

‘The Influences of Place and Space on Sexual Encounters’

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By Joshua Rees

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(Fig 1. Alvin Baltrop *Untitled* 1975-1986)



(Fig 2. Alvin Baltrop *Untitled* 1975-1986)



(Fig3. Alvin Baltrop *Untitled* 1975-1986)

Summary

This thesis will investigate the behaviours of gay men who partake in the activity of cruising (the act of searching public spaces in pursuit of a sexual encounter with another person) using the methodology of a literature review. This will be evidenced through the social documentation of Alvin Baltrop from 1975-1986. These will be compared to the behaviours of gay men 'cruising' through Grindr, a mobile app which allows users to look at other gay men who are close in proximity to arrange a sexual encounter.

Introduction

This study investigates cruising behaviours in the 1970s and 1980s in New York and how the behaviours and acts of social documentation by Alvin Baltrop have led to the development of the gay cruising apps of today. There is a focus on how the apps like Grindr have altered the cruising dynamic and environment in The New York gay community.

This Literature review will look at the history of cruising culture from the 1970s up until the modern day chronologically to provide a foundational understanding of cruising culture. Then the research will focus on the social documentation of the Hudson River Piers to investigate cruising behaviours of the 1970s and 1980s in more depth, Once this has been undertaken the research will

then progress to move the investigation to the cruising apps of today, to explore how the behaviours may have changed as gay men (or men who have sex with men) who cruise may have moved from a physical space towards a virtual space.

(Baltrop. 1975-1986)'s photographic documentation of the piers is insightful into the cruising activities and experiences that occurred on the piers (Crimp. 2008). Baltrop's documentation will be used to establish what the cruising culture was like from 1975-1986 and how things changed as the 'Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome' (AIDS) crisis emerged (Espinoza. 2019 Pg. 109). Baltrop's work offers the unique perspective of a gay man and a voyeur. To compare to current times of cruising being more established within a virtual field, this research may be able to understand if there are any differences or similarities between the different times; and could establish if the behaviours were "a child of its time".

The virtual environment is epitomised by the creation in 2005 of the geosocial app known as Grindr, released on mobile platforms (Licoppe et al., 2016). This changed the cruising culture drastically as cruising was suddenly readily available for anyone to access (Blackwell et al., 2014). (Blackwell et al., 2014) and (Licoppe et al., 2016) may provide more detail into how the behaviours of gay men who engage in cruising have changed in an online setting. This is evidenced in studies by (Blackwell et al., 2014) and (Licoppe et al., 2016), who researched how 'co-situating' individuals with different interests within the virtual space of Grindr can cause tension, as users intentions are unclear. The latter investigates communication between users and how Grindr's functionality is geared towards one time sexual encounters. These studies will give insight as to if there is a commonality of behaviours within the space.

Another study which was analysed was 'you show me yours, I'll show you mine' (Jones. 2005) which investigates the negotiation of the exchange of pictures and the initiation of video conferences in online dating chatrooms. This may provide a better understanding which has been outlined within the literature, but would need more qualitative measures to obtain more accurate findings.

By comparing the virtual private spaces with the physical public spaces in these documentations it will allow for an establishment of how the behaviours of gay men differ in public and private settings through communication and actions of those involved.

History Of Cruising

The first chapter of this review will focus on a brief history of cruising from the 1970s-2022.

The early 70s was when the gay civil rights movement started to gain momentum, especially in the United Kingdom and the United States (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 93). The Sexual Offences Act (1967) was amended, legalising homosexual acts in England & Wales, based on the condition that they were consensual, and in private between two men. This was a moment of sexual liberation for the gay community and from this point in time is where more information regarding the act of cruising was readily available (Sexual Offences Act, 1967)

Subsequently, after the 1969 Stonewall Uprising, the American Psychological Association removed homosexuality from its 'mental disorders' list in 1973. This led

to the first openly gay politician, Harvey Milk leading his campaign candidacy for city supervisor in San Francisco. Milk's actions threw himself and the gay community into the spotlight of the 'American social consciousness' (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 93). As a result of Milk's actions, over one thousand gay activist organisations were founded in the United States in the space of a year' (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 93).

In parallel to this, there was also a response from the United Kingdom to the Stonewall uprising (Drydon, British Library). In 1970 the United Kingdom saw the formation of The Gay Liberation Front (GLF), which fought against the oppression imposed on LGBT people (Drydon, British Library). The GLF protested alongside other oppressed communities (Drydon, British Library). Later in 1972, they organised their first Pride march (Drydon, British Library).

These events allowed the gay community to express themselves more freely, and the 70s became a time when gay men felt sexually liberated (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 95). Gay men felt more comfortable experimenting with sexuality because of the developments in the gay rights movements and the reduced level of oppression (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 95).

In the 1970s, psychologist Laud Humphreys (Humphreys, 1975) researched 'deviant sexual behaviour' – behaviour that is not socially acceptable - in public spaces. This study is formally known as the 'Tearoom Trade'. He did acknowledge the different environments where homosexual behaviour occurred, but Humphreys specifically focused on the sexual activity that occurred amongst other men in public toilets in parks. These spaces were commonly used amongst gay men as public toilets were easily accessible, and these spaces attracted many different

types of sexual identity; gay, bisexual and heterosexual men (Humphreys, 1975). These spaces are often associated with impersonal anonymous sex (Humphreys, 1975).

Humphrey's research was conducted through covert observational techniques, where Humphreys acted as a 'lookout' for men engaging in sexual activity, which is not ethical due to the breach of privacy. All interactions that Humphrey had with these men have been documented through recordings, without participants knowledge. A year later Humphreys then located several of the men whom he had spoken with and he interviewed them regarding their previous public sexual encounters.

Despite the methodology having ethical flaws (Humphreys never gained consent and deceived all the men whilst under cover), the research offers great insight into why people cruise and how it felt to be cruising in the 70s. Many of the men observed in the study relished their rush when engaging in risky activities, which was identified in this study. But this contradicts the reasons for engaging in covert behaviours like cruising. There is an inherent fear of exposure; if exposed, it could cause damage a person's view of the self. This is because public sexual behaviour was labelled as 'deviant'.

During this period of freedom in the 70s, establishments such as bathhouses and gay sex clubs started to become more widely accessible. The industries provided a more relaxed space for gay men to explore their sexuality with other men, whilst enjoying the facilities of the bathhouse and the clubs. However, it only started to gain momentum in usage in 1990s for gay saunas to operate freely

without the risk of a police raid (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 104). This is when these spaces became increasingly popular amongst gay men.

After the progression that was made in the 1970s, the gay community was faced with more 'setbacks' within society when AIDS emerged in the 1980s (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 109). Fear transcended through the population as the entire community was stigmatised. AIDS was labelled as the 'gay cancer' (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 114). Before (and even after) the general population we learned about how AIDS was transmitted people became paranoid as they dreaded the thought of potentially catching it. This is because it was a life-threatening disease, and it was seen as a death sentence.

In 'Cruising an intimate history of a radical pastime' (2019) he identified that within the gay community, some men chose to '*abstain from sex entirely*' (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 114); some men limited their number of anonymous "*hook-ups*" or took precautions, and still, others did nothing to change. This suggested that social responsibilities for sexual actions were changing, as a result of the advertising campaigns. In the UK, there was the 'AIDS: Monolith (1987)' campaign which used the image of a tombstone to depict the idea of a death sentence if you were to contract AIDS. Some gay men who cruised went from one end of the scale of frequently cruising to the other end of the scale and abstaining from sexual activity in fear of contracting AIDS.

Additionally, within the reading, he stated that 'the fear of AIDS, had forced many gay men to conceal their behaviours' - the term for this behaviour was called 'going back into the closet' (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 114) - because of the strong links association between AIDS and gay sex. Also, these behaviours and societal thinking

dramatically impacted the cruising subculture; he stated this was because of the widespread fear of AIDS transmission, which directly affected the landscape of cruising. The cruising grounds that were most impacted were the bathhouses, especially when it was discovered that AIDS was transmitted through bodily fluids. To combat the increase in AIDS transmission, the bathhouses started to display posters which promoted safe sex, in addition to also supplying free condoms in their facilities (Downs, 2006).

As more information became available regarding the transmission and causes of AIDS, the development of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), which is a pharmaceutical product which prevents the transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) from one person to another, was a huge turning point in the AIDS epidemic. This new drug helped gay men feel sexually liberated again (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 117). 'People were taking control of their HIV status and they did not need to let fear dictate their sexual activity' (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 117).

Despite the impact the AIDS epidemic had on cruising culture there was still an appetite for public sex (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 114). In the 2000s and more specifically in the last 10 years, technological developments with mobile apps, such as 'Grindr' and 'Scruff', this makes public sex more readily available (Colliver, 2022). They are geosocial apps which allow users to engage with those who are geographically closest to them. This will give insight into how gay men behave in a sexualised virtual online chat room.

The next chapter will focus on Baltrop's social documentation of The Hudson River Piers of New York. This will allow for a specific analysis of Cruising behaviours in the 1970s/1980s New York.

Alvin Baltrop's Social Documentation of The Hudson River Piers from the 1975

- 1986

In the 1970s New York, following the Stonewall uprising the gay community saw an increase in policing around several of the popular cruising sites (Anderson, 2015). In response, these spaces were abandoned, and gay men started in search of new areas for cruising, which lead them to populate The Hudson River Piers. Cruising encounters started in trucks near the warehouses on the piers. Due to the collapse of the West Side Highway the piers were only accessible on foot, this mode of accessibility took (until the late 1980s after the highway was reconstructed) (Crimp, 2008). The piers were perfectly positioned near several of the gay and leather bars and as the community saw the potential opportunities for experimentation, it became predominately populated by homosexual men, who were looking to use it as a cruising ground (Anderson, 2015 Pg. 138).

The piers were a poignant place for cruising throughout the 1970s and the 1980s (Crimp, 2008). So much so, they were regularly documented by photographer, Alvin Baltrop, who took advantage of the 'industrial dilapidated piers' (Crimp, 2008). Many of Baltrop's photographs capture the piers being appropriated for cruising. It has been said that Baltrop's photographs 'constitute rare and

indispensable evidence of the proximity and simultaneity of artistic and sexual experimentation in the declining industrial spaces of Manhattan during the 1970s' (Crimp, 2008). From Baltrop's perspective, we can see that the community populating this site felt sexually liberated and safe in this 'dilapidated' location.

Baltrop's series of photographs were based in 1970s New York, despite them being accurate to the time and place, they do lack external validity. The scenarios and circumstances captured within the photographs cannot be generalised outside of New York or to any period beyond the 1970s. Within this research we can explore if there are differences between the findings in Baltrop's New York and today's modern use of the virtual apps.

When Baltrop started documenting the pier's activity he took the position of a voyeur rather than a researcher, which adds a personal element to the documentation (Anderson, 2015). He was determined to capture the outrageous beauty that took place. To get some of his shots Baltrop would 'hang from ceilings in the warehouses' (Crimp, 2008), he would watch people for hours waiting for the perfect time to record the action, and at times the encounters he would watch ended violently. Ethically this seems like an invasion of privacy. An example of this can be seen in (Fig. 1. Baltrop, 1975-1986) where Baltrop appears to be capturing a photograph of two men engaging in sexual activities from above. Through Baltrop's experiences as a photographer and a voyeur, the community felt a sense of freedom (free from oppressive behaviours imposed by the policing and the fear of being caught and shamed), which is seen through sexual liberation (Anderson, 2015 Pg. 138).

Baltrop frequented the places regularly capturing men engaging in sex with other men from a distance, or a neighbouring pier or through a doorway - 'some men became exhibitionists when the camera was pointed in their direction' (Anderson, 2015 Pg. 138). Whether people were engaging in sexual activity or not in Baltrop's photographs the piers were recognised for the sexual playground that they were. While Baltrop's photographs were documentations of cruising on the piers, he also noticed men engaging in other fetish behaviours such as voyeurism (men watching other men participating in sexual behaviour) and exhibitionism (men performing in sexual behaviour for other men to see). This can be seen in (Fig. 2. Baltrop, 1975-1986) where it can be seen where a man in one of the warehouses looking through a hole and watching the other two engaged men. This depiction cleverly mirrors the position of the viewer, depicting them as someone who is also engaging in sexual activity as a voyeur.

What is interesting about Baltrop's photographs is that the surrounding area does not offer insight or direct your gaze to a particular section of the photo. They encourage 'visual cruising' (Anderson, 2015 Pg. 138). Through the ineffectuality of the photographs, the viewer is forced to look at the decaying surroundings and search through the deteriorating conditions to reveal the warehouse or darkness. (Fig. 3. Baltrop, 1975-1986) is a good example of this where we are looking through an orifice to find two men standing naked in and amongst the debris of the warehouse.

As time moved towards the mid-1980s there was a decline in the use of the space due to the expansion and fears of the AIDS crisis (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 114). At the time there was still a stigma associated with the gay community and AIDS,

which could explain the reduced use of the cruising grounds due to the fear of transmission.

This section focuses on evaluating Baltrop's documentation alongside the articles of Anderson and Crimps. Despite how insightful Baltrop's social documentary photographs are in regards to the cruising activity that occurred on the piers, it's important to recognise the ethical issues surrounding the series of photographs. Baltrop was taking the photographs from the position of a voyeur and capturing these candid moments as they were happening.

Another issue with the sources used to give insight into the contextual information regarding the photographs is that they are articles based on experience or opinions. These ideas are subject to a level of bias, which will be explored in this chapter.

There is a level of interpreter bias (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight. 2010) that needs to be acknowledged when viewing these photos, whether it be the Crimp, Anderson or my personal views. Each viewer may have a different interpretation of the literary evidence as it is subject to opinion, people of different culture, sexuality and gender will have different views.

We need to consider Baltrop's views and stance too as he may have captured these photographs to ensure that he is communicating his narrative, which may or may not be true to the events that were taking place (Aveyard and Sharp, 2017). So, the photos themselves are subjected to his own biases as a photographer as they could have been staged.

On reflection of the research, looking at Baltrop's photographs, despite the biases that could influence our perceptions: The work is insightful to what was

going on in New York from 1975-1986 (Crimp, 2008). The fear of policing prior to this documentation had been eradicated (Espinoza, 2019 Pg. 117), and this is expressed through the sexual experimentation of people in the photographs. Personal boundaries within these spaces had been deconstructed as people felt they could act how they pleased (Anderson, 2015 Pg. 138). This is implied through the method of documenting sexual activity through photography, as people were not concerned. While these photographs are limited to depicting 1970s/1980s New York, it would be wise to consider different countries at the time to investigate the shortcomings of Baltrop's documentation. This could be done by looking at more photographic documentation of activities in other countries, which have been taken in the same time period.

Grindr and It's Consumer-Focused Functionality

This section focuses on how Grindr's functionality (a mobile cruising app) is consumer orientated. Through the way it brings users into contact with each other and the communication functionality between users. This help to develop a comparison to be made between behaviours in public physical spaces (such as identified by Baltrop in the 1970' and 1980's), and more recent virtual behaviours of those in private online spaces.

The predominant use of Grindr is for gay and bisexual men to engage in anonymous sexual encounters based on their geographic location in relation to the user (Licoppe et al., 2016). The design of Grindr is steered towards preventing repeat encounters and the development of a relationship. Users can initiate contact with each other through a chat function and use a block function to cease contact with a user. Grindr has reinforced and reshaped cruising from the 1970s when Baltrop was photographing the piers, where people had to physically attend spaces waiting for the right person. Additionally, they provide pictures pre taken, to exhibit themselves to potential encounters. This is now done by allowing people to cruise from a grid of profiles and pictures possible from any location, based on those closest to them. The user design (UX/UI) of Grindr makes cruising seem less emotionally driven through monotonous actions of scrolling through profiles.

'Casual hook-ups on Grindr involve a sexual script' (Licoppe et al., 2016) unknown strangers are a key aspect of the sexual encounter, who are identified through (self-) objectified characteristics and attributes in addition to pictures and

possible kink preferences. The sexual encounter is expected to be an 'opportunistic activity that is short-lived' (Licoppe et al., 2016). This 'script' has made the act of cruising through Grindr more aggressive, because of the objectification that users face (Licoppe et al., 2016). Users are relinquished of responsibilities and consequences through the act of blocking or muting people who do not meet their criteria for a sexual encounter. Conversations that are generated in these chat rooms almost seem automated and robotic, giving the users a mechanical/consumerist experience. The manifestation of desire in a physical space and virtual space derives from a different source. In physical spaces, desire is sparked by natural appearances, whereas in a virtual space desire is concerned with a user's self-presentation through pictures.

(Jones, 2005) investigates the exchange of sexual photographs within online gay chat rooms and the use of video conferences. The study shows the way people interact with each other through these mediums is consistently imitating the robotic nature of conversations. They start with a greeting and progress to the exchange of information like 'age, race, appearance and the type of activity they are looking for on the chat rooms, the requirements of the partner, the sexual roles (top/bottom/versatile), and if one of the participants has a place for sexual activity' (Jones, 2005: Pg. 73). During the conversation, there is a negotiation to exchange pictures. Pictures are sent through digital files, and if both participants are satisfied, they arrange to meet in real life. If you compare these experiences to the 1970s and the physical spaces, they are a lot less instinctive, but more thought out and planned. But the directness of the questioning process is something you would only see in the private messages of a virtual space, again giving a consumerist feeling to

using Grindr as it allows you to quickly ascertain if the person you are speaking with is in possession of the characteristics that appeal to you.

A key thing to recognise in this research is that the communication is disembodied and allows users to act more freely, but also more aggressively through the exchange of photographs of people's bodies and genitalia at the risk of potentially facing rejection if one party is not satisfied (Jones, 2005). In comparison to Baltrop's documentation, Baltrop's photographs seem more natural. In these interactions, the body is always present and is 'the main topic of conversation' (Jones, 2005: Pg 74). When cruising occurs on the grounds like in the 1970s, it is the body which is viewed as an anchor for the self and holds people back from acting on the act of cruising. There is also an element of a rush due to the risk taking behaviour. Whereas, in an online environment, it's easy for people to lose a sense of self and act however they want because there is no responsibility or repercussions for their actions, to tailor the functionality to consumers. Users can always block other men if unsatisfied or if tension arises in conversation.

These scripted interactions carve a particular structure for the social interactions, the participants outwardly display a lack of concern to develop any type of long-term connection (Licoppe et al., 2016). It is this reason that makes it possible to view these encounters as pure sex rather than social interaction. Historically on cruising grounds, men would meet and did see regular clientele, where the social interactions are developed and maintained. The encounters in a private virtual space seem more transactional through the process of meeting one person, and then moving on to the next (Licoppe et al., 2016). This is also because

of the surplus of men on Grindr allowing users to constantly scroll for the perfect match through the overwhelming choices of potential partners.

(Blackwell et al., 2014) used semi-structured interviews with Grindr users to investigate 'What is the effect of co-situating Grindr users with multiple goals and purposes, and how do people discern the intentions of other users in such an environment?' In a space where social notions and physical boundaries are removed, Grindr can make it difficult for users to establish the intent of other users on the app (Blackwell et al., 2014). The consensus was that regardless of where they used the app there were others online who had different intentions. If this tension arises in online spaces, users have the function to block communications, which is another reason why online spaces feel a lot more aggressive and distant to users. Communication occurs in a private chat therefore there is no responsibility for actions. The online spaces are heavily impacted by consumerist functions. This situation would not arise in a physical space as everyone attends a cruising ground for the same reason.

Grindr does have a function which allows users to define what they are looking for these labels don't always communicate the intentions effectively, 'partly because looking for sex is not an option' (Blackwell et al., 2014). This can make navigating profiles confusing for users. Most of the time users would rely on cues from profile pictures. Again there was a consensus that there were 3 main types of profile pictures, that hint at the norms within a virtual/private place; these include 'face pictures, headless torsos, and landscape/blank profiles' (Blackwell et al., 2014). Whilst these pictures help navigate users to determine what others were looking for, sharing a space with others who use the app for a different prerogative

could create tension. One user in the study stated that he would get frustrated when people pretended they are on Grindr to meet people when ‘the whole purpose is to fuck’ (Blackwell et al., 2014), he feels that those with blank profiles are just ‘fucking the system’ (Blackwell et al., 2014). Back in the 1970s when Baltrop was patrolling the piers, everyone who was at a cruising space was looking for sex, the dynamic is simpler in a public space. The virtual spaces allow for an increased likelihood of catfishing (people not being who they say they are), which is not evident in Baltrop’s documentation.

Grindr is a highly sexualised virtual environment a participant didn’t understand why people would use it for interactions other than sexual gratification; he compared it to ‘going to a bathhouse to meet friends’ (Blackwell et al., 2014). Comments like this distinguish the differences between public spaces that were more commonly used for pure sex in the 1970s compared to virtual spaces, which some people will use for social interactions – intentions are clear to those present in a physical space, whereas in a virtual space like Grindr most interactions are private and users intentions are not clear. The people ‘co-situated’ spaces like Grindr have a range of expectations, but there is little information to give insight as to what people want to engage in.

This next section will focus on evaluating the sources used throughout the chapter.

Both (Blackwell et al., 2014), (Licoppe et al., 2016) used similar methodologies that were formed based on an interview process to gain information from participants. The interviews were both semi-structured which produced qualitative data. This data is rich with information, however, it is harder to identify

trends from this type of data unless you use a thematic analysis technique. It does also suffer from interpreter bias, the answers given by the participants could easily be interpreted in multiple ways. The data collection was done via an anonymised questionnaire, which suggests the data is subject to the disinhibition effect, which means they may answer more truthfully, as they had anonymity. These types of biases can affect the reliability of the data obtained, as the participants are not giving a true representation of their thoughts.

One aspect of the research worth noting is that (Blackwell et al., 2014) and (Licoppe et al., 2016) did not standardise their procedures. (Blackwell et al., 2014) interviewed participants in several different states, this may have caused time differences which did not allow for participants to be interviewed at the same time, so participants may have different energy levels and therefore different levels of motivation. But this could allow for comparisons between localities which could further illuminate United States regional differences. In (Licoppe et al., 2016)'s research two participants used a 'freeware' version of Grindr and it's not stated how this is different from the other version of Grindr. This means that these studies both have issues with internal reliability, but there would be strong ecological validity as the methodology is true to real life.

(Licoppe et al., 2016)'s research used a volunteering sampling method - participants replied to an advert placed on Grindr and flyers placed around a university campus. But this does mean the answers would suffer from volunteer bias, as these participants are typically more eager to help aid the research and provide information, also there is weak population validity as the sample is not representative. (Licoppe et al., 2016) on the other hand used a stratified sampling

method, which is good for getting a representative group of the target population. This means there is strong population validity in the results.

Looking at both (Blackwell et al., 2014) and (Licoppe et al., 2016) it is also important to acknowledge the validity of the results. Both experiments use questions in their interviews which is directly relevant to the aims of the study, meaning they have strong internal validity, strong content validity, strong face validity, and strong representative validity e.g. qualitative validity is important to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability (Aveyard and Sharp, 2017: Pg 162) – the methodology of these studies measured what was initially set out to be measured. As there is limited research into this topic there are issues with concurrent validity, but further research could strengthen the concurrent validity. However, due to the impact of Covid 19 in recent years, I would say that we would not be able to generalise these results to 2022.

(Jones, 2005) used a meta-analysis to conduct their research into the exchange of photographs and video conferences in online gay chat rooms. This study has strong concurrent validity, ecological validity, representational validity and face validity and it shows that multiple studies support the same conclusion and the supporting research used sets out to support the aims of the study. This also means that it has strong internal validity and content validity. The research was conducted in 2005 but due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic on social interactions with people, the study would not be generalisable to 2022.

One of the main issues with this meta-analysis (Jones, 2005) is that the research designs vary so much in methodologies, sampling techniques, and the types of data produces. This means that the results of each of the studies are not

truly comparable, which brings into question the reliability of the results produced. Nevertheless, a meta analysis provides a good overview of a particular area, as it looks at a large amount of literature to explore an hypothesis.

Conclusion

To conclude, this thesis offers a contemporary argument for the concept of place and space for sexual activity. It challenges the idea that sexual activity should be restricted to a domestic space. The experience of sexual freedom in 1970s New York, was influenced by the reduced oppression imposed by the police. However, the AIDS crisis heavily impacted cruising activity as some gay men feared transmission of AIDS.

Whereas in virtual spaces like Grindr, interactions are private, and the act of cruising is not as natural. Users browse through profiles initiating contact with those who have attractive qualities, the surplus of men programs the user to act in a consumeristic way, the act is a lot more objective looking for the perfect encounter. Not everyone on Grindr is looking for sex in comparison to those who use the physical cruising grounds. This can cause tensions to arise between users as the intentions of users are not clear. So, the desire that drives men on Grindr is through

the initial point of contact.

There is limited research available to investigate cruising behaviours in the 1970s, and cruising behaviours of today. A large portion of the evidence featured in this thesis is from ideas, opinions, editorials, and anecdotes. The evidence used in this research from these types of sources are subject to bias.

There were no appropriate case-controlled studies for this thesis, which suggests that more research needs to be conducted to investigate cruising behaviours so that the ideas put forward can be founded in a scientific way.

There was also limited meta-analysis studies, critically appraised topics and articles, random control trials, which again shows that more research needs to be conducted to investigate cruising behaviours. The meta-analysis used investigated gay chat rooms generally rather than the specifics of Grindr.

There was a small selection of cohort studies which were used to investigate cruising behaviours. These cohort studies did provide relevant information on gay men's behaviours whilst cruising. These were done more recently, however, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic the results of the studies could not be applied to 2022.

This study has highlighted the ethical issues surrounding the studies and documentations of cruising, which suggests that the methodology that has been previously used to study cruising needs to be revised to conduct research in a more ethical way.

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