CRUISING
a coded phenomenon
in public space
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter One - A Closer Look at Cruising</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining cruising</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The origin and history of gay cruising</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruising nowadays</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Codes of conduct</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual space vs. gay space</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Two - Research Setup</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research questions</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research locations</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Three - Research Results</strong></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. De Oeverlanden, Amsterdam</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anne Frank plantsoen</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leikant</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lage Aard</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Four - Research Conclusions</strong></td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Research question</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary research questions</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appendix - Observational maps</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Left: Cover picture of The Beginner’s Guide to Cruising (1964)

Introduction

This report is the result of the research done for the subject Capita Selecta by the night-time activity group. Starting point was to find a research subject that was a night-time street phenomenon. The choice fell on a not very obvious activity, namely cruising. Not only is cruising a hidden, not exclusively night-time phenomenon, it is in relation to urban planning not a subject that comes to mind very rapidly; by its nature it is an unplannable thing. Cruising however is a phenomenon that takes place in public space, where interactions with other people, non–cruisers, are inevitable, and thus it is an interesting subject for urban planners to look into As you may be wondering by now what exactly cruising is, here will follow the definition used throughout the report:

Cruising is the activity of looking for and contacting possible sexual partners in public space by following codes of conduct that hide the true intentions of cruisers from non-cruisers, that happen to be in vicinity.

The main goal of this research has been to find out in what ways cruising influences public space and vice versa.

The first chapter is a look into the phenomenon of cruising. Firstly defining it and then looking at the history and development of cruising in the past and nowadays. After that it will touch upon the ways cruising actually works in practice, and then finishes with some theoretical background of the phenomena. Chapter two will present our research setup by introducing the research questions and methodology. Chapter three will follow up on chapter two with the research results and finally chapter four will cover our conclusions.

Alke van den Berg
Chiara Garri
Bartek Najman
Gijs van der Sman
Inge Stolwijk
Chapter One

A Closer Look at Cruising

Cruising can be described from different point of view. More in depth information is needed to fully understand cruising. This chapter contains research of literature on the subject to understand the phenomenon.

Defining cruising

At the start of this research, we had the idea that cruising is the phenomenon of gay men having sex in public space. This proved to be wrong. Many definitions of cruising can be found in dictionaries and on the internet. Three examples that we found are:

“Cruising is driving around to meet somebody (stranger) (Van Dale, 2010)\(^1\)

“Cruising is what two men do in a public space to initiate sex.” (Source: Youtube)\(^2\)

“Cruising for sex, or cruising is the act of walking or driving about a locality in search of a sex partner, usually of the anonymous, casual, one-time variety. The term is also used when technology is used to find casual sex, such as using an Internet site or a telephone service.” (Source: Wikipedia)\(^3\)

From all the found definitions and literature about the phenomenon, we deduced cruising has the following characteristics:

- Cruising consists of an elaborate system of actions for making contact with a sexual partner in a public space. These codes of conduct make sure that non cruisers won’t notice that anything out-of-the-ordinary is going on.
- The sexual act is not an integral part of cruising; it is what cruising can lead to, but it does not necessarily have to be the result.
- The term originates from the gay community, but does not have to signify male-to-male interaction. Heterosexuals, transsexuals or lesbians can also cruise, even though this happens less often.

- Cruising takes place in public spaces like parks, parking lots, cemeteries, public toilets and other outdoor locations. Sometimes gay bars and saunas are also marked as cruising locations. However it is not necessary to make contact in secret there; flirting suffices in these locations. Therefore what happens there can’t be defined as cruising.

From these characteristics we formed the definition that we’ve used during this research. Our definition is as follows:

Cruising is the activity of looking for and contacting possible sexual partners in public space by following codes of conduct that hides the true intentions of cruisers from non-cruisers, that happen to be in vicinity.

The origin and history of gay cruising

To get a good understanding of cruising, it is important to look at how the phenomena has developed over the past centuries. To do this though, it is necessary to touch upon the state of homosexuals in general during those times. Therefore a short overview will follow of the changing perceptions of homosexuality and how homosexuals were treated starting in medieval times and leading up to nowadays. This overview is mainly based on several chapters of “Homoseksualiteit in Nederland van 1730 tot de modern tijd” by Gert Hekma.

Sodomy is a term that is used to describe acts of ‘unnatural’ sex, which can consist of oral or anal sex, or any non-genital to genital congress, whether heterosexual or homosexual, or with human or animal. It is derived from the myth of the city of Sodom, that according to the bible was destroyed by God, because its inhabitants practiced gay sex.

Although the term sodomy was only introduced

---


2 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I7Ampu8jxP8 [quoted 29-11-2010]

at the end of the 19th century, the influence of the myth itself in the western world has been enormous. From 1000 a.d. up until 1800 a.d. it was the main reason that homosexual acts were considered a sin, and since church and state were not separate entities also a crime. However, because of the fact that it was considered a 'crimen nefandum' or an unspeakable crime, not a whole lot of people would have known about sodomy. Also during those centuries the societies of Europe were agricultural societies that had a lot of space for every one of its members and therefore the possibility for privacy. Since sexual traffic happens behind closed doors, a sodomite would have had more than enough freedom to do as he pleased. This is backed up by the fact that in Republic of the United Netherlands, in the four centuries up until 1730, sodomy was rarely prosecuted. Only about one hundred cases have been known. Assuming that gay sex was practiced as much as it is nowadays, this is very telling.

Things changed however. In the 18th century in the big cities of Europe a subculture of sodomites was developing, albeit slowly. In these cities young men (often of lower class with a free roaming existence) had sex with other men in exchange for money or goods. The paying customers would often be married. Prostitution was an important part of this sodomite subculture, and would remain so until the late 20th century. Because these men couldn't go to the paying man's house and most of the time the other one didn't have one, these contacts would mostly happen at specific places in the city; in churches, near city walls, in public toilets, in parks or other quiet places. Therefore the sodomites became more visible and the number of prosecutions and death sentences went up enormously. This can be considered the origin of cruising. It explains why men had to go outside for gay contact; society didn't provide private space to find other gay men and have sex. But even more so it explains why cruising consists of an elaborate system of codes to make contact; it was very dangerous if you were caught hitting on another man that wasn't there for sex.

At the turn of the 19th century the situation didn't change much even when there was a separation between state and church in most catholic countries. From that moment on sodomy wasn't considered a crime anymore. In the Netherlands sodomy was decriminalized in 1811 after Napoleon annexated the lower countries in 1810. Only sex with minors and violation of public morality, including sex in public, was considered a crime by law. However acts of homosexuality remained behavior that was far from accepted by society. Therefore the secret codes of conduct for homosexuals remained necessary still. As the cities of Europe grew during the industrial revolution, so did the gay-subculture. Cruising thrived in the streets of Europe. During the 19th century gay men weren't prosecuted for sodomy anymore, but the police was hunting cruisers down very actively. Trying to catch them in the act and prosecuting these homosexuals by using the law against violation of public morality. The main motive of the police wasn't the safe-keeping of public morality however, but stopping gay activity, since it was considered harmful behavior. Men that were caught often saw their lives destroyed; society exiled them.

At the beginning of the 20th century, new views on sexuality had started to emerge from science and philosophy and also the first wave of the emancipation of women and minorities was beginning to dawn. This probably led to a climate in which gay culture could emerge in new forms. In Amsterdam the first gay bars started to appear, although they were often closed down quickly by the police. In 1911 article 248bis was introduced in the Dutch Penal Code as a part of the Law on Morality. It stated that:

“The major that commits fornication with a minor of the same sex, whose minority he knows about or should reasonably suspect, shall be punished with imprisonment of up to four years.”

After one hundred years the Netherlands had an anti-gay law once again. It would remain operative until 1971. The prosecution started to heat up more after the introduction of this law, although the greater visibility of gay culture also played a role in this. In general if a man wanted gay sex in the decades before the Second World War, he still had to go out on the street as before. WWII was an even greater throwback for gay society than article 248bis, but after the war ended better times were dawning. In the 1950's the police in Amsterdam considered cruising in public space, especially in public toilets, a bigger problem than the harm homosexuality was causing society in general. Therefore for the first time gay bars were allowed in the city. From that moment on homosexuality was slowly starting to become more accepted by society. With the acceptance, the need of cruising diminished. It was no longer
necessary for gay men to hide behind the cruising codes of conduct to find a sexual partner. Men could now make contact with each other in the open in gay bars and clubs.

Cruising nowadays

The opening of gay bars and clubs would not be the end of cruising. The phenomena has not faded in popularity since the start of the exploitation of gay activities. Cruising grounds, nowadays also known as 'Public sex environment' (PSE) or 'beats' in Australia, still include meeting places for gay men in public parks, beaches, parking lots, public toilets (called 'tea rooms' in US and 'cottages' in UK) and even in cemeteries. The main reason for the remaining popularity of cruising grounds is the free of charge public space and anonymous character of cruising this way in contrary to cruising in bars, clubs and saunas for example. The identities of non-gay identified men aren't threatened by their cruising activities in these places. Therefore these men prefer the anonymity of the PSE's over commercial locations. Another reason for it is that some men just like to have sex outdoors, the ease in which it can be achieved, or they like the thrill of the hunt, and maybe even the risk of being discovered.

Even today cruising can’t be done without any risks. It’s relatively dangerous for the cruiser because of police harassment, homophobic attacks and of course exposure during sexual activity. Sometimes, cruising is the only possibility where male (sexual) contacts can occur, especially in rural areas and for “heterosexual” men (with families) that want to have gay sex without anybody from their daily life knowing about it.

Codes of conduct

As the definition given in the first paragraph states, cruising is not only the search for a stranger to have sex with, but also a behavior that allows to contact this person and show sexual interest without non-cruisers noticing anything strange. Sexual activities usually take place on or near the cruising grounds. However sometimes men are just using the space to meet sex partners and go elsewhere to have sex.

Once a sexual partner has been found, the process of contacting the other person consists of a complex set of non-verbal activities and signs to show sexual interest. There probably are many variations of these activities and signs encompass depending on the location and maybe other factors. Since this is a study into the spatial aspects of cruising, and not into the differences in cruising codes of conduct, we haven’t researched nor will try to describe all these variations. However to illustrate what cruising looks like and which interaction exists between cruisers and space during cruising, two examples of cruising codes will be given. The first example shows how cruising works in a public park. This is based on a youtube video that details the phenomena in Toronto, Canada. The second example shows how a cruiser in a car would let other cruisers know that he is looking for a sexual partner. This information comes from a beginner’s guide to cruising found on the internet.

Cruising in the park

Cruiser A is sitting on a bench in the park when cruiser B is passing by. There is eye contact and both cruisers like each other. Now they have to let each other know this. They do this as follows: cruiser B walks past the bench and stops a little bit further down the road. Now cruiser A stands up and walks into the direction cruiser B just came from and also stops. Cruiser B walks back and sits down exactly in the spot where cruiser A was sitting before. Now both know they are interested in each other and they can find a place to have sex.

Cruising in a parking lot

When a cruiser is sitting in his car on a parking lot, it’s hard for other cruisers to recognize the person in the car as a cruiser. After all he might just be a driver resting for a moment, before continuing his journey. Therefore the cruiser in the car puts down the sunshade of the by-driver’s seat. This is a sign for other cruisers so they can recognize him as a cruiser. And it’s fairly safe because even on a sunny day why would anyone put down the sunshade of the by-drivers seat when he’s sitting alone in his car?

Heterosexual space vs. gay space

Cruising is a not accepted behavior in an heteronormative space. This heteronormative space is caused by three processes. First, the
dominant position of heterosexual as general accepted sexuality, secondly the construction of space in dominant patterns and third, some groups in society are more powerful than others, they can dominate the space and own it. In Queer culture cruising grounds show the fragility of the queers and emphasize their culture. Gay spaces can be understood as a distinction of the common public space, hetero spaces. The general accepted public space is a heterosexual public space. People expect heterosexual behavior in a heterosexual dominant public space. Heterosexual space has become the general accepted environment, where acting differently is mostly misunderstood. Homosexuality can be seen as out-of-place, heterosexuality as the normative ‘in-of-place’ behavior in public space.


For example, two men kissing in public space, in most places, is frowned upon or worse.

Fig. x.x - Cruising in a park with benches
Chapter Two

Research Setup

This chapter will present the research setup by stating the research questions and our research methodology. Apart from that attention will be given to the safety and ethical issues that arose during the research. Finally the research locations will be presented and explained.

Research questions

One of the research group members had come across the phenomenon of cruising during the M1 UDP Master project. Since there wasn’t enough time during that project to delve deeper into the subject of cruising, there remained a lot of questions. For example while doing field work for the project it was clear that the cruising grounds in the project area had an influence on other users, though it was unclear what exactly that influence was. From this experience our main research question sprouted:

How does cruising influence public space and vice versa?

To help answer this questions, the main question was divided in three smaller questions:

1. What is the way of interacting between cruisers?

2. Are there patterns of cruising and other activities on the location? Or, when no other patterns can be discovered, are there clear separations between:
   - The meeting spot
   - The location of the sexual act

3. Is there interaction between cruising and other users on the location?

Methodology

To answer the research questions we thought it necessary to make observations of activities in different cruising areas, possibly in combination with small interviews, but also to do a study of literature about cruising to get a better insight in the subject. Now will follow a description of how we approached these different parts of the research. But first we’ll address the safety and ethical issues we came across when we wanted to make observations in cruising areas.

Ethical and safety Issues

For researching cruising, ethical issues for the researcher are involved. The two most important issues are: Anonymity of the cruiser has to be retained and cruisers can’t undergo disadvantages because of the research.

If cruisers feel that their anonymity is being compromised by for example a person with a camera, they might become aggressive. Which could form a possible risk for the researcher. Even more so, it is unethical for the researcher to compromise the possible double lives of cruisers by making use of cameras. For these two reasons no equipment that records people’s identity can be used during this research.

Observations and interviews

To understand what the activities in a cruising area are and how different users influence each other, we needed to map all the activity in the cruising areas we wanted to study. However the safety and ethical issues mentioned above prevented us from taking pictures or filming the activities, so we had to come up with a different way of mapping the activities. During a discussion with our group tutor, he told us about a research, also done for Capita Selecta, in which a system for mapping activity at a train station was developed. This was based on drawing activities on maps with symbols for different activities. We came up with a similar way of mapping activities in cruising areas.

The mapping system consists of many maps of each cruising area on which activities are drawn during the moments of observation. Each user of the cruising area has its own map. In figure X.x. one such map can be seen together with the legend of symbols used. If a user was doing something specific, or interacting with another user, this was noted on the map together with the time of the observation. The idea was that by mapping the activities in this way, a whole library of activity maps would be created for each study area, from which insight into these
activities could be deduced.

Once we had found an ethical and safe way of mapping the activities, we only had the problem of distinguishing cruisers from non-cruisers. However this turned out not to be a problem at all, since from the literature study we could easily learn what typical cruiser behaviour was. Therefore we didn’t have any problems distinguishing them from non-cruisers.

The observational maps would have to be accompanied by descriptions of the activities. These descriptions were deemed necessary to map specific information that could not be recorded on the observational maps, but could be important to understand why certain activities were or weren’t happening. For example the weather or the circumstances under which the observations were made.

There is a chance observations may fail in terms of observing cruising activity itself. Without having seen any cruising activity the cruising phenomena itself can’t be researched directly. However non-cruisers, that make use of a location regularly, can be questioned about interactions and observations in situ, and thus can help to understand the invisible phenomenon. In case no cruising activity is found, non-cruisers will be interviewed with the following questions:

1. Have you ever heard of cruising? (Yes/No, please explain)

By asking this question, we try to find out if cruising is a known phenomenon at this location. If the answer is yes, the non-cruiser can be a cruiser or know more about cruising. If the answer is no, the term cruising isn’t known but it doesn’t have to mean that that person isn’t familiar with the phenomenon, so the researcher will have to explain what it is.

2. Do you know this is a cruising area? (Yes/No)

If the answer is yes, the interviewee could be a cruiser or know about the activity. This can be very helpful in the research and can contribute in mapping cruising activity. If the answer is no, it is a sign that cruising activities may not influence other activities.

3. Have you ever noticed that cruising takes place here? (No/Yes, in what way?)

If the answer is yes, cruisers are interacting in a certain way with non-cruisers. If the answer is no, it is a sign that cruising activity

![Fig. x.x - Example of an activity map for observation of a cruising area](image-url)
probably does not influence other activities.

Further, in our research we asked three more questions to find out the cruising space, to understand ideas of non-cruisers about the phenomena and to understand interactions between users and space. The three other questions are:

4. Do you feel safe?
5. Do you know the exact location of cruising?
6. How do you feel about cruising?

The result of this part of the research will be a series of maps of every location showing the morphology of the location, the cruising activity, the other activities in the area and finally a map showing confrontations between cruisers and non-cruisers.

Literary study
Literature is used as a starting point for this research. Without any scientific information we’re not able to understand cruising. A general scientific background is needed to understand the phenomena. We don’t chose to interfere with cruisers, we don’t approach them literature is used to understand the behavior.

Research locations
Cruising takes place in many locations, in Spartacus Gay Guide and multiple internet forums cruising spaces were pointed out (banenoverzicht.net, 2010). For our research we focused on two parks and two parking lots (table 1).

The observation locations have been chosen for their popularity amongst cruisers. These spots are well represented on internet gay forums and –webpages. Leikant and Lage Aard for example, are mentioned as some of the busiest cruising areas in the Netherlands (BRON). Detailed descriptions of the locations have been included in the observations reports and morphological maps in the next chapter.

During the visits, all observations were noted and drawn. Detailed descriptions of people weren’t noted because of the focus on interaction of cruising with space, so movements and the surrounding space were observed. Research has been done at different times of day at the parks. At the parking lots research has taken place in the late afternoon and early evening.

Table 1. Cruising locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Type of space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Anne-Frankplantsoen/Dommelplantsoen - Eindhoven</td>
<td>Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. De Oeverlanden - Amsterdam</td>
<td>Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Leikant - along the A65 near Breda</td>
<td>Parking lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lage Aard - along the A65 near Tilburg</td>
<td>Parking lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. x.x - Location of the Nieuwe meer recreational area between Schiphol and the Zuid-as project.
Chapter Three

Research Results

In this chapter the results of our research will be presented. The results consist of maps and descriptions of the observations that have been done at the four research locations presented at the end of the previous chapter.

1. De Oeverlanden, Amsterdam

De Oeverlanden is a natural reserve that is located on the southern city border of Amsterdam between the national airport Schiphol and the “Zuid-as” project. The natural reserve is part of the recreational area “De Nieuwe Meer”, and lies along the north shore of the Nieuwe Meer and is defined in the north by the “Oude Haagse weg” and the highway A4. It has been known as a cruising area for decades, and was there long before any other public functions arrived there.

Observations in de Oeverlanden have been done during the months of september and octobre in 2009 as part of the Master Project 1 Urban Design and Planning. After a quick research on internet, it was made cleat that not much had changed, so it was deemed unnecessary to make new observations, since the workings of the cruising area were already known to us. Therefore there are not such specific observations available as for the other locations of that were studied for this research. However extra information was available, like interviews with other usergroups and policymakers, because of the nature of the M1 project. This information has been used and therefore the results differ slightly from the other locations. We did try however to make the results as comparable as possible to the other locations.

Morphology

De Oeverlanden is very easy to reach by car and bike, but since it’s a natural reserve it can only be entered by bike or foot. Cars can be parked at the edges of the reserve along de Oude Haagseweg and a large parking area to the west of the area. A cycling route cuts from east to west through the reserve and divides the it in a northern and a southern part. De Oeverlanden are full of trees and are built up by smaller and larger clumps of trees with green open areas in between. This built up of the area creates a lot of a smaller spaces, In between the trees lies a network of unpaved walking routes. On the next page a morphological map of de Oeverlanden can be found.

Policy

De Oeverlanden is a unique location in the world, because it is the only cruising ground in existence where it is tolerated to have sex in public space. Officially it is still forbidden by law, but the policy of the city of Amsterdam is directed at providing space for and allowing it. This is made apparent by several measures taken by the city:

- Informing other users
  On the information signs that are scattered all over the park it is made clear that the natural reserve is known as a gay cruising location. By doing this other users can choose to run the risk of being confronted with cruising men or not.

- Protecting cruisers
  The city police, which has a special gay brigade called “Pink in Blue” checks the area regularly to make sure the cruising men in the area are safe from gay bashers.

- Allowing sex
  People that have sex in the Oeverlanden won't be prosecuted by the police, as long as they do it out of view from the public roads and paths in the area.

By taking these measures, the city hopes to ensure that outdoor cruising in the city mainly happens in this one location, where they can regulate it, limit the nuisance of cruising for non-cruisers, and make sure that violence against cruisers is minimalised. (Source: interview with Paul de Wilt, stadsdeelwethouder, 08-10-2009.)

Cruising

Cruising in the Oeverlanden happens both by car as by foot. By car it happens on the parking lot and along the Oude Haagseweg. Observations have been made during lunchtime of men sitting alone in their cars and looking around very actively at people passing by. During the night (around 11.00p.m.) there was especially a lot of activity at the parking lot. This probably is because of the fact that the
Morphology of the Oeverlanden
natural reserve is totally dark at night, so no cruising can be done inside it. Therefore the cruising moves to the edges of the reserve where there is light from streetlamps. Possibly sex still happens in the reserve at night, since it requires less light. This is only an assumption however, since no observations inside de Oeverlanden have been done at night, because of feelings of unsafety the darkness was causing the researcher.

By foot cruising takes place all over the walking routes of de Oeverlanden. It isn’t even hard to imagine that the walking routes mainly exist thanks to cruisers, because of the unpaved nature of most of them; the many feet of cruisers keep them free of plants growing there. When cycling through the area the researcher came across men walking particularly slowly and looking all around them all the time. Clearly signs that they were cruising. Also some empty condom wrappers have been found lying all over the reserve. The morphology of the reserve makes it particularly suitable for cruising, because of the many routes and secluded smaller spaces, that make the reserve interesting to walk about.

Sex, though not observed, probably happens in the clumps of trees, that provide ample privacy. This statement is backed up by the policy that says sex may only happen out of view of the roads; the clumps of trees are the only possible locations.

De Oeverlanden is an active cruising location which clearly shows from this post from on an internet forum with reviews on cruising locations worldwide1:

56 n full of trix
Posted Aug 31 2010:
I am a regular here and I fuck or get fucked 2 or 3 times a week depending on how many times go. All ages and types including some lovely Indonesians. Anytime of the day you will get action here.

Another post on the same site confirms that all types of men come to cruise in de Oeverlanden, while also pointing to another cruising related activity; nude sunbathing.

Christophe
Posted Jul 04 2010:
This park is officially tolerated by the government. It is worth going to if you like outdoor action. All age groups, sizes and shapes, etc. Anything goes, from nude sunbathing to walking around naked, to open sex.

The map on the previous page gives an overview of the cruising activities in de Oeverlanden.

Other user groups
There are many other actants and user groups in the recreational area of the Nieuwe Meer, that have their own area within it. Among them are allotment gardens, squatters, artists, sportparks, a nature education centre (NME) and a hotel. All of them are shown on the map below. Other than these users there are of course also other people that make use of the park, like cyclists, joggers, people who walk their dogs, children playing, and people who come to swim there in summer.

Thanks to the policy a lot of unwanted confrontations is being prevented. The cruising area is specifically...
meant for cruising and the signs make sure most users know that there is a cruising area and points out exactly where, so they can avoid it if they want to. Froms interviews held with the actants in the area it was made clear that some don’t mind about it happening there (artists), some find it funny and think it’s good that these men have a place to do what they want (owners of an allotment garden). While the owner of the Mercure hotel wouldn’t mind them moving somewhere else, since it’s bad for the image of his hotel to have cruising men so close by. These users however, are never confronted if they don’t want to.

The NME sometimes has real problems when they stumble upon cruisers having sex in the southern part of the reserve, while walking around with groups of children that they try to learn something about nature. Cruisers having sex there are not allowed to since only the northern part of the reserve is for cruisers.

All user groups that make use of the Oeverlanden are shown on the map on the next page. On the page after that one is a map that shows an overview of all the possible confrontations between other users and cruisers.

Fig. x.x - The recreational area “de Nieuwe Meer” with its actants.
Fig. x.x - Parksing pointing out the cruising area to all park visitors.
Possible confrontations with cruising
2. Anne Frank plantsoen

The Anne Frank Plantsoen is a public garden in the city center of Eindhoven, near Stratum’s eind. It is a small park, which accommodates a part of the Dommel, a river which flows though the city of Eindhoven.

Morphology

The park is bordered by public roads and houses which are fronted to the park. There are several buildings situated in the Anne Frank plantsoen: an office building, apartment buildings and houses. Most of these buildings have a view over the park. The park is accessible by several curly walking and cycling paths, which cross the park. Benches are situated on most roads. The vegetation consists of trees, bushes and grassfields. During the night only the square is lighted, the rest of the park is completely dark. There are many places where you can find privacy.

On the next page a morphological map of the Anne Frank Plantsoen is shown.

Observations and interviews

The observations usually were made riding a bike and walking to places where it is possible to find privacy. Sitting on the benches along the river is possible to watch every activity of the park. Because we didn't find any cruising activity we decided to interview common people that usually are in the park to understand if there is this activity there and if they know something about it.

Questions:
1. Do you know what cruising is?
2. Do you know if this is a cruising area?
3. What do you think about cruising?
4. Have you ever heard something or seen something about it?
5. Do you feel safe?
6. Do you know the exact locations?

Research day: Saturday 23th October 2010
Weather: sunny, about 11 degree Celsius, it is becoming dark.

We ride our bike through the park. There are some people walking with the dog. After half hour without watching any cruising activity we decide to make our interviews.

Interview time: 18:03-18:11
Boy around 25 years old with a dog

1. No, what is?
2. Yes I know that this is the gay park.
3. I'm not a gay, it isn't my problem,
4. Yes during the summernights you can see some gay people sitting on the benches talking and waiting for fun.
5. Yes.
6. I know that there is one near the railway onthenorth-westofEindhoven, but haven't been there and I have no idea about this place.

He is very kind and happy to help us. He is useful for us because now we know that this activity exists in this park.

Research day: Saturday 23th October 2010
We ride our bike through the park. There are some people walking with the dog. There are many teenagers sitting on the benches talking because it is just finished their school day. After half hour without watching any cruising activity we decide to make our interviews.

Interview time: 16:10-16:21
A man around 70 years old with a dog

1. No I don't know what it is.
2. No I don't; I'm only walking here with my dog.

We explained him about cruising and after that he didn't want to speak with us anymore.

Interview time: 16:23-16:33
A girl around 17 years old who was cleaning the park near her school.

1. Yes I know only that is something like a gay activity.
2. No, I know only that a lot of old people is coming here with their dogs during the day, I don't care about this.
3. Yes I heard something but I didn't see anything,
4. Why not, my school is here!
5. I have no idea about this.

She is nice and wants to answer us but maybe she is too young to know this kind of activity.
Morphology of the Anne Frank Plantsoen
Interview time: 16:33-16:42
Two boys 16 years old sitting on a bench in front of the high school.

1. No, what is it?
We explained them about cruising. Then they start to laughing

2. No really?
3. We think that this is for sick people
4. This is the first time that we hear about it
5. Of course, if we have never seen anything why to feel unsafe!
6. No.

They continue to laugh all the time of our interview and they don't know anything.

Interview time: 16:45-17:01
An old couple with a dog about 50 years old.

1. No, we don't.
2. We explained them about cruising. After that the man told us that he knows about this activity
3. Yes we know. We don't think anything we know only that this is a gay activity,
4. Yes we heard that Anne Frank forest is a place for this sexual activities, and we saw some people in the bushes near the Van Abbe museum but only for quickly sex actions in the summer because it's near the Stratum and the gay people meet in some pubs there.
5. Yes because usually we are coming here during the day to walk with dog and we see a lot of young people crossing the park with bikes and old people with dogs, so there is no way to feel unsafe here.
6. Yes, we know that some years ago there was more activity near the airport but now we think it doesn’t work anymore. The only place that we know it’s here.

They are really happy to answer us and to show us the place where they saw something. They are for us really useful because they show us other part of the park that we didn’t know to be a cruising area.

Interview time: unknown
Four young guys about 20 years old smoking weed on the benches.

1. No we don't.

We explained them about cruising, but they were so stoned that it was hard to speak with them.

Cruising activity
As mentioned before we didn't find any cruising activity during our observations. We did however construct a map of probable cruising activity in summer time from our interviews. The map can be seen on the next page. During the winter the park probably is not the right place for cruising activity because of the open vegetation. We assume that cruising moves to inside locations like pubs, discos or other gay spaces (sauna etc.) during winter, though we have no direct proof of this.

Activity in the park
During the day in the park there are many people walking with their dogs. Many people also use to cross this park to arrive in the center following the Dommel river, the majority part of them ride a bike because it's impossible to come in the park with car. At lunch time in the Anne-Frankplantsoen there are many young people because there is a school close to it, after lesson they use to sit on the benches and talk before going at home.

Conclusion
After our interview we have confirmed that in this park there is cruising activity, probably when the weather is not so cold and the vegetation bigger. Usually during the winter this is a park where people come with the dog, with the bike or to stay with friends sitting on the benches to talk. More research in summer is needed to confirm the cruising activity in the park.
Cruising in the Anne Frank Plantsoen

Legend
- Red: Cruising by foot area
- Purple: Sex area
Other usergroups in the Anne Frank Plantsoen

Legend

- Area used by non-cruisers
- Usergroup

office building

usual park activities: (walk with the dog, sitting on the benches...)

residence area

bike/people routes

usual park activities: (walk with the dog, sitting on the benches...)

Group report - Cruising for sex
Possible confrontations with cruising

Legend

- Area of possible confrontation
- Area used by non-cruisers
- Usergroup
- Area of possible confrontation with sex

office building
usual park activities: (walk with the dog, sitting on the benches...)

residence area
bike/people routes

usual park activities: (walk with the dog, sitting on the benches...)
On the observations of the parking lots
The observations in the parking lots have been done while sitting in a parked car. All activities have been noted and drawn, and translated into a sequence of maps accompanied by a detailed description. The maps show us movements of cars and pedestrians only. When considered important a person's activity has been noted as well. The description describe the same movements and activities, only more detailed and elaborated with information that is hard to clarify on a map.

It is hard to see people inside cars from a certain distance when it is dark, and it is almost impossible to see what they are doing in the car. It is also very hard to estimate the age of people we have seen, because of the poor lightning at the parking lots. That is why we did not register all activities that was happening inside the observed cars, and haven't mentioned anything about the persons involved.

On the maps, we have made a distinction between cruisers and non cruisers (other users). It is possible that we have made mistakes by seeing cruisers as a non-cruisers and vice versa. However, we tried to make the distinction between them by looking for the cruising behaviour found in the literature described earlier.

3. Leikant
Friday 29th of October 2010
Weather: dry, about 12 degrees Celsius, complete darkness.
Observation time: 19:42 – 20:45

Description location
We take the highway exit to the parking lot. The parking lot has one asphalt lane leading back to the highway. At both sides of this lane are two parking lane where cars can park parallel to the driving lane. There are no marks on the ground so you can park wherever you want. Pavements at the outer sides of both lanes are leading to several picnic spots with tables and garbages bins. At both sides there is a grass lane of about 6 meters wide. At the side of the highway the grass fades into more rough vegetation which finally leads to the highway. The other side has a dense forest with bushes and pine trees. On the grass lanes there are some standalone trees. In the evening the parking lot is lit by several lanterns which provide a yellow/orange light. Only the asphalt lane and the parking lanes are lit. At the end of the parking lot there is a small worn out path leading from the pavement to a small entrance in the forest.

Activity of cruisers and other users
We park at the beginning of the parking lane on the right side, in front of a small black car. There are 3 other cars in front of us, 3 cars and 1 truck in the left hand sparking stroke. The car at the left end of the parking lot is a car of the car mechanic service ANWB, the car behind it is a car with an open bonnet. The ANWB mechanic and the owner of the -probably broken- car are standing next to the car and are talking. In the small black car behind us are two persons messing around. It is hard to tell what they are doing exactly because it is too dark. At the end of the right parking lane appear two men out of the forest. They use the path leading into the forest. They walk to the car at the end of the right parking lane. They stop and have a chat. After 4 minutes both man leave by going to separate cars –the one they were standing next to, and the car behind the probably broken car- and leave at once. When both men are gone, a third man comes out of the forest, walks straight to the car at the front of the parking lot, and leaves. We move more forward and to the left parking lane. A man in a luxury car stops in the middle of the right parking lane. He stays in his car for about 20 minutes. Then he leaves the parking lot and resumes his way. After the man leaves nothing happens until a car stops at the right parking stroke. A man gets out walks around his car towards the forest. He urinates and leaves the parking lot by walking the same path back to the car.

Friday 12th of November 2010
Weather: rain, about 10 degrees Celsius, complete darkness.
Observation time: 18:15 – 19:28

Activity of cruisers and other users
We park once again at the beginning of the right hand side parking stroke. There are 4 cars and 2 truck on the parking lot. The 2 trucks and a car are parked on the left parking stroke. Behind us, at the beginning of the right parking lane, is a car which is parked out of line of the parking lane, almost perpendicular in comparison of the other cars. We cannot see what is happening inside the car. We move to the left parking lane almost at the end of the parking lot. We park behind a truck with a petrol trailer. From here we have a more clear view on the forest entrance we spotted during our last observation. At the end of the parking lot there are two cars leading from the parking lot to the forest entrance.
Two men are standing near the entrance of the forest. It is raining and one of the men is using an umbrella which keeps both men dry. One of the men walks to the nearest car and opens the boot. He grabs a coat and puts it on. Then he walks back to the man with the umbrella.

After a quarter of an hour, both men walk to their cars – the car which provided the coat, and a sporty car behind it - and the man with the sporty car drives away. The other man seems to drive away but he reverses and parks in front of the truck with the petrol trailer.

In the meantime 3 other cars have arrived. They are all parked in the middle of the right parking lane. One man comes out of his car, locks it, and starts walking over the pavement slowly. He walks to the beginning of the parking lot with an umbrella. He stops at the end, turns, and walks back to his car slowly. He passes his car and walks to the end of the parking lane. Then he turns around again, walks the same path and returns to sit in his car. The other 2 cars which have just arrived did not move in meantime. After 5 minutes, the man who walked with the umbrella moves his car to the end of the right parking lane and parks his car in front of the entrance of the forest.

Meanwhile the man who parked in front of the truck with the petrol trailer reverses and parks his car on the spot the other man just left. We cannot see the entrance of the forest because a truck parked in front of it, behind the man who walked the parking lot slowly before. This man leaves his car and is still standing with an umbrella at the entrance of the forest approximately 4 meters from his car. The other cars that arrived earlier have left the parking lot without leaving their cars. When we leave the parking lot, the man with the umbrella is still standing near his car and the entrance, and the other man who reversed two times is still sitting in his car.

Conclusion observation Leikant
All the movements we have observed are combined in two maps; one with the cruising activity and one with the other users’ activity. These maps show us the concentration of movements. We can see clearly the concentration of cruisers is at the end of the right parking stroke parking lane, and next to this lane on the grass. This might be explained by the fact that the entrance of the forest is at this place. Furthermore, the cruising activity extends to halfway of the right parking lane. There is in our observation almost no cruising activity on the left parking lane. The other users are more scattered about the parking lot, which means it is completely used. However, there is almost no activity of other users on the end of the right parking stroke, the place where the cruising activity is concentrated. Finally we have observed overlapping cruising tactics. We have seen several persons who are walking the parking lot slowly, and we have seen several people waiting in cars.
Morphology of Leikant

Legend

- Water
- Park
- Green space
- High vegetation
- Trees
- Parking space

- Pedestrian route
- Cyclist route
- Road

0m 100m
Cruising in Leikant

Legend:
- Red: Cruising by foot area
- Purple: Sex area

Distance Scale: 0m - 100m
Other usergroups in Leikant

Legend
- Area used by non-cruisers
- Usergroup

Car/truckdrivers

Group report - Cruising for sex
Possible confrontations with cruising

Legend:
- Pink: Area of possible confrontation
- White: Area used by non-cruisers
- Yellow: Usergroup
- Blue: Area of possible confrontation with sex
4. Lage Aard

Friday 29th of October 2010
Weather: dry, about 12 degrees Celsius, complete darkness.

Observation time: 18:56 – 19:24

Description location
We take the highway exit to the parking lot Lage Aard. Lage Aard is almost similar to Leikant. It has one asphalt lane leading back to the highway, and on both sides a parking lane parallel to the asphalt road. Along the right parking lane there is a pavement lane, which contains several places with picnic tables. The difference with Leikant is the forest next to the parking lot. It is less dense and it separated from the parking lot by a fence. The fence has nevertheless several doors, which provide access to the forest.

Activity of cruisers and other users
When we arrive, we park in the beginning of the right lane. There are three trucks with trailers parked on the left parking lane. The remaining parking places are empty. There are no persons walking or sitting. After about 5 minutes a car arrives. No one gets out of the car, and the car leaves 3 minutes later. Ten minutes later a truck with trailer arrives, parks and turns off its lights. We leave at 19:24.

Friday 12th of November 2010
Weather: rain, about 10 degrees Celsius, complete darkness.

Observation time: 17:33 – 18:00

Activity of cruisers and other users
When we arrive, we park on the right parking lane, in front of a truck which is parked at the beginning of the lane. On the left lane, almost at the end, a truck is parked as well. After a couple of minutes, a car parks in front of us, a man gets out, walks to the small forest, urinates and gets back in his car. He leaves at once. Ten minutes later a car arrives, parks at the end of the right lane, doesn’t get out and leaves 5 minutes later. Only moments later, the same thing happens again. So again there is not much going on in this parking lot.

Conclusion observation Lage Aard
This parking lot is marked as one of the busiest cruising areas in the Netherlands. However, we did not see any cruising activity during our two observations. Strangely, there was also less non

Group report - Cruising for sex
Morphology of Lage Aard
Cruising in Lage Aard

Legend
- Cruising by foot area
- Sex area

0m 100m
Other usergroups in Lage Aard

Legend:
- Area used by non-cruisers
- Usergroup

Car/truckdrivers

Legend:
- Area used by non-cruisers
- Usergroup

0m  100m
Chapter Four

Research Conclusions

This chapter will conclude our research by trying to answer the research questions, basing them on the results presented in the previous chapter.

Primary Research question

How does cruising influence public space and vice versa?

When an area is a known cruising area, other users, tend to not go there. It seems as if a bubble is created around the cruising area that other users don’t like going in to.

Secondary research questions

1. What is the way of interacting between cruisers?

Cruisers interact with each other through the codes of conduct. This allows them to contact other cruisers in public space, without non-cruisers, that happen to be in the vicinity, knowing what is going on.

The codes of conduct are an elaborate system of signs and actions that allow cruisers to let each other know if they are interested in having sex with each other or not.

2. Are there patterns of cruising and other activities on the location? Or, when no other patterns can be discovered, are there clear separations between:

- The meeting spot
- The location of the sexual act

Since we only observed cruising in two of the four research locations it is hard to answer this question. However in both de Oeverlanden as Leikant, cruising happens in public space where other usergroups are also active. The sexual act, while also happening in public space, seems to distance itself from other usergroups by moving to locations that are out of view from other usergroups and where non-cruisers tend not to come. Although in case of de Oeverlanden this is not always true, since the NME sometimes comes across men having sex. We have to note though, that the NME is a special group of non-cruisers, that tend to come to locations other usergroups normally don’t come.

3. Is there interaction between cruising and other users on the location?

There is definite interaction between cruisers and non cruisers. In three of the four locations we have found out that cruisers mainly interact with non-cruisers while walking about looking for other cruisers. The interaction consists of looking at other users, but since the other users don’t know the codes of conduct looking is all that happens. In literature and on internet we have found accounts of other users feeling uncomfortable, because they were being “stalked” by cruisers. Though they clearly did not know their stalkers to be cruisers. Possibly these cruisers did not follow the codes of conduct, but this is only an assumption.

Interactions while cruisers are having sex (“being caught”) happens less, because of the fact that cruisers tend to go to quiet places, that are out of sight to engage in sexual activities. Only special usergroups that come to these areas, or people that are looking for these confrontations, run the risk of being confronted with cruisers having sex.
Observation Leikant from 19.42 to 20.45
Friday 29th of October 2010
Observation Leikant from 18.15 to 19:28
Friday 12th of November 2010
Observation Lage Aard from 17:33h to 18:00h
Friday 12th of November 2010

Observation Lage Aard from 18:56h to 19:24h
Friday 29th of October 2010