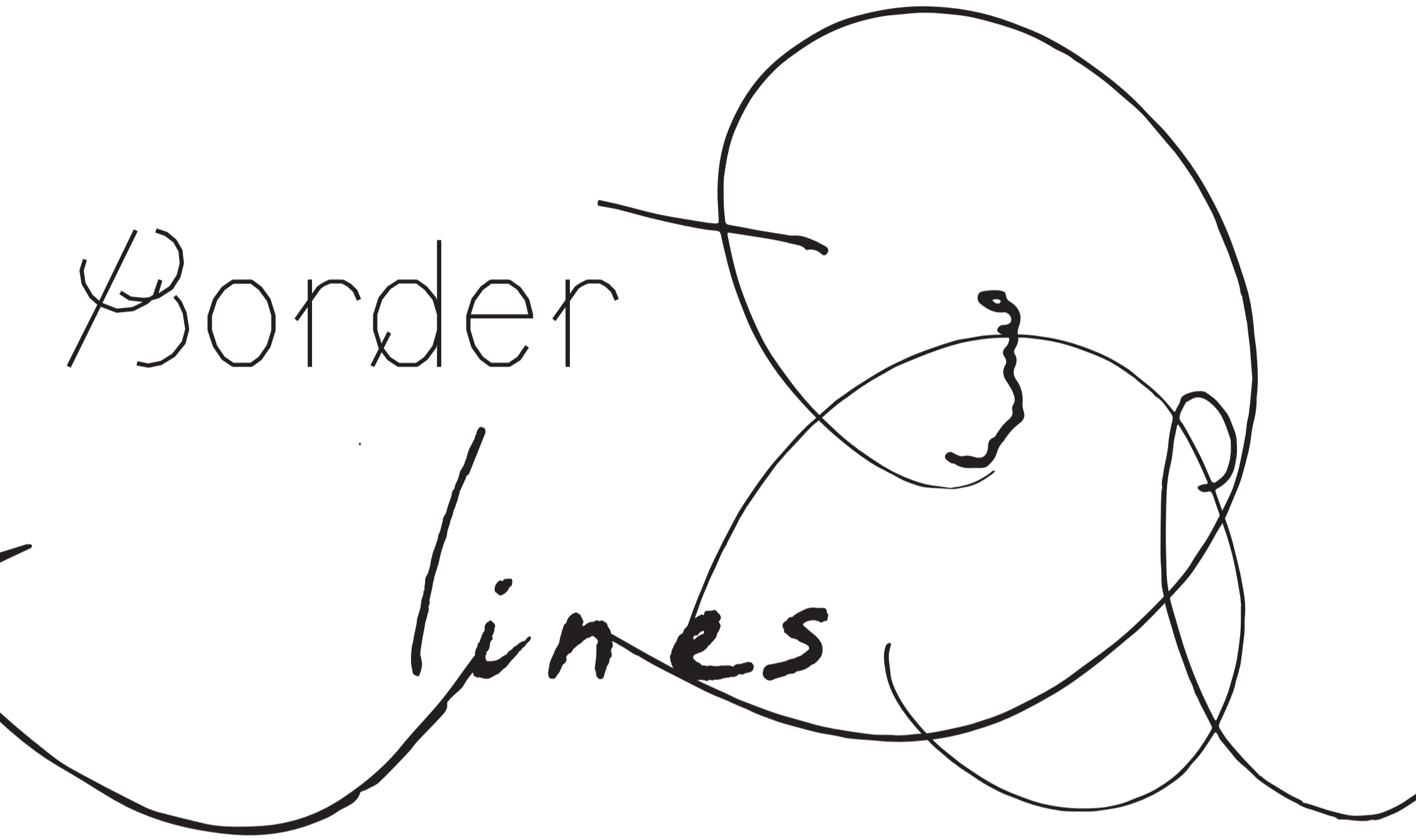


~~Border~~

lines



When I think about my first memory in the street I have to think about that stranger that smiled at me. It was around 8 years old, before passing a crosswalk, the traffic light was red and that person was standing on the opposite side.

Being born in Paris, let's say that it's not a common thing.

So, that first time that it happened to me I was quite surprised.

Why did this stranger smiled at me?

Did I do something funny?

Am I funny?

I didn't mean to be funny?

Well, that first time, I asked my mom why that stranger smiled at me.

She simply responded by :

“ - That person was just being nice. Try it sometimes, it's always nice to have someone smiling at you, you'll see, you will get your smile back!”

I tried, it worked! Weirdly as it sounds, it's a nice sensation to share a smile with someone you don't know. It gives you happiness, and somehow strength to continue your day.

What is sharing a smile?

I could say that sharing a smile is kind of sharing your vulnerability to someone. It's showing a bit of yourself to that stranger.

This story made me think of this quote of William H. Whyte<sup>1</sup> in his book *The Social life of small Urban spaces*<sup>2</sup>.

“ *What has fascinated us most is the behavior of ordinary people on city streets - their rituals in street encounters, for example, the regularity of chance meetings, the tendency to reciprocal gestures in street conferences, the rhythms of the three-phrases goodbye*”

In his book, William H. Whyte is studying human behavior in urban spaces. In this quote, he is focusing on daily life in urban spaces, considering the informal interactions that happen naturally in those environments. I feel that the “rituals” that he evokes are regular and imperceptible behaviors that contribute to the social texture of the streets. This smile that I am talking about above could be one of those gestures. It is part of things that can happen in the street without it being notified or without it being perceived as out of the ordinary.

1. William Hollingsworth “Holly” Whyte Jr., (July 11, 1917 – July 11, 1999) was an American urbanist, sociologist, organizational analyst, journalist and people-watcher.

2. This book was published in 1980, it's a study of New York's plazas started a mini-revolution in urban planning and design. In 1988 Whyte also published a video documentary with the same title as the 1980 book.

Also, the references of “reciprocal gestures in street conferences” suggest a kind of social dance that happens in social space.

To me, this quote underlines the richness of social behavior observed in urban spaces, highlighting rituals, the regularity of chance encounters, reciprocal gestures and the particular rhythms of farewells as fascinating elements of social life in the city.

The rituals that William H. Whyte describes are not noticeable at first, they're floating around and are so much a part of our daily lives that we don't notice them anymore. He sees those rituals as a global vision of street encounters that make these interactions seem trivial.

But, what he is not talking about here, are the gestures that are out of the ordinary. Those that stand out from the crowd and shake up our habits. Because of the rituals he is talking about, I can go out of my house without sharing too much of my privacy and feel safe. It's when those rituals change that the glass of your intimacy is broken. Not controlling this rhythm is what makes you vulnerable and showing your intimacy. Even if the act of going out into the street remains commonplace and banal, lulled by the same rhythm of the urban public space, we are never safe from unpleasant surprises that are beyond our control. In my opinion, this control of our surroundings is necessary to maintain a certain intimacy.

Here, I'm obviously focusing on urban public spaces. Those spaces in which interactions are so varied, those spaces where humans gather in mass, leaving room for an infinite number of diverse interactions. It's these spaces that interest me in the search for the place of intimacy. Because when it comes to urban spaces, intimacy can be shattered at the snap of a finger.

Urban space is so vast and varied that it leaves ample room for chance. Chance encounters, interactions, and unexpected elements during your outing all play a significant role. Here, this randomness is of interest to me because it is what will alter our intimacy. Taking, for instance, an involuntary interaction with someone who disrupts your rhythm. This person shouts at you without context, thereby disturbing your privacy as you must then speak or react at a moment you had not anticipated. In this interaction you will definitely show yourself, the way you will react to this will show a state of mind or an emotion that will reveal a certain part of your personality. It could be vulnerability, strength, anger, distress... Either way, the fact that you had to share one of those states will inevitably break through your privacy.



Images taken from the video documentary "*The social life of small urban spaces*" from William H. Whyte in 1988.







# Where is my space?

Is it weird if I tell you that being a child growing up in Paris I often ask myself where I would sleep if I was a homeless person?

In this big city full of architecture and structure in any form I had a lot of options I often came across homeless people trying to take shelter in different places, trying as best as they could to build a private place for themselves in this public space.

In a corner of a building,

Behind a bus stop

At the end of a sidewalk

Under the ring road

Under the metro

Under bridges

In the park

In front of a store

And my questions always was:

Where would it be the most comfortable?

Where would it be quieter?

Where would it be safer?

At one point, people even designed some structures anti-homeless so they didn't disturb the view or the way...

It is known that urban spaces have been thought and designed so that people can move around as naturally as possible, almost without having to think about it.

This can go as far as intelligent landscaped areas with a quiet corner under the trees or a bench.

But also architectural design that can help avoid excessive proximity between interior space and public areas.

Well-thought-out lighting that leaves shadows and therefore more privacy.

Sculptures, fountains or kiosks that offer points of interest that create informal meeting zones.

Intelligent technology that can manage traffic flow, for example.

All these elements help to create a fluid urban environment that respects privacy.

People make use of public space for different reasons. It could be social or cultural activities (musicien, street artists), community events (festival, street market), informals meeting in playground or benches, recreational activities (jogging, bike), daily activities (picnic, reading) and resistance and revendication (protest). All those activities make us share our privacy in this huge living room that is the city.

Despite the fact that these urban spaces are well-designed to create a certain dynamism, we have no control over people's behavior.

What I mean by this is that people sometimes use urban space in ways other than its basic purpose. An example is the appropriation of a homeless person's space to make it his own.

It can happen that this space is used in another way. This reminds me of an example. In the Netherlands, on April 27, King's Day, a national holiday celebrating the king, takes place, during which the city transforms itself and serves a different purpose than usual. While normally forbidden, it is possible to use public space to sell personal belongings. Markets can be found all over the streets, with sales areas marked out so that everyone can have their own space. The streets are full of people, singing, laughing, drinking, dancing, shouting and sharing a moment together without knowing each other.

In my opinion, this example shows that public urban space can be a place for sharing when it serves its primary function, but also when it is diverted from its primary function and appropriated by citizens.



*Playground, Vivian Maier<sup>3</sup>*

In this picture, those kids decided to make the street their playground by opening the hydrant and playing with the water like they were in their garden without thinking of who it could bother.



*Martin Parr<sup>1</sup>*

What is interesting to me in the photography is the way that those two people decided that it was going to be their spot. On the rocks, behind the trucks, by only putting a towel they call this place their own and get their privacy.

3. Vivian Dorothy Maier (February 1, 1926 – April 21, 2009) was an American street photographer.

4. Martin Parr is born the 23 of May 1952, he is a british photographer, journalist and photobook collector. He is known for his photographic projects that take an intimate, satirical and anthropological look at aspects of modern life, in particular documenting the social classes of England, and more broadly the wealth of the Western world.



Today I am traveling from Amsterdam to Paris by bus  
 7:45, I am already sitting at my seat  
 8:05 am, the bus has to leaves  
 It's early  
 For now, nobody is sitting next to me  
 A group of five girls are coming and sitting on the seats near me  
 They are talking loudly!  
 Too loud for that time, it's annoying!  
 They don't realize that people are next to them?  
 They don't realize that it can bother people?

Then, another person is coming and sitting behind me  
 The bus leaves  
 The girls keep talking like they are in their living room  
 Suddenly I hear someone on facetime  
 It's the guy behind me  
 He is on speaker  
 I can hear all his conversation

“- Yo! What's up? Where is Marvin?  
 - Yo! Wait one sec! He is taking a shower!  
 - Papaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!!!  
 - AAAAaaah  
 - They are super excited they didn't take a nap?  
 - No, we went for a walk  
 - .....”

There is shouting, imperceptible words and sounds that keep going for 45 minutes.

Doesn't it bother him that I know everything?

I would have never done that.

First calling in the bus and then not putting on headphones.

I guess not everyone has the same rules when it comes to leaving together.

To not think about people that surround you and if your intimacy is stepping into their own would be unbelievable for me.

In this case, every individual steps out when they're acting out of the box.

The book *Urban Views by Beat Streuli*<sup>5</sup> and *Gabriele Basilico*<sup>6</sup> raises some interesting points. This photography book represents two different visions of the modern cities. Between life-size color photographs of anonymous passers-by in big cities and black and white pictures of post-industrial cities concentrating on structure and the architecture play of form, their works stimulate the viewers to ponder the identity and representation of the modern metropolis.

5. Beat Steuli (born in 1957) is a Swiss visual artist who works with photo and video based media.

6. (12 August 1944 – 13 February 2013) was an Italian photographer who defined himself as “a measurer of space”

It's mostly the first part of this book that is interesting to me. Seeing photographs of strangers passing by in the urban public spaces is bringing me back to me walking in the street. What is even more interesting is that the pictures are not only taken in one city but many. We can find: Oxford, Tokyo and Sydney. Even though those cities are so far apart, we can find the same pattern of people acting in the streets. Busy, in their thoughts... Let's say, in their own worlds, even if they are sharing this public space with everybody, it looks like they still find their way to get their privacy.

*“The sociologist Georg Simmel<sup>7</sup> pointed to the importance of the blasé attitude in urban culture, an attitude that in a certain sense focuses, like the aperture of the camera, on infinity and only momentarily focuses on something close by in exceptional circumstances. A bad collector is constantly distracted by the meaningless details of all the clamouring rubbish, just as someone from out of town is driven crazy by the bustling crowd in the city. The urbanite is impervious to it all, and cannot be seduced by misplaced signs of identity or particularity. Identity and uniqueness are under urban conditions the product of standardization and “the universal equality of things”.*

I would like to talk about the “blasé attitude” that he is referring to. If you describe someone as blasé, you mean that they are not easily impressed, excited, or worried by things, usually because they have seen or experienced them before or just to give themselves a facade. What I mean by this facade, is a way to protect themselves from the world, they built a wall to not be disturbed. It could be a synonym of nonchalant and distant.

This quote shows that there is an established pattern of buildings and urban infrastructures that adopt a similar form, creating a homogeneous appearance. Despite this, individual identity and uniqueness still emerge within these urban conditions. Individuals preserve their identity beyond standardized structures and norms. This reveals a complex dynamic between norms and individuals.

What is relevant for me in this quote is that individualism that stands out from the crowd. In my opinion, that's what reveals your identity, and therefore your intimacy too.

7. Georg Simmel (1 March 1858 – 26 September 1918) was a German sociologist, philosopher, and critic.



*Street Scene, George Grosz<sup>8</sup>*

To me, this painting is a good illustration of what I am talking about in the blasé attitude. Everyone has this attitude, and the silhouettes overlap to create a certain harmony. But, some characters still stand out.

8. George Grosz (July 26, 1893 – July 6, 1959) was a German artist known especially for his caricatural drawings and paintings of Berlin life in the 1920s. He was a prominent member of the Berlin Dada and New Objectivity groups during the Weimar Republic.



The individuality that emerges from the monotony of rituals in urban public spaces cannot exist without the eyes of others. The way we contemplate others who pass us by. I am talking here about “The Gaze”, this steady and intense look, especially in admiration, surprise, or thought. The gaze can be understood in psychological terms by: “to gaze implies more than to look at – it signifies a psychological relationship of power, in which the gazer is superior to the object of the gaze.”

Another quote from the book *Urban Views* by Beat Streuli and Gabrielle Basilico talks about it. But more precisely about the photographer’s gaze through his camera.

*“The gaze of the flaneur<sup>9</sup> was quasi-vacant, like that of the collector, focused on infinity, but in actual fact constantly focusing briefly on the gazes of others. Seeing and being seen, seeing to be seen has become the urban game per excellence, in the squares and boulevards, in the bars and discos, on the terrace and in the passageways.”*

Here, the gaze is what makes you dress and behave the way you behave. By going outside, you know that you’re going to show your privacy and personality because you’re going to be confronted with the look of others. It’s that look that’s going to get you dressed in one way or another from time to time. But it also makes you behave. Knowing that we’re going to be observed in public space will lead us to adopt a certain behavior. In my opinion, it’s a way of protecting your privacy. Some people adopt a certain attitude and put a mask on when they go out. An attitude they wouldn’t have at home.

To me, by being outside in public space, you’re sharing a bit of your privacy. The way you walk, the way you dress, the way you talk... You’re faced with judgment. According to me, it can be this judgment and how strangers interact with you that can shake your privacy.

9. Definition: someone who walks around not doing anything in particular but watching people and society.



*Picture by Beat Streuli in the book Urban Views*

Tokyo 98: The gaze into emptiness, an air of indifference. Fashionably blasé. Sunglasses on the nose, revealing less emotion. A way to shut out the external world? A way of saying, don't talk to me, leave me alone?



*Daido Moriyama*<sup>10</sup>

In this picture I feel that we are intruding on her world. Breaking the window glass to go into the restaurant where she is sitting alone. Breaking her intimacy. But, by looking at us back, it feels that she is trying to not let us in.

10. George Grosz (born October 10, 1938) is a Japanese photographer best known for his black-and-white street photography and association with the avant-garde photography magazine *Provoke*.

The *Urban Views* by Beat Streuli and Gabrielle Basilico that I mentioned before also brings an interesting point, which is the notion of voyeurism. I feel that I couldn't talk about the gaze and exposing our intimacy without talking about voyeurism.

In my opinion, there's a fine line between gaze and voyeurism.

The desires or behavior of a voyeur could be many things, such as:

- The practice of obtaining sexual gratification from observing others.
- The criminal act of surreptitiously viewing a person without their consent in a place where the person has a reasonable expectation of privacy (such as a home or public bathroom) or of using a device (such as a camera) for the purpose of such viewing
- The practice of taking pleasure in observing something private, sordid, or scandalous

In this book we can read:

*“Voyeurism is essentially a delicate game on the border between private and public that at the same time subverts the border between the two domains. In that characteristic position on the threshold between two worlds - the intimate and private world, on the one hand, and the public sphere, on the other.”*

Here, I am not focusing on the sexual part of voyeurism but on the line between private and public. Which crosses the usually well-defined boundary between what is personal and what is exposed to public scrutiny.

By calling voyeurism a “delicate game”, the quote perhaps underlines the finesse and complexity of interactions.

Mention of the boundary between private and public highlights the duality inherent in this practice. By playing on this boundary, voyeurism challenges social norms and accepted limits. By subverting the boundary between the two domains, it creates an in-between space where complex dynamics can emerge.

The ambiguity evoked in this quote interests me. In my opinion, this ambiguity may stem from the unspoken rules of society. Those rules that allow social homogeneity and cohesion. If I had to do a list it would be:

- Spatial Etiquette, this means de navigation flow. How people navigate in the street, on the sidewalk, with the traffic light. People tend to the unspoken rule of walking on the right side or maintaining a certain pace to ensure a smooth movement of individuals.
- Shared Use of Public Facility like public benches where people leave gap or respect boundaries to allow others to use benches or seating areas without feeling crowded.
- Noise Levels is also an important rule to live in harmony. Conversations are often kept at a moderate volume to avoid disturbing others. Similarly, the use of headphones in shared spaces is a common practice to maintain a quiet environment.



-Cultural and Social Norms. While not strictly enforced, urban public spaces often have unspoken norms regarding dress code. Individuals may adhere to certain expectations of attire based on the nature of the space, contributing to a sense of shared identity or cohesion.

- Queueing and Waiting, I feel that there is an unspoken rule about forming an orderly queue while waiting, which is a sense of fairness to avoid chaos and keep your distance from each other to not encroach on your space.

-Respect for Personal Space. There is also a rule about proximity and touch that is linked with personal space. In my opinion maintaining a respectful distance from strangers and avoiding unnecessary physical contact are common practices that contribute to a sense of comfort and cohesion.

-Public Art and Expression. This goes with respecting the public art installation by not vandalizing or interfering with them.

- Use of Technology. By this I mean the usage of the phone like lowering your phone while talking on the phone, or using headphones when listening to music and not taking pictures of people you don't know.

- Environmental Stewardship means expectation that individuals will dispose of their waste appropriately in public spaces, contributing to a clean and well-maintained environment.

These unspoken rules serve as social norms that, when followed collectively, contribute to a harmonious coexistence in urban public spaces. They facilitate a shared understanding of how to navigate and participate in these spaces, fostering a sense of social homogeneity and cohesion among diverse individuals.

If those rules are crossed, you can notice it directly and by that you are being seen. Voyeurism can then appear and intimacy is shared out loud.



*Garry Winogrand<sup>11</sup>*

According to me this photograph is a good representation of the fine line between gaze and voyeurism, but also of the unspoken rules we were talking about. Here, the photographer places himself in the position of voyeur, as we can see from the gaze of the two women looking at the lens. This gesture of gazing doesn't make us feel legitimate to look at or photograph the scene. Also, from my point of view, the disgusted look of the woman on the right reveals a certain discomfort that may underline the out-of-bounds behavior of the two individuals kissing.

11. Garry Winogrand (January 14, 1928 – March 19, 1984) was an American street photographer, known for his portrayal of U.S. life and its social issues, in the mid-20th century.

“ A la porte de la maison qui viendra frapper?  
une porte ouverte on entre  
Une porte fermée une antre  
Le monde bat de l’autre côté de ma porte”<sup>12</sup>  
Pierre Albert-Birot<sup>13</sup>. *Les amusements naturels*.

12. English translation

“At the door of the house, who will come knocking?

An open door, one enters.

A closed door, a cavern.

The word beats on the other side of my door.”

13. (22 April 1876 – 25 July 1967) was a French avant-garde poet, dramatist, and theater manager.

It's so comfortable to be at home alone, not being bothered by any stranger  
 Nobody is in your way  
 Nobody is disturbing you  
 Nobody is talking to you  
 Nobody is bothering your privacy

Wait... I am now surrounded by people  
 Some that I know, some that I don't  
 Me and my roommates decided to throw a little gazing at our place  
 Our place is now habited by people that are usually not here  
 I dressed up differently from what I used to dress up at home  
 I behave differently from what I used to at home  
 Smiling a bit more  
 Talking a bit more  
 Behaving a bit more  
 Making conversation  
 The rules has change  
 The unspoken way of behaving that a encounter with people in the street are there  
 This judgment and the look of others that I only feel outside has come back  
 Wait,  
 it feels like I am outside!  
 I am in a public space in my own house!

In a broader definition, to me, a public space can be any space where you meet a stranger. It means that even by being at your place, a stranger's presence can make you feel that you're not at home anymore, therefore you're in "public". According to me, what makes this happen is the fact that our comfort is disturbed by someone's presence. When we're disturbed, we tend to act differently, behaving as if we were in a public space. It can be by being in someone's place or even yours. I mean a place where your habits are changed by interacting with people you don't know even though it's not defined as a public space.

In this scenario, I believe that comfort and privacy are intertwined. When a stranger disrupts your comfort, it also compromises your privacy.

This made me think about a movie by Alfred Hitchcock<sup>13</sup> called "*Rear Window*". This film is about a photographer, Jeff, that broke his leg and has to stay in a wheelchair in his apartment. Jeff spends his time observing his neighbors, who leave their own windows open for fresh air. The tenants across the street include a composer, a middle-aged couple and their little dog, a young dancer, miss Torso, who dances alone during the day and invites men of all ages to her house at night, a lady who dabbles in abstract sculpture, a newlywed couple, a woman in her forties who lives alone, miss Lonelyheart, and another couple: a man of rather imposing build, and his wife, ill, it seems, who stays in bed all day and with whom he seems to argue frequently. By observing all those people and taking advantage of seeing his neighbor, he comes to the conclusion that one of his neighbors killed his wife. Here, we can realize how even at your own house your privacy can be shaken. By being observed.

13. Sir Alfred Joseph Hitchcock KBE (13 August 1899 – 29 April 1980) was an English film director, screenwriter, producer and editor. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential figures in the history of cinema.



Bob Garrison. 3<sup>rd</sup> sleeper. Monday April 2<sup>nd</sup>. 3 A.M. he didn't want to go to bed.

*Les Dormeurs, Sophie Calle<sup>14</sup>*

*“Does he/she want clean sheets? Does he/she masturbate?  
Does he/she wants music?  
Moving on... can you imagine your successor?  
Do you regret coming?”*

Aren't those disturbing questions?

In her work *“Les dormeurs”* from 1979, (“The slippers”), during eight days, Sophie Calle invited 28 people to come sleep at her place for eight hours. Over this period, she had the liberty to capture photographs and ask questions. Destabilizing the intimacy of strangers that decided to share their privacy. Acting at home in someone else's place.

I find this work really interesting in a disturbing aspect.  
The fact that people agree to do this experience is intriguing to me.

In my opinion, sharing a bed is already a big step towards sharing your intimacy, as is sleeping at someone else's place. But sleeping in someone else's home and sharing it with someone else, and allowing the artist to photograph you and ask you intimate questions, is an even bigger step.

Not everyone could have done it. We can therefore question the notion of comfort and boundaries.

14. Sophie Calle (born 9 October 1953) is a French writer, photographer, installation artist, and conceptual artist. Her work frequently depicts human vulnerability, and examines identity and intimacy. She is recognized for her detective-like tendency to follow strangers and investigate their private lives.

For example, I wouldn't be able to do that because I think it would disturb my intimacy too much, and I don't want to share it to that extent. On the other hand, a more comfortable person would have no problem doing it.

Sharing intimacy is therefore not a problem to everyone, rather that we don't have the same boundaries when it comes to private space.



10 A.M. I woke him up while taking the picture -



Today I am going to my grandparent's house with my mom  
 We are having lunch outside in the garden for the last time this year  
 We share a nice meal, a nice conversation, a nice moment  
 Here comes the desert!  
 It's so nice to be able to enjoy the last bit of the warm sun!  
 Suddenly, in a middle of the conversation, I child appears  
 Out of nowhere!  
 I don't know this child  
 She coming to the table interrupting our discussion  
 Let's say that she feels at home

I am asking my grandmother: "*Do you know this child?*"  
 and she simply replies: "*Yes she is the daughter's neighbor!*"

She wasn't bother,  
 I was

It always impresses me how children are so comfortable!

She was just going and leaving the house as she wanted  
 Taking anything from the house and use it

Then, she took out a board game, went into the living room and played with it as she was at her mom's place

She is only a child but it was bothering me,  
 I felt intrude and couldn't go on with the conversation or the nice moment I was having with my family

In a way, by having no clue of social boundaries she disturbed my privacy.

Even though we talk about unspoken rules in public spaces, according to me, this example shows that everyone has a different point of view when it comes to boundaries. Obviously, the lack of social awareness of children can easily break the barrier of intimacy. The way they could stand too close in a conversation, their excitement (hugging or jumping), their unfiltered comments and their playfulness could be seen as invading personal space. I feel that we can also observe it with grownups. I won't have the same view of boundaries as everyone. Not everyone has the same modesty or education.

I can't talk about intimacy without talking about the difference between gender's behavior, here *women* and *man*. Since the beginning of time *women* and *men* have behaved differently and it's even more obvious when it comes to their behavior in public spaces. They don't take up space in the same way.



This made me think about the work of Marianne Wex<sup>15</sup> finished in 1977 called “*Let’s take back our space*”. In this book, Marianna Wex is making a systematic comparative study of the postures and body language of *men* and *women* in public space, based on 5,000 photographs taken between 1972 and 1977 on the streets of Hamburg. She also includes images from advertising, film and the media. In this research, Marianne defends the idea that body language is the result of patriarchal, gender-based socialization, which affects our behavior as *men* or *women*. In this book, she analyzes the different postures between these two genders. This study clearly shows that *men* tend to take up more space in public spaces than *women*. In fact, *women* tend to stand with knees together, hands clasped or placed one on top of the other, and feet pointed inwards. *Men*, on the other hand, have their knees apart, feet turned outwards and elbows extended, thus intruding more into other people’s private space. It’s important to bear in mind that this work was carried out between 1950 and 1977, and may not be entirely valid today, as standards and norms have changed.



*“Men sitting only hint at the most at crossing their arms. As in all other positions, the arms are mostly much farther away from the body than women in the same position”*



*“With both arms lying on top of each other, the elbows very close to the body; these positions seems almost cowering”*

11

12

13

14

15. Marianne Wex (13 July 1937 in Hamburg – 13 October 2020) is a German feminist photographer, author and self-healer.



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*“Narrow “female”  
body positions  
were something  
I observed in  
men only in  
underprivileged  
groups, and even  
then, only when the  
men were alone”*



***“Masculine”  
footprints***



***“Feminine”  
footprints***

In my own point opinion, I see a very clear difference between *men* and *women* in the public space. And this could be influenced by a variety of factors including social, cultural, and historical contexts.

First aspect would be the safety concerns. *Women* are most likely to feel unsafe in public space and fear assault, harassment, especially during night time, that will impact their comfort and freedom of movement. Whereas *men*, generally feel more secure and less vulnerable to personal safety threats.

We could also talk about the occupation of space, like the work of Marianne Wex, *men* are most likely to have territorial behavior, like spreading out in public transport and sitting legs apart, referred to as “manspreading”. Whereas *women* navigate the space more carefully of their surrounding and more observant.

*Women* also require more public facilities like toilets or room for breastfeeding if they feel the need to.

I also feel that social expectations and norms can play an important role in the search for intimacy. The scrutiny *women* face for their appearance may make them more self-conscious in public spaces compared to men. Societal norms may discourage men from expressing vulnerability or discomfort, potentially affecting their willingness to seek privacy in public spaces.

I would also say *women* could also feel threatened by unauthorized photography or being recorded without consent.

Obviously, social norms can vary significantly across cultures and regions. In some cultures, there might be stricter expectations regarding personal space and behavior in public, impacting both *women* and *men* differently.

All those aspects play an important role in the place of intimacy in urban public spaces. Regarding being a *woman* or a *man*, your intimacy won't be the same.

What I find most interesting about the place of privacy in urban public spaces is that it can take many forms. From a harmless smile to an inappropriate glance or gesture, and from one place to another, the question of intimacy and public space is highly subjective. It was challenging to raise all those details and notice that intimacy varies across individuals and communities. What may have evoked intimacy or public space for me in these texts, may be completely different to you.

Williman H. Whyte, *The Social life of small urban spaces*, 1980, Project for public space, p.17  
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[https://www.perrotin.com/fr/artists/Sophie\\_Calle/1/les-dormeurs/7366](https://www.perrotin.com/fr/artists/Sophie_Calle/1/les-dormeurs/7366)

Marianne Wex, *Let's take back our space*, David Company, 1979, p.12

