in need. At each stop, we discuss a different component or interpretation of belonging and how it shows up in different sites across Parkdale. This walk is rooted in stories on community and belonging from Parkdale locals, the walk leader, and each other.

In the true spirit of Jane's Walk, this will be a walking conversation. While each stop will be accompanied by information from the walk leader, there will be time and space for those attending the walk to share their thoughts and experiences and discuss amongst each other.

The walk begins at Lisgar Park and travels west through Parkdale and Little Tibet as we visit sites like Gladstone House, the Toronto Collegiate Institute and the Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre before heading south to finish the walk along the waterfront. The different components or interpretations of belonging we will explore are varied, including emotions of belonging, politics of belonging, belonging as more-than-human, and belonging amid diversity.

The walk will be led by Celia Beketa, Co-Chair of Jane's Walk, who is currently completing her Master's thesis on how community organizations might influence individuals' feelings of belonging in diverse cities like Toronto. This walk is being led in part to help inform her thesis research, but mostly because she is passionate and curious about the topic. Pictures may be taken on the walk.

If you are planning on attending the walk, please fill out this form: https://forms.gle /c21THF1hACXw9osa7. This is mostly to better predict how many people will attend and understand any requests related to accessibility or otherwise. I hope to see you there!

- Walk Start Location: Lisgar Park (Lisgar and Queen). I have blonde hair, will be wearing green pants, and will have a Jane's Walk sign.
- Walk End Location: Waterfront, near Lakeshore Boulevard Parklands

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4.2 Walk guide

A note on this section of the annex: The next few pages show the personal notes I prepared in advance of, and used as reference on my participatory walk. They represent the overall structure of the walk and the topics covered. Not all topics were necessarily discussed word for word, and discussion also veered outside of this script. The detailed, verbatim notes taken by my sister are omitted from the annexes to protect the identity of the participants and the sensitive subject matter discussed.

Stops ~ *2 hour 9 mins*

1. **Lisgar Park –** *15 mins*
   ==Intro - What is belonging?==

2. **Gladstone House –** *10 mins + 6 min walk*
   ==Belonging as emotional==

3. **Parkdale Amphitheatre –** *10 mins + 2 min walk*
   ==Belonging as political==

4. **Little Tibet – Loga's Corner** *– 10 mins + 8 min walk*
   ==Belonging amid diversity==

5. **Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre –** *15 mins + 2 min walk*
   ==Belonging as political==

6. **Beaty Avenue Parkette –** *10 mins + 3 min walk*
   ==Belonging as relational and more-than-human==

1. **Lisgar Park**
   <mark>**Intro - What is belonging?**</mark>

   - Land acknowledgement
     i. I would like to honour the land that we are on, which has been the site of human activity since time immemorial. It is the traditional territories of the Wendat, Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and most recently, The Mississaugas of the Credit River First Nations.
     ii. Particularly important for us to consider today in a conversation about belonging—for myself, what does it mean to belong as a white settler?
   - Introductions – go around the circle
   - Overview of the walk—what to expect
     i. 6 'stops'
     ii. Identify where there are places to sit
     iii. Mention potential trigger warnings
     iv. Ask to tell me if you can't hear me
     v. Describe intent of this being a walking conversation (vs. walking tour)
     vi. Mention positionality – I am hardly an expert
   - My thesis & belonging & diversity in Toronto
     i. Toronto & belonging (all of below from Parkin & Ayer, 2022):
        1. In Toronto Foundation's 2022 Vital Signs report on social capital, the sense of belonging has declined somewhat since 2018. The proportion with a very strong sense of belonging decreased by seven points, from 28% to 21%.
        2. Likely due to the pandemic, the decline is more pronounced among some groups (those who expressed in 2018 a very strong sense of belonging to their local community):
           a. Seniors
           b. Those who know a lot of neighbours
           c. Those with highest civic engagement scores
        3. Those aged 30 to 39 (63%) report the lowest sense of belonging, while those aged 65 and older (79%) report the highest. Sense of belonging is also higher among those who describe their income as "good enough" (78%) and is lower among those who say their income is "not enough" (59%).
   - **Question posed to group: what is belonging? What words come to mind?**
   - Why does belonging matter?
     i. A need to belong — to connect with people and places, to align with one's cultural identities, and to feel like one is a part of the systems around them — is buried deep inside our biology, all the way down to the human genome (Boyd & Richerson, 2009)
     ii. Evolutionarily, has been critical for survival (Boyd & Richerson, 2009)
     iii. Lack of sense of belonging (feeling marginalized, feeling like an outsider) in the host country is the most stressful factor in international migrants' acculturation process (Hang & Zhong, 2023)
     iv. The proportion of Torontonians having in-person contact with close friends or relatives at least once a week fell between 2018 and 2022 (Parkin & Ayer, 2022).

2. Gladstone Hotel
<mark>**Belonging as emotional**</mark>

About the Gladstone (Kalinowski, 2020)
- 131-year-old Victorian
- Oldest continuing hotel in Toronto, since 1889
- Designed by George Miller (architect of Massey Hall, Annesley Hall and many of Parkdale's old residences)
- Started as a railway hotel, served as rooming house and dive bar before architect Eberhard Zeidler (now in his 90s) bought it and took it on as a passion project (father of former Gladstone president Christina Zeidler)
- Zeidler family selling the property after 17 years of building its reputation as an arts hub
- 37 artist-designed rooms, 3 gallery spaces
- Christina Zeidler – filmmaker, artist, self-described 'accidental hotelier' (all of below derived from personal interview with Christina, 2018)
  - "Everybody feels like it's their place," Zeidler said.
  - rooted in the arts and activism, Christina built her business (The Gladstone Hotel) the only way she knew how—by creating a community in which artists could thrive, and by adopting a mentality of "if you think you belong here, you do".
  - Christina's title, "Alchemist": points to the element of experimentation inherent in the Gladstone's operations. Nobody will be silenced at the Gladstone, and everybody is welcome
- Operations (derived from personal interview with Christina, 2018)
  - Lateral model: everyone, including caterers, bartenders, artists, dish cleaners, and managers, has a seat at the table for the organization's most critical decisions.
- **Question posed to group: Who has been to the Gladstone?**
  - Events that I have been to:
    - Nightmare on Queer St. Halloween party
    - Come Up to my Room – 4-day immersive installations
    - Dead Poet - spoken word and open mic monthly
    - Damn Fine Party – Twin Peaks themed immersive theatre Halloween night (lost & gone theatre)

My Gladstone story of belonging

Belonging as emotional
- "As many theorists have pointed out, the assumed emotionality of belonging is rarely explicitly explored" (Wright, 2015)
- "Belonging is not just about membership, rights, and duties . . . Nor can it be reduced to identities and identifications, which are about individual and collective narratives of self and other, presentation and labeling, myths of origin and destiny. Belonging is a deep emotional need of people." (Yuval-Davis, 2004: 215).
- **Question posed to group: Think of the last time you felt a sense of belonging. What did it feel like?**

3. **Parkdale Amphitheatre**
   <mark>Belonging as political</mark>

<u>History of Parkdale</u>
Unless otherwise mentioned - <u>Whyte, 2020</u>
- <u>Late 19th century:</u> built as a summer refuge for the city's wealthy
- <u>2 decades later:</u> Rapid industrialization along the water's edge changed it—apartments built for workers (many of them immigrants); Victorian homes repurposed into multiple single-room dwellings
- <u>1960s-1980s:</u>
    i. Decline of industry
    ii. Province of Ontario deregulates mental health care and shuts down psychiatric hospitals (during the 1960s and 1970s approximately 75% of Ontario's psychiatric hospital beds were eliminated—In Toronto, it is estimated that by the early 1980s 1,200 former mental health patients were living in the community of Parkdale).
    iii. Develops the reputation of a neighborhood rife with poverty, crime, drugs, homelessness, and large numbers of people living with mental illness (Slater, 2004)
    iv. Overconcentration of social services and rooming houses as 'cause' of strife, state-led gentrification ensues
    v. Other community groups emerge countering these views:
        1. Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre PARC – 1977
        2. Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust – 2010
        3. Parkdale People's Economy Community Planning – 2015

<u>Parkdale today</u>
- As of 2020 (Ostanel, 2020):
    o The 2016 census data: recent immigrant population (people arriving in the previous 10 years) is shrinking and the non-immigrant population is growing.
    o The population of low-income persons and recent immigrants has decreased, while the population of older Canadian-born working adults has increased.
    o The resident occupations are shifting away from middle-income blue-collar jobs towards business/professionals
    o Apartments removed from the regular rental housing stock and made available for short-term rental, through services like Airbnb, have doubled in Parkdale in the past three years.[1]
    o Corporate landlords represent upwards of 50% of all rental units in Parkdale – they can hike up rents as high as they want, they neglect repairs.
    o Advertised asking rents increased drastically over the 2015–2017 period by over $426 per month, or 36% (<u>Leon, 2019</u>).
- Eviction protests
    o In 2017, tenants mounted a rent strike to protest above-guideline rent increase and a backlog of repairs. More than 300 tenants in 12 apartment buildings collectively refused to pay rent. After months of protests and strikes, <u>the landlord agreed</u>.

- o In 2022 an entire building, 12 Lansdowne, received N13 eviction notices
  - o In June 2022, eviction notices sent to people for using window-mounted AC units

<u>Connection to belonging</u>
- "politics of belonging":
  - o negotiations and power struggles over boundaries that define who belongs to a particular local and national community and place and who does not" (Leitner, 2012)
  - o Different from feelings of belonging: it focuses on the interpretations and negotiations of the boundaries between the 'we' and the 'them'
  - o In line with assimilation:
    - In her study on encounters between long-term white residents and immigrants of colour in small-town rural Minnesota, Leitner (2012) conceives belonging as conforming to white America—from the perspective of white residents: "belonging is conditional on immigrants becoming like them, through expectations that immigrants adapt to prevailing norms and culture".
- Public space can be a place of exclusion—it offers the "possibility of exploring how difference is experienced and negotiated on the ground" (Ostanel, 2020)

<u>As we walk today…</u>
- **Question posed to group: Do you see any evidence of people fighting for the right to belong?**

4. Little Tibet – Loga's Corner *(8 min walk from #3)*
Belonging amid diversity

<u>Toronto & diversity</u>
- One of the most diverse cities in the world
- 46.03% of the city's population was born outside of the country (Statistics Canada, 2022)
- 44.90% of the city's residents speak at least one nonofficial language at home (City of Toronto, 2022)
- Toronto—one of the most diverse cities in the world—claims that "the diversity among its people has strengthened Toronto" (City of Toronto, 2017)

<u>Relationship between belonging and diversity</u>
Question posed to group: How do you think living amid diversity impacts belonging?
Conflict/contact/constrict theories from Wu et al., 2011:
- Conflict perspective: ***Higher sense of belonging to one's ethnic group, lower sense of belonging to Canada as a whole***
  - Ethnic diversity creates competition for different groups, people have an aversion to difference, dissimilarities prevent social trust
- Contact theory/perspective: ***Lower sense of belonging to one's ethnic group, higher sense of belonging to Canada***
  - exposure to racial diversity can lead to the elimination of in–group/out–group antagonisms and the development of social solidarity on a generalized level ([Putnam 2007](#)).
  - exposure to diversity fosters a superordinate sense of belonging and deemphasizes the importance of in–group/out–group distinctions
- Constrict theory (Putnam, 2007): ***Lower trust towards all groups, lower sense of belonging***
  - both in-group and out-group relations weaken, as individuals tend to be less trusting in general, leading to expect lower sense of belonging in general.
- Citizenship
  - Migration and citizenship are intimately intertwined with notions and experiences of belonging—Canada as a nation-state shapes, contests, and challenges understandings of who belongs and who does not
  - State citizenship isn't enough to provide a sense of belonging, w/o feeling listened to, valued, ability to express your own identity, etc.

<u>About Tibetan conflict</u> ([Aljazeera English, 2022](#))
- China claims a centuries-old sovereignty over Tibet.
- 1951: the country sent thousands of troops to the Himalayan region in 1951, calling it a peaceful liberation.
- Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, claims the territory was independent. He and his supporters fled to India after a failed anti-Chinese uprising in 1959

- China says Tibet has achieved remarkable social and economic progress under its rule. But 125,000 Tibetans live in exile across the world, many seeking refugee status

About Little Tibet (Aljazeera English, 2022)
- Little Tibet is host to the largest Tibetan community in North America
- 241 first arrived in Canada in 1970 and 1971
- Tibetan community in Toronto has grown to over 4000

5. **Parkdale Activity-Recreation Centre (1499 Queen St. W.)**
   Belonging as political

PARC overview (from personal conversation with PARC representative, 2023)
- Opened in 1977; a haven, a sanctuary from the outside world for those who needed it most—drop-in model…
- 'belonging' part of what guides the work of PARC, baked into vision. Based on belief that everyone who comes through the doors is welcome
- Primarily support people with issues related to mental health and substance use
- For 40 years drop-in has existed as a place of belonging
- PARC born out of locals noticing psychiatric survivors released from institutions (in 70s), noticed they had nowhere to go.
- PARC started by forming this drop-in. Drop-in is core, coffee is served, snacks.
- Pandemic & belonging. Can't emphasize how difficult it's become. People have lost the physical space to be together. Space still has capacity limits.
  - A home, a friend, a job, a neighbourhood.

Story of belonging
- Guest speaker – Peter Martin: PARC Treasurer, Board Member, and Service User Representative

6. **Beaty Avenue Parkette** *(3 min walk from #5)*
   <mark>Belonging as relational and more-than-human</mark>

Belonging as relational overview:
- "Things (or people or places) do not pre-exist, in static ways – their belongings are made through their coming together." – Wright, 2015: 393
  - Humans and 'more-than-humans'—their emotions, their aspirations, and the other beings that make up a place—influence one another.
- "…plants, animals, and other organisms to be important agents in constituting the border, and informing who and what belongs." (Wright, 2015: 401)
- "Beings, processes and emotions, even those things understood as inanimate or intangible in a Western sense, are players in the world – they produce affects. It is possible, then, to understand belonging as materially performed by messy, complex, human and more-than-human assemblages of things, people, beings, processes and affects." (Wright, 2015: 402)
- Beings and belongings co-constitute one another. They become together.

Belonging as more-than-human
- We often understand belonging as something that humans do with other humans in places. What about the role of rituals? Institutions? Places? Food practices?
- "Food, organisms, trees, music, markets, hair and dance all actively co-constitute belonging. Rather than a background, they actively co-produce feelings of belonging, they sculpt and participate in practices and performances of belonging, and they materialize belonging in, through and with place." (Wright, 2015: 402)

Relations with the earth:
- We cannot understand belonging without understanding the ground beneath our feet, the nature around us, the animals with whom we coexist.
- A culture of belonging rooted in the Earth (Rebalancing the World by Carol Lee Flinders, quoted in hooks, 2008):
  - "one in which there is 'intimate connection with the land to which one belongs, empathic relationship to animals, self-restraint, custodial conservation, deliberateness, balance, expressiveness, generosity, egalitarianism, mutuality, affinity for alternative modes of knowing, playfulness, inclusiveness, nonviolent conflict resolution, and openness of spirit'

5. Other

5.1 Jane's Walk principles

Jane's Walk…

1. Is volunteer-driven

Jane's Walk is a volunteer-led movement powered by the communities in which it operates. Anybody can lead a Jane's Walk, and participation is always free. While the Global Festival takes place annually on the first weekend of May (close to Jane Jacobs' birthday on May 4th), Jane's Walks can be led at any time. Local financial support of Jane's Walks is permitted, but no fees, charges, or any promotion of commercial activities can be connected to the content or activities of any given walk.

2. Is inspired and informed by the world around us

Jane's Walks are a way for neighbours to meet neighbours, and for neighbourhoods to build community. Jane's Walk strives to include a wide array of voices and ideas in discussions about cities, neighbourhoods and community engagement. Jane's Walk is different from other initiatives because the community and its buildings, parks, and broader environment are also active players in the walks. They inspire, frustrate, inform, and direct participation in the conversations.

3. Is done in whatever way makes most sense for you

There is no 'one way' to lead a Jane's Walk or run a Festival. For both cities and individuals, Jane's Walk is a tool to create and encourage conversation. Jane's Walks take place on foot, through other forms of mobility, through performance, or virtually. The design is intentionally open, serving as a global container for ideas, exploration, and discovery.

4. Creates an opportunity to hear all voices

Jane's Walk creates a space where community members with different viewpoints can share their perspectives. As a platform for these voices to be heard, Jane's Walk directly addresses and takes a stance against hate speech, racism, xenophobia, oppression, and discrimination.

5. Encourages critical engagement with the ideas and legacy of Jane

Jane's Walk was created in recognition of the ideas and legacy of Jane Jacobs, who has inspired and influenced city builders for decades. The intent of Jane's Walk is not to prescribe her teachings on city-making and urban planning, but rather to promote dialogue, discussion and debate on them.

6. Recognizes cities are living ecosystems with a past, present and future

Jane's Walk encourages reflection about the history of habitation and city-building. Jane's Walks can prompt questions about who has been displaced or marginalized in a particular space, in a critical, investigative way. They can inspire dialogue on ways of moving toward greater equity, together.

5.2 Providing informed consent

- The **survey** communicated my position as both Master student and Co-Chair of Jane's Walk and that the survey would be used to both improve future festivals and help me complete my thesis. It conveyed the general subject matter of the survey, and explained that the survey was anonymous unless participants chose to enter into a draw for a gift card or sign up for a conversation with me (for which they would need to provide contact information). For the recruitment communications, see Annex 7.1.1.

- Consent forms were used for all **interviews**, detailing all information pertaining to the research—see Annex 7.2.3 and 7.2.4.

- Promotional materials and communications for both the **interviews** (see Annex 7.2.1) and the **participatory walk** (see Annex 7.4.1) also provided as transparent information as possible regarding the study, so that participants knew what to expect and how their data would be used before signing up.

- After **interviews** were conducted, I sent interviewees an email with my key take-aways from the conversation and asked if they were accurate. Once I had the interview transcripts, I emailed back any direct quotes I was considering using to ask them if they were comfortable with me using them and if they felt they were accurate.