

CONSTRUCTIONS OF RACE WHEN GAY MEN SEARCH FOR INTIMACY USING LOCATION-BASED DATING APPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Constructions of race and racism are grounded in historical oppressions that are strongly linked to the question of spaces. Location-based dating applications have arguably contributed to a shift in the relationship between searches for and establishment of intimacy, and they are thereby also influencing contemporary ideologies about race, as well as desirability and belonging (to a delineated 'nation-state').

This study is part of larger project about how, why and when gay men use location-based media applications. In total, 26 men were recruited and interviewed using open-ended questions in three major cities in Sweden. In this study, we our attention lies in the instances where gay men themselves discuss the question of race in their accounts. We scrutinize the role that race plays in relational dynamics among gay men in Northern societies when they search for intimacy using dating applications. More specifically, we are exploring how they negotiate and form constructions of race when they themselves lift the topic. Drawing on Racial Formation Theory, this presentation presents some preliminary findings from these interviews.

Keywords: spatial media, gay men, partner selection.

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Daniel Hedlund is Associate Professor in Sociology of Law. His research is focused on migration and processes of inequality.

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