# SEX AS/AND/ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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Sex is central to the internet. Not only has it spurred technological innovation (Arlidge 2002; Johnson 1996; Waddell 2016), generations of people have now looked to the internet for information about sex and sexuality (Daneback et al. 2011). Online communities have formed around gender and sexual identity (Baym 2010), which have been particularly important to the lives of LGBTQIA+ people (McCracken et al. 2020; Tiidenberg, Hendry & Abidin 2021). Sex exists everywhere online and yet is everywhere constrained, sanitized, normalized, and invisibilized (Albury 2018; Paasonen, Jarrett & Light 2019; McGlotten 2013; Monea 2022; Tiidenberg & van der Nagel 2020). This panel will investigate the ways in which sex seeps, spills, and oozes across boundaries, both online and off, despite efforts to control and limit its impact beyond consumer capitalism. We investigate the ways in which sex continues to inspire new forms of identity and community online as it evades content moderation, moves to liminal spaces of the internet, gets interpreted and reimagined by artificial intelligence (AI), creates new forms of inclusion and exclusion, norms and exceptions, connections and disconnections, and spills over into our IRL (i.e. real/material) lives.

Alexander Monea examines the growing online 'gooning' community, a group of self-professed pornography addicts that engage in prolonged sessions of masturbation to multiple simultaneous streams of pornography. Drawing on demographic data from over 50,000 gooners, content analysis across 2 subreddits and 10+ Discord servers, and ethnographic interviews, Author 1 shows how gooners are engaging in new and problematic forms of queerness. Gooners leverage social media to build solidarity, encourage one another, share pornography, draw public critics into their fantasies, roleplay pornography addiction, find people to direct message with, and find people to engage in mutual masturbation, both online and off. They fetishize transgressing the boundaries of acceptable porn consumption and build new forms of problematic queerness around phallocentrism, transnormativity, and bisexual mutual masturbation.

Shaka McGlotten examines the ways in which designers of Generative AI technologies work to constrain sexually explicit content with particularly damaging ramifications for representations of queer sexuality. Both their inputs and outputs contain sexual connotations, but the guardrails installed by designers to prevent the production of sexually explicit content produce a porous boundary between the two. The outcome is excitatory enchantments, wherein machines engage alternately in sexual hallucination and oppressive silences that Author 2 probes through a series of 'glitchcraft' practices that investigate the way the figure of the 'twink' gets interpreted and articulated by various Generative AI technologies. In so doing, they explore new imaginaries of 'twinkdom' in an our increasingly AI-mediated digital world.

Susanna Paasonen, Jenny Sundén, and Katrin Tiidenberg look at the sexual boundary work and content moderation practices of what they term 'sexual social media platforms'. Drawing on analyses of platform governance policies, ethnographic observation, and over 60 interviews with users, developers, and moderators, these authors examine the ways in which platforms built to facilitate the dissemination of sexual content themselves produce new boundaries and norms around sexuality online. Thus, while they document multiple ways in which social media can be made more sex positive and kink friendly, the tendency towards scalability, network effects, and monopoly status of the platform structure all inevitably runs contrary to the needs of particular subcultures and subcommunities online. Their exclusion creates new seeps and spills, as they look to continue using platforms surreptitiously or find alternative homes for their online interactions.

Robert Jacobsson looks at the anal sex practices that are mediated by gay hook-up apps like Grindr. Drawing on qualitative diary writing performed by 33 Swedish queer men, the Author demonstrates the ways in which queer men continually engage with Grindr throughout the day to mediate a diverse spectrum of anal activities (such as fisting, spanking, caressing, and rimming). Grindr here operates as a point of conjunction between the corporeal, the algorithmic, and the sociocultural and works to mediate queer pleasure and normativity.


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## PAPER 1: A VISIT TO THE GOON CAVE: ONLINE MASTURBATION COMMUNITIES

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This paper examines the growing online 'gooning' community, a group of self-professed pornography addicts that engage in prolonged sessions of masturbation, and argues that they represent a problematic queerness that transgresses cisheteronormativity while preserving some of its damaging forms of power and marginalization. It connects with a broad range of scholarship that examines the intersections between sexuality,

pornography, and digital space (McCracken et al. 2020, McGlotten 2013, Paasonen 2011), but builds important connections to recent work on the manosphere and cisheteronormativity online (Are & Briggs 2023, Blunt & Stardust 2021, Burke 2023, Monea 2022). Gooners often surround themselves with pornographic materials, setting up 'caves' with multiple screens simultaneously playing pornography, printed images collaged onto walls, and various sex toys and pleasure enhancing drugs laid out at the ready.

This study performs a discourse analysis on select posts from the three most popular subreddits for gooners and ten of the most popular Discord servers that are explicitly designed for the gooning community. This analysis will be supplemented with ethnographic interviews with volunteers recruited from these Reddit and Discord communities. Through these Discord servers, a large amount of demographic data on the gooning community is made publicly available. Some of that data conforms to expectations for Anglophone digital communities centered on masturbation and pornography: 74.6% of gooners identifying as cisgender men (out of 21,861 respondents), 46.6% of gooners residing in North America and another 40.2% in Europe (out of 53,319 respondents), and 95.7% of gooners being aged 18-25 years old (out of 42,993 respondents).

Perhaps the most surprising demographic finding is that 61.2% of gooners identify as bisexual (out of 42,993 respondents). This finding is better illuminated in conjunction with a key narrative that surfaces in the analysis of content from the community subreddits and Discord servers. Gooners often tell some version of a narrative wherein they came to the gooning community as cisgender, heterosexual men who happened to love pornography. Through prolonged gooning sessions and time spent in a 'goon state' (akin to a tantric meditative state), they unlocked a latent queerness within themselves and began exploring non-normative components of their sexuality during goon sessions. The online gooning community regularly encourages these deviations into queerness. They encourage new members to share similar stories, affirm their new interests, and normalize them by telling stories of their own.

That said, analyses of the content shared by gooners – in addition to open discussions of non-normative sexual desire they regularly poll themselves on which of a series of pornographic GIFs most 'triggers' the community into needing a goon session – demonstrates some problematic components to the queerness they profess. The predominant form of non-normative sexual imagery they explore is trans pornography, but this rather strictly limited to trans women and gatekept through transnormativity, transmedicalism, fatphobia, ableism, and racial marginalization (Gossett 2017; Haines 2021; Jacobsen, Devor & Hodge 2022; Johnson 2016). Typical scenes shared amongst these communities include thin, white, able-bodied, femme trans women either masturbating or having sex with cisgender men. The community describes this fixation as worshiping 'girlcock,' which connects to a broader theme of phallocentrism across the community. The penis is the center of the porn that gooners consume *and* of the broader discourse they participate in. Its emphasis borders on what one might describe as 'phallomania', wherein a maximalist digital aesthetic pushes the previous problems of phallocentrism to new heights (e.g. Butler 1993; Derrida 1983; Spivak 1990).

This brain addled goon state resulting from hours of phallocentric porn streams looks a lot like porn addiction to many public commentators. While porn addiction remains a highly contested concept, this has not stopped it from capturing the public's imagination (Meehan 2023; Taylor 2021, 2020). Many people self-report having porn addictions (Meehan 2023), describe the problem as consuming an unhealthy amount of pornography or having "too much of a good thing" (Taylor 2020, p. 618), and note a desensitization driving them to more niche/fetish porn (Attwood, Smith & Barker 2018). This discourse has pushed many into the NoFap movement, an online community focused on refraining from using porn and/or masturbating that also has deep connections to the manosphere, the Men's Rights movement, and the far Right (McGlotten 2019; Monea 2022). NoFap understands porn as impacting expected behaviors and aims to spur people to take back control of their lives through abstinence (Taylor & Jackson 2018). As perhaps the flipside of this same coin, gooners instead fetishize pornography addiction and roleplay submission to its siren song (Sunny Megatron 2023).

Despite being described as occurring in the solitude of goon 'caves', gooners' roleplaying of pornography addiction has a public and social dimension. For many, it involves some combination of (1) posting about their states of arousal, agitation, and desire in the lead up to a gooning session, (2) frequently discussing 'triggers' that compel them to goon, (3) intermittently posting during goon sessions, sometimes to receive encouragement, sometimes to receive chastisement, and sometimes to find other gooners to direct message with, (4) sharing images and videos of their goon caves and their goon sessions (usually point-of-view images of their cave centered around their erect penis), (5) finding other people to goon with, both online and off. For many, gooning thus entails play with exhibitionism and voyeurism and connects with earlier internet trends of masturbation on anonymous chat sites like Chatroulette or Omegle (Kreps 2010; Korn 2017).

We might read these performances as exuberant acts of rebellion from Neoliberal capitalism – an excessive squandering of time on bestial pleasure that flies in the face of productivity discourse. We might also follow Jane Ward (2020) and understand this return to homosociality as indicative of the failure of heteronormativity to deliver on its promises to deliver stable, meaningful, and fulfilling lives. Gooning also celebrates the ascendancy of women in the sexual and pornographic marketplace, helps people feel safe to explore new forms of pleasure and desire, and operates as a gateway towards queerness. However, there are problematic implications for women lurking beneath these performances of rebellion, as they also connect deeply with men's rights advocates' call for a 'sexit' where men utilize technology to render women superfluous and thus evacuate women's power to demand equality and justice (Sharma 2018). Gooning also tends to perpetuate (albeit sometimes in a mutated form) some of the problematic elements of cisnormativity and heteronormativity, including body normativity (fatphobia, ableism, etc.), phallocentricism to the point of phallomania, transnormativity and transmedicalism, and a new masculine homosociality where women's only role is as performers on screen.


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## PAPER 2: GLITCHCRAFT: TWINKS IN THE MACHINE?

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What can generative AI teach us about sex? Not nothing, but not everything, either. With careful prompt generation, one can learn about the most popular sexual positions in the United States, the broad historical outlines of technology and the regulation of sex, or where to find popular fan fiction slash archives. In these ways and others, one can be impressed by the democratizing power of these tools in the ways they make accessing knowledge easier, echoing earlier cyberutopian beliefs in the Internet's leveling power. Indeed, if one asks ChatGPT what it can teach about sex, it will answer

that it can be used to teach users about sexual education, health, and wellness, as well as address taboos, provide counseling and support, and offer a space for the creative exploration of fantasies (Chat GPT 2023). However, the wrong prompt or the use of a sexually coded term can trigger a content policy violation. Thus, there are significant constraints surrounding the use of these widely available chatbots and image generators, as companies implement guardrails that significantly limit the production of sexually explicit content, with a particular concern for inputs and outputs that concern the figure of the child, which presents not only moral and ethical questions about their representation but the particular technical difficulties present in identifying those representations (Thakor 2017).

These constraints also have particular implications for representations of non-normative and queer sexualities, which despite their apparent digital ubiquity, continue to be policed and censored via overt stigma as well as less apparent heteronormative bias (Monea 2022; Sourtherton et al. 2021). The content moderation policies of contemporary technology platforms are notoriously opaque and form an uneven patchwork of governance protocols, and what we know about why popular new tools such as Open AI's ChatGPT, Google's Gemini, or image generators such as Midjourney and Leonardo flag some terms and not others is limited. While some content moderation policies clearly prohibit nudity and sexually explicit content, this does not necessarily prevent users from developing workarounds or the programs from hallucinating the content by mistake. These moderation policies, moreover, may not align with what users want or how they use the platforms (Duguay et al. 2020; Gillespie 2018), and this is particularly the case for queer counterpublics for whom networked intimacies are essential means for the exploration, formation, and expression of identities, aesthetics, and politics (Author 2013; Mowlabocus 2010, 2021).

Moreover, as numerous scholars have observed in recent years, predictive technologies, including generative AI, reproduce existing inequalities, reflecting violent histories of oppression and extraction that have characterized so much of technoscientific history in relation to various minoritarian groups differently marked by race, gender, class, and ability (Author 2016, Bailey 2021; Benjamin 2019; Broussard 2023; Browne 2015; Noble 2018; Tacheva and Ramasubramanian 2023). Sexuality is a particularly charged material-affective field. For queer people, networked intimacies serve as collective forms of memory and as "cultural adhesives" (Wang 2021)–from porn to hookup apps and more–that also undergo continuing transformations with each introduction of new technologies. It is telling but not surprising then that generative AI, much like the rest of the Internet, demonstrates a heteronormative bias that pushes queer content into a narrow "digital closet" (Monea 2022).

This presentation examines how several popular generative AI platforms regulate and filter queer sexual content, and it reflects on a series of experiments with these tools that focused on the figure of the "twink." In the lexicon of queer embodiments, twinks are often characterized by their youthful exuberance, slim physique, minimal body hair, and, typically, racialized whiteness. The twink flirts with boundaries between boyhood and adulthood, innocence and carnality, feminine and masculine (Needham 2022). From the perspective of queer literary, critical, and popular traditions, the twink shares historical antecedents with Hellenistic ideals through Renaissance art, as well as

figuring prominently in queer representational histories tied to the emergence of modern technologies of mass reproduction, from photography, film, and television to the modern Internet (Mercer 2017). The twink entered the broader modern gay lexicon through pornography in the early 2000s as the sexually available white suburban kid next door and has since entered mainstream discourse, as evidenced by the widely circulated New York Times article, "Welcome to the Age of the Twink" (Haramis 2018). The figure of the twink is viral, with numerous memes dedicated to them, including, prominently, those about "evil twink energy" (Needham 2022).

This paper is part of a larger project on what I call the "computational hex," which uses multidisciplinary creative and intellectual approaches to attend to some of the weird and witchy contours of our algorithmic ordinary–from the rise of the astrology app Co-Star to "#witchtok" (Author 2021). "Glitchcraft" takes inspiration from Legacy Russell's (2020) "glitch feminism" and her manifesto's solicitation to embrace the glitch as a form of activism. "Glitchcraft" here refers to those creative practices of engagement that underscore the excitatory enchantments these generative AI produce, their frustrating constraints, and the accidents–exploited or serendipitous–that might result. The presentation documents a series of ongoing experiments with generative AI that seek to pressure the opaque guardrails that invisibly demarcate the twink and much sexual content more broadly to critically and playfully explore the queer affordances of popular generative AI tools.

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## PAPER 3: FLAGGING FLUIDS: MODERATING BODIES AND BOUNDARIES IN SEXUAL SOCIAL MEDIA

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This paper explores the layering of sexual boundary work and content moderation on sexual social media platforms by considering the place and limits of bodies and bodily fluids in networked sexuality. Relying on data from platform walk-throughs (Light et al. 2018), analysis of the governance and moderation rules, ethnographic observation, and over 60 interviews with platform users, developers, and moderators of three Nordic and Baltic sexual platforms – the Estonian Libertine.Center used primarily by non-monogamists, the Swedish Darkside preferred by BDSM and kink practitioners, and the Finnish Alastonsuomi dedicated to nudity and sex – we ask how bodies are regulated by platforms and users alike.

First, we analyze how users of sexual social media platforms negotiate the boundaries between "vanilla" and "non-vanilla" and show how the platforms' governance principles make that possible. Then, relying specifically on the example of one of the three platforms – Alastonsuomi – we explore the further boundary work that users undertake within the category of "non-vanilla" through content moderation via flagging actions based on notions of "good taste."

Within the context of aggressive de-platforming of sex on leading US-based social media services, our platforms encourage sexual exchanges as their main rationale. Sex – instead of being banned – becomes a binding dynamic that fuels engagements between users and makes space for alternate understandings of platform sociability and the value that sex holds within it. This becomes possible because the governance principles of the platforms differ from generic social media in a number of ways. First, the notion of safety is uncoupled from sexual content and the imperatives of moderating it, becoming reframed through the notions of consent, authenticity, harassment, shaming, and violence instead (cf. Tiidenberg et al. 2023). Secondly, this invites nuanced forms of moderation (i.e. supplanting or supplementing flagging based after-upload moderation of posts with what is, essentially, user moderation through verification).

Within these relatively safe spaces for sexual exploration, users activate and move symbolic boundaries around the kinds of sex they enjoy, regularly mapping it out against the figure of *vanilla*. Vanilla is a popular term used to speak of conventional, unimaginative, and normative sex, not least so within kink communities defining themselves against the category (e.g., Chalkidou, 2022; Langdridge and Butt, 2004; Pohtinen, 2019; Rehberg, 2017). Our interviewees' sexual preferences and lifestyles vary from online-only exhibitionism to swinging, to event-only BDSM, to cross-dressing, to 24/7 fetishism. Across a variety of self-labels ("sexually liberated," "libertine," "kinkster," "lifestyler" or "perv") our interviewees valorize willingness, variability/diversity, and self-reflexivity over the assumed tedium of vanilla. Through this they articulate an aspirational kind of sexual hierarchy, explicitly turning the cultural and normative construct of what Gayle Rubin (1989) framed as "good sex" on its head.

Yet, within these infrastructures and cultures built against the presumed vanilla of generic social media and generic sex, some forms of sexual connecting and representations of bodily flesh and fluids take things too far to be included in the fuzzy warmth of celebrated "non-vanilla."

Harassing or insulting other users, primarily in the sense of judging their sexual lifestyle is considered a violation across the rules of all three platforms. While our participants all have stories to tell of a garden variety of hateful speech or harassment, they report an overall positive experience that they set aside from experiences on generic social media. Different body sizes and sexual preferences are generally appreciated. This applies in particular to body positivity when it comes to images of women's bodies, but extends to photos of small and micro penises: "Maybe it's a little like 'oh, cute,' so there's a little of that tone, but, in any case such that all kinds of bodies and all kinds of penises, they get positive feedback and admiration there." (Emilia).

While our platforms have varying levels of moderation by moderators, user and community governance is important on all three platforms, and particularly so on Alastonsuomi that has only two moderators. Users delete comments, block other users, flag posts, sometimes shutting down and restarting accounts to manage their experience. They also report looking after each other and the shared space, in particular when users are outed as abusive or criminal. This, however, does not necessarily a happy egalitarian community make. The platform's insistence on the content posted to confine to "good taste" in particular results in friction in users' content being removed without the reason – or the taste criteria – being altogether clear. This applied especially, albeit not exclusively, to watersports, which again pointed to a much deeper friction among (certain) kinksters and more mainstream tastes. According to Juhani, "piss pics" were not allowed during the platform's first years, only to suddenly appear. As one sharing the fetish himself, Marko has been equally puzzled by the content policy:

> The piss-play part I don't understand especially since today there's that squirting fad, they probably put it into one category or another according to some [volume criterion of] deciliter, one gets flagged and the other one not. But, maybe it's the assumption about what kind of material could drive people away. But, on the other hand, when you think how it's like there, it's a very strange division really. (…) I guess they think from their own starting points in terms of the average users.

Here, the ephemeral yet firmly vanilla figure of the "average person" evoked in U.S. community standards when drawing the boundaries of obscenity (and pornography) makes an unexpected entrance into how sexual content is flagged as deviating from the norms of good taste. The interviewees had difficulties in remembering how the flagging of questionable content works exactly – whether it is done by the users uploading photos and videos, by the admin, or by fellow users. Jenni adds that users have the possibility of opting in to seeing content deemed sensitive:

> Was it sensitive? So, it's about, mainly what I've seen it's piss play that's been in videos and pics, that's classified as sensitive. Apparently, there can also be shit

play and vomit play somewhere there but I haven't gotten them myself yet at least. Alastonsuomi is nevertheless such a, let's say, middle-margin mass population site so, I guess that you can maybe pretty badly lynch [*sic; a literal translation from "lynkata"*] that kind of material away. Or is it like so that even the admin removes it. But those are the kinds of criteria that you can set yourself.

While, in the greater picture of social media, it may seem counter-intuitive to identify a platform trading in explicit sexual content as conservative and one for the "middle-margin mass population," this becomes understandable when considering the ephemeral yet tenacious, and possibly hurtful, drawing of boundaries between what goes, and what does not; what remains within the realm of "good taste" and what tastes are flagged as questionable or "not good" instead. To state the obvious, sexual platforms are not free from discrimination against kinks: even as their hierarchies of "non-vanilla" are open to variation, hierarchies do remain. The opacity of content policies, combined with the ease with which some users become upset with facing visuals not of their own liking, results in governance being tricky business, the actors and norms of which are by no means evident.

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## PAPER 4: "NOT YOUR TYPICAL BOTTOM": ANAL AFFORDANCES ON GRINDR

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This paper delves into the intricate interplay between corporeal sexualities and their digital manifestations. Focused on an exploration of Grindr, the paper is based on a three-month diary study, capturing queer men's (which in this paper includes homosexual and bisexual cisgender and trans men, as well as non-binary people's) day-to-day experiences. As the diaries unfold with a mix of confessions, reflections and their own embodied experiences and narratives about anal sex on and through Grindr, the participants' use of Grindr permits them to reassess their sexual identities and the connections between identity and practice. Anal affordances on Grindr – how queer men use profile texts, statistics (such as sexual position preference), photos and chatting – shape and regulate anal desires and affect how users traverse norms, habits, and behaviours on the app (van Dijck, 2013). Notably, the paper sheds light on the dynamic interaction between users and the 'rigid' sexual categories imposed by Grindr, which are also reflective of the wider gay/queer culture, unravelling the nuanced ways in which users subvert these categories. Sometimes queer men align with binary identity preferences, and sometimes they go beyond these. This not only contributes to a deeper comprehension of digital sexualities but also provides insights into the broader landscape of gay and queer culture, where digital technology intersects with identity formation.

**Method and Previous Research**

The paper is based on the diaries of thirty-three queer men and their embodied experiences with anal sex facilitated through Grindr. They live across Sweden, from rural areas to big cities and are between 20 and 50 years old. I suggest that Grindr users (un)intentionally "mess with" and subvert normative expectations on binary anal intercourse preferences and identities (set at the intersection of the society, the historical roots of the gay community, and the app itself) by participating in a playful and subversive exploration of their sexual identities. The discussion delves into the diverse spectrum of anal activities within the context of Grindr, exploring both the motivations driving such engagements and the utilisation of the body on the platform.

Prevalent stereotypes persistently portray the role of a male bottom, particularly in anal intercourse, as passive, feminine, and indicative of a lack of control (Allan, 2016; Bersani, 1987; Hocquenghem, 1972; Kemp, 2009; Kippax & Smith, 2001; Snyder, 2007; Vytniorgu, 2023). Scholarship addressing anal sex from a non-medical standpoint has delved into the nuanced identities associated with bottom and top dynamics in hook-up apps, examining their implications for femininity, masculinity, and hierarchies (Chow, 2022; Conner, 2023; Hammack et al., 2022; Plaza-Vidalón & Mateus, 2022; Thepsourinthone et al., 2022). Although some queer men in this study make use of anal affordances connected to binary sexual preferences, many of them go beyond intercourse positions; they fist, rim and spank; they are in flux between vanilla and kink, dom and sub; they change anal sex positions and resist ideas of being gendered or positioned in a specific category. They are actively subverting conventional ideas of identity and sexual behaviours through two connected themes: by not being a typical bottom and by unveiling anal desires through pictures.

**Not Your Typical Bottom**

Several participants expressed a desire to do the opposite of their self-labelled sexual preferences, such as to be penetrated when labelled as a top on Grindr, revealing they are not as strict as they may appear through Grindr's affordances. Sexuality is more fluid for some queer men; some tops are bottoming, whilst some bottoms are topping, and some are topping without a physical penis. However, people sometimes find it challenging to explain non-binary sexual identities on the app. For example, how do you indicate that you are an active top with erectile dysfunction? Grindr is an influential force in regulating and controlling anal sex practices. However, despite the platform's pre-established categories, queer men employ various strategies to fulfil their specific desires, deviating from Grindr's categories. This intricate dance between the controlled framework of Grindr and the nuanced preferences and desires of queer men reflects a dynamic process in which users actively shape and navigate the specific details of anal encounters, going beyond pre-established labels of top, bottom and verse and anticipated outcomes.

What happens if you are atypical regarding Grindr's preferred position stats? Participants reveal desires beyond identity positioning, such as identifying as a bottom while expressing an interest in rimming:

> As a bottom, I'm not expected to do certain things…I still think about these Grindr guys telling me, "Strange, why do you like to rim me if you are a bottom?" Or "Why do you play around my entrance?". Dunno, maybe I'm an atypical bottom, or maybe I just met atypical gays? Ergo, I am a vers bottom on the App; just to clarify to the BOYZ that I do love more than standing dead on a bed waiting for them to finish.

Moreover, identities also connote power dynamics, such as being penetrated is to abdicate power (Bersani, 1987). A trans guy writes that "because I like ass sex, I should then also be small and thin and love being submissive and being degraded". Effectively navigating non-normative expressions of anal sex entails making use of available affordances but also being extensively creative in communicating preferences regarding the nature of anal sex, specifying levels of kinkiness, and articulating one's inclinations towards vanilla or more rough forms of sex.

**Unveiling Your Anal Desires**

The unveiling of anal desires on Grindr involves strategic self-presentation and tailoring online personas to align with sexual preferences, emphasising visual and embodied aspects of specific anal activities. Pictures are used on profiles, in messages, and in albums to signal specific anal desires. Conversely, the absence of specific pictures signifies exclusionary preferences. For example, when requested, explicit photographs of cocks and genitals are for some deemed undesirable and may act as discouragement of continuation when asked to send pictures. To achieve success, participants strategically selected images aligned with beauty standards associated with perceived effectiveness as tops or bottoms or images reflecting their specific kinks. For instance, a 50-year-old gay man shares a close-up photo of his buttocks with a hand

positioned near the opening, symbolising previous engagement in fisting. The positive reception of such images on Grindr is perceived by this person as an acceptance of his enjoyment of fisting, eliminating the need for concealment. Consequently, these images serve to leverage Grindr's affordances for engaging in anal activities beyond penetration.

In sum, anal affordances collectively shape the user experience on Grindr, influencing how individuals present themselves and search for potential matches and enabling quick hook-ups. This paper illustrates a discrepancy between labels on Grindr and actual anal practices. Although queer men are using Grindr's anal affordances, the paper shows the limitations of Grindr as its affordances are not fully taking into account how people's desires are in flux and how anal sex may move beyond penetration. In other words, the anal affordances of an app like Grindr are disrupted and challenged by the complexity of people's sexualities.

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