Queer Hate and Dirt Rhetoric: An Ambivalent Resistance Strategy

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Abstract

This article examines the queer use of hate and dirt as a form of resistance. Through analysis of a selection of Swedish queer activists' self-representations on the Internet, the article's aim is to describe and problematize the queer use of hate and dirt, and point to some ambivalences and risks with this resistance strategy. The three cases selected are situated in the queer activist milieu in Gothenburg, Sweden: The Day of Hetero Hate festival; the Black Rainbow Riot block in the annual Rainbow Walk of the HBTQ Festival; and the music video Cry Alliance Of Our Hatred. Ambivalences and risks in the emotional speech acts of queer activists are analyzed, first by looking at Michael Cobb's research into religious hate rhetoric as a potent form of queer expression, and Mary Douglas' discussion of dirt as having creative potential, and then by critically examining the use of hate as resistance. The concept of abjectification, which signifies an active and strategic use of the abject position, is central in the understanding of hate and dirt in this article. The queer use of hate and dirt is found to have at least four purposes: resistance to normalization and assimilation; emotion channeling; construction of a strong 'we'; and a way to experience pleasure, laughter and joy. It is also shown how this strategy risks reinstating hate and excluding many people, even queer activists, from the activism/community.

Introduction

Enduring existence in a heterosexist society gives birth to black thoughts, a hatred towards the oppression. To be able to turn darkness into light, night to day, hetero to homo, we first have to recognize the

> hate, give it a platform and let it speak, otherwise our joy and efforts will always be superficial. (Pleasure in Struggle/Kamplust 2010)[1]

The queer use of the emotion of hate for strategic and political purposes has been a subject of research primarily in the US and UK (e.g. Robson, 1994; Cobb, 2005, 2006; Jeppesen, 2010; Harvey, 2012), while in the Nordic countries it is practically uninvestigated. As in the quote above, from the website of Gothenburg's Queer Institute, hate is used by different political groups, for example the Black Panthers (e.g. Doss, 2001; Wendt, 2006), animal rights activism (Jacobsson and Lindblom, 2016), AIDS activist groups such as ACT UP (e.g. Gould, 2009; Harvey, 2012; Hirschman, 2012), Pink Panthers (Jeppesen, 2010) and, further, hate is often discussed in relation to class struggle (e.g. Linderborg, 2012). In this article the characteristics of the queer use of hate and how it is connected with a celebration of dirt – here referring to something that arouses loathing, is deemed filthy and therefore rejected – will be discussed and problematized. This is done through analysis of a selection of self-presentations on the Internet by queer activists from Gothenburg, Sweden.

Sweden is ranked the second most open and tolerant country in the world regarding attitudes toward people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans or queer (from now on LGBTQ) (European Social Survey, 2013). The gay liberation movement in Sweden has been active since the 1950s and has achieved several victories regarding laws to protect the rights of LGBTQ people. In 1979, homosexuality ceased to be registered as a psychiatric disease; in 1995 it was made possible for two people of the same sex to register their partnership; in 2003 it was made legal for same-sex couples to be considered for adoption of children within Sweden or from abroad; in 2005 lesbian couples in Sweden were granted the right of insemination and in-vitro fertilization in state hospitals; and in 2009 a gender-neutral marriage law was introduced. As late as 2013, the demand for sterilization of transsexuals before surgery was abolished.

The gay movement's struggle for acceptance of LGBTQ has meant a fight against the dirty, bad and sinful attributions to homosexuality. Through the victories that the gay movement has won, Swedish

[1] All translations from Swedish to English are by the author.

homosexuals and bisexuals are, at least in the legal sense, almost 'clean' and integrated into Swedish society.[2] Queer activists often position themselves in opposition to this through their critique of what they conceive of as assimilation and normalization. Dirt and hate are central to this resistance. They argue that dirt is needed as a kind of weapon against the supposedly pure, which they consider synonymous with the normative, bourgeois and assimilated (Wasshede, 2012). When analyzing different aspects and meanings of dirt, it becomes clear that it is tightly interwoven with the use of hate.

In this article it is not the queer movement or the events per se that are analyzed, but discourses about them, that is, representations, films, talks and stories about these events such as they are presented in a selection of the movement's self-presentations on the Internet. Through this we will hopefully achieve a deeper understanding and problematization of how hate and dirt are used as tools for resistance in contemporary Swedish queer activism. The analysis aims to answer the following questions: How are hate and dirt performed in the self-presentations of queer activists and how is this performance motivated? In what ways do hate and dirt relate to each other? Which ambivalences and risks emerge in the resistance strategies analyzed?

Disposition

In the following section the theoretical perspectives for the analysis will be presented, and then the method and material will be discussed. After that, the three cases of queer self-presentations on the Internet – The Day of Hetero Hate, Black Rainbow Riot, and the music video Cry Alliance of Our Hatred[3] – will be analyzed in turn. Finally, the results will be discussed, with a special focus on problematization of the hate and dirt strategies.

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[2] Transsexuals are consciously excluded here since the gay movement has not previously worked for transpersons' rights, and since transpeople have not yet gained the same acceptance in society as have LGB people.

[3] The Alliance was a collaboration between four political parties: Moderaterna (the Moderate Party), Folkpartiet (the Liberal Peoples Party), Centern (the Centre Party) and Kristdemokraterna (Christian Democrats).

Hate, dirt and abjectification – theoretical concepts and earlier research

In this article emotions are seen as something social and relational, not as something we 'own' or that are intrinsic to us (e.g. Thoits, 1989; Fineman, 2000; Hochschild, 2003). It is in our interactions with others that emotions take place. Emotions are also very material; they are felt in and/or through the body, they are often expressed physically, and it is, as Sara Ahmed (2004) writes, the contact between bodies that gives rise to emotions. In this article, emotions are analyzed in the form they take in texts and images on the Internet. Thus, it is emotionality in speech acts that is the primary focus. Even though bodies do not meet in a physical manner on the Internet, they are central in the self-presentations. Ahmed speaks of emotions as performative, i.e. as something that is performed repeatedly, that exists in motion and that moves us. In this article, another aspect is added: they make a social movement stronger (e.g. della Porta and Diani, 1999; Mouffe, 2005). Through sharing emotions, a strong 'we' is created – something which implicitly also means that an 'other' is generated. Boundaries are drawn between the 'we' who share emotions and are supposed to belong to this emotionally marked community, and the 'them' who do not share 'our' emotions and who do not belong in 'our' community (cf. Hutcheon, 1994).

The emotion examined in this article is hate. When Ahmed discusses hate, she returns several times to how we direct our feelings of hate towards those that we suppose have caused our pain. Her analysis concerns groups that hate ethnic minorities and LGBTQ people, and it is the majority's Own Country or Love that are seen as threatened by 'dirty others' who make claims on holy symbols (Ahmed, 2004). Love is, according to Rita Kirk Whillock (1995), a precondition for hate, since hate results from a feeling that something one loves and values has been threatened or violated. Since it is the 'others' who are seen as having inflicted harm on us and our beloved, it is deemed legitimate to feel hatred towards them. Unlike Ahmed and Kirk Whillock, who portray hate flowing from dominant majority groups toward minorities, this article focuses on the opposite; the hate is performed by those 'dirty others', i.e. the minority.

Hate is here understood as related to dirt through the loathing and disgust that hated bodies arouse. The hated bodies often become carriers of dirt and/or are seen as dirt. Ahmed (2004) argues that some bodies, for example those of queer and black people, are always more likely to be hated than others, and that feelings of loathing are attached to those bodies more than to others. An important aspect of this is what Ahmed calls the 'stickiness' of bodies. Some emotions, signs or words stick more to some bodies than to others and become attached and associated with those bodies. One example of this is how the epithet pedophilia often sticks to homosexuality (e.g. Cobb, 2005, 2006). This is due to earlier histories and associations. Signs become sticky through repetition; if an epithet is used about an object often enough, it seems to become something inherent in the object. People hear or see the association often enough to believe that it is the truth about that person/body/group (Ahmed, 2004; cf. Butler, 1997a).

Another way to understand why some bodies are more hated than others is to use Julia Kristeva's (1982) concept of the abject. Kristeva describes the abject as a non-object and a non-subject, and she writes: 'It is thus not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite' (Kristeva, 1982: 4). Judith Butler describes the abject as 'that which has been expelled from the body, discharged as excrement, literally rendered "Other"' (Butler, 1990: 133). The 'other' comes into existence through this very expulsion. Sara Edenheim clarifies this process even more when she defines abjection as an emotion – an emotion of panic, disgust or loathing which is triggered by the sight of something: 'It is the observer that creates the abject, not the thing/form that is observed.' (Edenheim, 2005: 74)

Mary Douglas' (1984) excellent description of how dirt becomes dirt is an important piece in the understanding of the queer use of dirt. She describes the process in different steps: 'from the beginning' we are located in an undifferentiated, formless, ambiguous state, and with the purpose of creating order we start to differentiate and construct boundaries between different areas, things and phenomena. Things that are unproblematic in themselves, become dirty when in the wrong place; one example is that hair and nails are seen as natural when attached to

bodies – if they are on the right part of the body and on the right body – but disgusting when detached from the body, especially on a plate of food. LGBTQ persons are often seen as transgressing borders, and in the process of differentiation they are often considered inappropriate, offensive and as threats to the 'good order'. They are therefore rejected. In this phase they have an ambiguous identity that threatens to violate the 'correct' subject. After being rejected, a process of pulverization, disintegration and decomposition takes place, a process that goes on until every facet of the identity of the 'inappropriate' is eliminated, i.e. until it is unidentifiable and has no power to act. This phase corresponds with making LGBTQ people invisible, or killing or imprisoning them. The rejected are transformed into a 'stack of junk' and are no longer dangerous. They are in a defined place: a rubbish heap, closet, prison or cemetery. But if we 'poke around' in this space, the rejected can become re-established and potentially dangerous again. This is how dirt can become a weapon to be used in resistance strategies. Dirt has, according to Douglas, a creative power and a potential for change, while purity is characterized by the opposite: 'Purity is the enemy of change, of ambiguity and compromise' (Douglas, 1984: 161-2).

Hated bodies that are forced to be carriers of dirt, loathing and disgust (LGBTQ persons in this case) can react in many different ways. They can, for example, resign themselves and accept that they 'are' disgusting, thereby internalizing a sense of self-loathing. They can try to prove their innocence, that they are not dirty but as pure as normal people are believed to be (as in the gay liberation agenda). Or they can use the anger that arises in them as a result of being hated unfairly. Anger can take many forms. It can be sublimed into other feelings or into artistic expressions. It can be acted out with physical violence. And it can, as in the case of the queer self-representations studied here, be acted out with verbal and visual rhetoric about hate and violence. Begoña Aretxaga (1995) describes yet another way of handling the imposed hate and disgust in her analysis of IRA prisoners' 'Dirty Protest' at the end of the 1970s. She highlights the importance of not seeing the use of dirt as a free-floating strategic tool, but rather to see the deep personal commitment and the physical and psychic pain that accompanies it. The IRA prisoners resisted the discipline, the assaults and dehumanization by

refusing to wear prison clothes or leave their cells, even to visit the toilets – visits that were surrounded by harassment and violence. Naked and dirty, they protested by smearing their excrement and menstrual blood on the walls of the cells. Deprived of everything, their bodies were all they had left. Aretxaga argues that this exposure of dirt is about the right to exist and be recognized as subjects: '(---) from abjects of a defiling power, the prisoners had come to be the subjects that controlled it' (Aretxaga, 1995:137).

In order to understand how queer activists, like the Irish prisoners, use the abject position to create resistance, I suggest we use the verb form of abject: abjectification (Wasshede, 2012). The focus is on the making, the doing, rather than being made abject. It is not about demanding respectability in spite of one's abject position, but actively using that position to destabilize the order and creating an alternative logic, an alternative order, in which dirt challenges the primacy of purity and boundaries between purity and dirt are destabilized. This also means challenging boundaries between the normal and the deviant, the intelligible and the unintelligible. Further, it can also be seen as an attempt to control the dirt. To avoid going insane as a result of oppression and humiliation, the prisoners, as well as queer activists, try to prevent and undo the risks of being dragged down into the dirt. They are, so to speak, already there. The activists'/prisoners' embrace of dirt shows that the dirt is not dangerous to them, that they are not afraid of it. Dirt is only dangerous to order, purity and boundaries.

Michael Cobb argues that religious hate speech is an opportunity for queer people. First, queers are given existence through the hate that is directed towards them; they become the hated ones, and second, because queer use of religious hate rhetoric may be seen as a rhetorical position aimed at undermining the hate that is directed towards one's own group (Cobb, 2005, 2006; cf. Harvey, 2012). Unlike Butler's concept of resignification, Cobb (2005, 2006) does not aim to change the meanings of the words, but to use the emotional and religious power that lies in the words. The adoption of religious hate speech is seen as giving access to words associated with sovereignty and enabling arousal of emotions (Harvey, 2012). Further, Cobb sees the potential of using hate in politics, among other things, as a way to highlight the shortcomings

of liberalist classic citizenship politics: 'I am hopeful that this kind of emotional, racially inflected language is the twist we need for a political sphere that is hyperemotional, full of suspicion and hate, and not willing to be rational.' (Cobb, 2005: 270-71; cf. Doss, 2001) Sandra Jeppesen's analysis of queers vomiting and having sex in public space as an act of resistance to normalization and consumerism within the gay movement and society at large is another example of the interpretation of hate and dirt as productive resistance strategies (Jeppesen, 2010; see also Robson, 1998).

It is often argued (e.g. Cobb, 2005, 2006; Butler, 1997a) that it is important to distinguish between linguistic hate – the words, the rhetoric – and feelings of hate and/or hateful actions. According to this logic, queer activists can use hate rhetoric even though they don't actually hate someone or something. Another way to disarm hate of its dangerous potential is to see the hate as a sort of lie or storytelling. Cobb says that in order to avoid becoming too vulnerable or 'too real', we can use figures, tales, and even lies to tell our stories. This is one way to understand the self-presentations that are analyzed in this article; not to see them as truths, as authentic descriptions of queer activists or their 'real emotions', but as figures and stories that are used rhetorically, politically, strategically and as a means of channeling emotions.

Departing from a feminist, biological and psychoanalytical frame, Elizabeth A. Wilson (2015) problematizes the fact that we always strive to understand and translate outwardly-turned hostility, such as hate, from oppressed groups, such as queers, as something morally good. We tend to see it as a political aggression working for the good, for a better society, and we often perceive the oppressed/queers as heroes (cf. Whillock, 1995). But, asks Wilson, what if we accept the negativity of that hate and tolerate its capacity for harm? Wilson argues that feminist politics is most effective when it is able to tolerate its own capacity for harm and does not try to 'make itself pure of heart' (Wilson, 2015: 6, 166). Further, Wilson claims that politics always involves hostility against the objects that we love, and that this hostility/hate results from the loss of those we originally love and hate ambivalently, i.e. our parents or caregivers. Unfortunately, she does not elaborate on what the psychoanalytic theory of ambivalence and loss of the loved/hated ones might mean for queers

and queer politics. However, Wilson criticizes Butler's (1997b) definition of gay melancholia as just sorrow over a homophobic culture, and compares her definition of it with her (Butler's) definition of heterosexual melancholia as something much more complex, emanating from the prohibition and loss of homosexual/same-sex desires (Wilson, 2015: 87-89). Wilson stresses how gay melancholia is not just depression turned inwards, but also an outwardly-turned aggression stemming from the loss of the love for the opposite sex; the heterosexual desire. In this article, I will explore what such a theoretical claim might do to the analysis of queer use of hate and dirt.

Reading Kirk Whillock (1995), it is obvious that hate is considered harmful. She describes it as aiming at extinction of the hated one. Andy Harvey is also skeptical towards the use of hate speech and wonders how we are supposed to be able to distinguish between emancipatory violence/hate and so-called conservative violence/hate. He also warns about the double nature of hate rhetoric; it is both a disguise of queers and a queer advantage (Harvey, 2012: cf. Butler, 1997a).

Abjectification as a strategy, as it is used by queer activists in Gothenburg, is however characterized by the combination of pain, dirt and hate on the one hand, and on the other hand, pleasure, humor and irony. It resembles the strategy of the traditional jester, to turn things upside down and to fool the authority/king in order to undermine it/him. Humor and irony create spaces where one is temporarily allowed to criticize, say one's meaning, make fun of and laugh at the authority. Anna Lundberg emphasizes the importance of the grotesque body in this type of 'laughter culture', and describes how this grotesque and shameless body wallows in its existence, celebrating things that are usually seen as ugly and abominable (Lundberg, 2008; cf. Bachtin, 1986). But, as Linda Hutcheon rightly claims, there is nothing inherently radical or subversive in irony. It can just as well be used to reinforce power (Hutcheon, 1994:10). According to Hutcheon, irony is a 'negative passion', often characterized by a judgmental and hostile attitude, a tone of mockery or contempt and tightly connected to the power. To use the language of power always carries the risk of being reassimilated – or being perceived as reassimilated (Hutcheon, 1994). Another critical question regarding irony is where the limit for the irony and humor is drawn; who

understands it and who is excluded from it? According to Hutcheon, irony is a 'risky business' since it is the interpreter who has the power to decide whether the irony works or not (Ibid.: 11-12; cf. Butler, 1997a; Harvey, 2012). Counter-hate speech is always dependent on parody to work, says Harvey, and he continues: 'The hate-filled text stands, usually quite clearly, in the background and irony is the rhetorical mechanism by which the parodic text can be distinguished from the original' (Harvey, 2012: 200). The parody is thus dependent on the 'source', i.e. the hate speech directed at queers, to work. If it were decoupled from it, it would no longer be a parody.

One could thus ask how effective the strategy of using hate is in terms of how it is received by people 'outside' the community. When dirt is (metaphorically) thrown in the face of the oppressor, it is seen as a hateful act and people often have a hard time understanding the logic behind such acts. In his analysis of the Black Panthers in the US in the 1970s, Simon Wendt (2006) claims that the use of violence and hate was counter-productive since people only saw them as violent and ignored their actions, or missed other parts of the activism, such as social activities. He further argues that the militant rhetoric within the Black Panthers was primarily a psychological rather than physical imperative, and a way to assert and nurture black manhood (Wendt, 2006: 158-161; cf. Doss, 2001).

It is important to note that hate rhetoric produces effects; it is not harmless or innocent. Language is powerful, and a threatening speech act takes place materially. It augurs what might happen, since it refers to something that bodies can do. Furthermore, it is not possible to control the effects of speech (Butler, 1997a; Cobb, 2006; Harvey, 2012). Hate is productive – but what does it produce? Can an oppressed group win something through the use of hate? Is queer hate good and emancipatory by definition? What about unforeseen effects?

Method and material

The selection of the cases analyzed in this article is based on a combination of spatial, temporal and theoretical considerations. The Internet has become an important space for activism, due to its high capacity to spread ideas rapidly and widely to many different contexts

(Colbert & Courchesne 2012; Craig 2013). Some elements of queer activism in Gothenburg take place on the Internet and consist of websites with articles, videos and photos from actions, political statements and information about upcoming activities, as well as videos on YouTube. 2010 was an election year in Sweden, the year when the liberal-bourgeois Alliansen (the Alliance) won, accompanied with intensified activity among Gothenburg's queer activists. The three cases analyzed in this article are to be found in this mobilization before the election and they all deal with the theoretical issue at stake: use of hate and dirt rhetoric. They have all attracted a lot of attention and ambivalent feelings, and have been targets for discussions both in media and activist contexts. This makes it possible to call them 'critical discourse moments', which means an intensification of societal debates related to mobilization in social movements (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989). There are some other productions on the Internet made by queer activists in Gothenburg at this time, but the three cases chosen are the most salient and widespread.

The Day of Hetero Hate is an eight-minute-long video produced on 28 August 2010 about the celebration of Hetero Hate Day, filmed by Gothenburg's Queer Institute and Queers against Capitalism (The Day of Hetero Hate 2010). *The Black Rainbow Riot* is a nine-minute-long video from the Rainbow Walk at the HBT Festival[4] in Gothenburg in June 2010, filmed by Gothenburg's Queer Institute and Regnbågsrabulisterna/Rainbow Rabble-Rousers (Black Rainbow Riot, 2010). *Cry Alliance of Our Hatred* is a music video made by Göteborgs Förenade Musikalaktivister/Gothenburg United Musical Activists, Transmilitanta Brigaden/the Transmilitant Brigade, Pantermilitanterna/ the Panther Militants, and Gothenburg's Queer Institute (Cry Alliance of Our Hatred, 2010). The parts about menstruation and dildos used for analysis in this article are taken from the 25-minute-long film *Moralists Instruction Musical*, made by HeteroHatisk Filmproduktion/Hetero Hateful Film Production (Moralists Instruction Musical). Beside these films, I have used quotations from interviews with queer activists on the blog *Queers against Capitalism* (Queers Against Capitalism, 2010).

[4] In 2011, the 'Q', was added, i.e. the festival was named the HBTQ Festival. In 2013, the festival was named West Pride.

In spite of the heterogeneity and the conflicts that sometimes characterize the queer activist climate in Gothenburg, the Gothenburg Queer Institute has served since 2007 as a gathering point for queer feminists of all genders in the city, both for those who have dedicated themselves to it, and for those who problematize the rhetoric and the strategies that it advocates.5 Gothenburg's Queer Institute is not an organization in a traditional sense, with membership, board and annual meetings. Rather, it is a flexible and changing network, where new affiliations are constantly formed and old ones are broken. In spite of this changeability the network is constant, and continues to produce websites, initiate political actions and create new groups.

In the analysis the discursive analytical tool 'figures of speech' (Ahmed, 2004) is central. Through focusing on how figures and signs are put together, how they are colored by earlier compositions and associations, and in which social norms they invest, we may be able to say something about a phenomenon. I have found figures of speech to work especially well as a tool for analyzing visual material, such as Internet representations, since 'figures' appear in the material in both concrete and symbolic ways. Further, figures of speech can be seen to have a mediating role between the material base and the discourse (cf. Asplund, 1981). The material, the discourses and the figures of speech affect each other, but not in a reductionist way. To understand a discourse analytically you need to understand a figure, and to understand a figure you need to understand the material base to which it responds (Ibid.). Each of the figures in the material, for example the flower phallus in the music video, says something about the material base, since it is represented materially in one way or another. What I want to emphasize here is that figures of speech are not 'only' symbolic provocative expressions, but grounded in materiality. Different figures are associated with different emotions (Ahmed, 2004) and those emotions are described and discussed in the analysis.

[5] According to informal conversations with activists, there has been critique against Gothenburg's Queer Institute, for example from antiracists who deem the institute too Swedish and white, as well as from class activists, who deem it too elitist for its use of academic language, for instance.

Analysis

The Day of Hetero Hate

The Day of Hetero Hate has been celebrated in Gothenburg every year since 2007. This 'anti-heterosexual festival day', arranged by Gothenburg's Queer Institute, is a day when activists meet and celebrate their hetero hate. Actions and happenings that have taken place over the years include a trip on a 'sexual revolutionary tram', queer historic excursions in the city, anti-marriage manifestations, parties and cultural events. On the website for the Day of Hetero Hate, called Kamplust (Pleasure in Struggle), it is declared that one of the reasons for the celebration of hetero hate is to overcome the divergence between love and hate. In order to feel deep happiness and love, queer people have to see and acknowledge their hate of the oppression that they experience living in a heterosexist society. This message is printed against a pink background filled with hearts. The vision is formulated as follows: 'Taking the spirit of our souls seriously and letting the creativity that flows from our hands collaborate with the longing of our hearts, the pleasure of our bodies, the lucidity of our minds and the endless possibilities of our genders.' Further, those who participate in the celebration of the Day of Hetero Hate are said to 'contribute to the jettisoning of hetero patriarchy and to give new possibilities for the creation of an equal, creative and loving world'. The points of departure for hetero hate are formulated as follows:

> - It is not strange that we hate hetero society once we realize that it is not at all made for us, even though we are forced to live in it.
>
> - It is not brutal when we express our disgust in words; the real brutality lies in the physical, structural and discursive violence that is constantly, constantly directed towards us.
>
> - It is not too provocative to point out individual heterosexuals and let them personify heterosexism; it is necessary that they start taking personal responsibility. We queers have no other choice than to

> personify the deviation, on a very personal level. Now it is time for the straight people to come out as norm persons.[6]

Queer activists hold up a mirror and let the hate return to the place from where it came. In doing so, they strive to undermine the hatred that is directed towards them (cf. Aretxaga, 1995; Cobb, 2005, 2006). The embracing of hateful words puts hate in focus and challenges the meanings it carries. If interpreted as a form of resignification, the activists aim to take control of these words and their content (cf. Butler, 1993). Following Cobb (2005), it is however the emotional arousal that is the working tool here, not the potential shift of meanings of the words. Are the activists creating a 'hyperemotional political sphere' and if so, for whom? To celebrate hate is in itself an infringement of the rational thinking that they see as a dead-end politically (cf: Robson, 1998; Doss, 2001; Cobb, 2005; Jeppesen, 2010). The activists' combination of love and hate may be seen in the light of how love is said to be the prerequisite of hate, since it is loved ones/things that are mourned through hate (cf. Kirk Whillock, 1995; Ahmed, 2004; Wilson, 2015).

In the queer activist texts above, the hate is not only directed towards oppression, but also towards heterosexual people, which makes the strategy of hate rhetoric problematic. In the archive of Kamplust's celebration of The Day of Hetero Hate there was a picture of a female figure with a weapon who takes aim at heterosexual people, for example the former Prime Minister and his wife, Fredrik and Filippa Reinfeldt. Reinfeldt with wife are used as a figure that symbolizes 'the Heterosexual Couple', heteronormativity, the bourgeoisie and the (Swedish) state, and when the sniper scope is directed towards this figure it triggers a flow of associations and emotions. When the message that it is time for heterosexuals to come out as norm persons is combined with this image, with potentially deadly violence, it becomes hard to distinguish between the linguistic, rhetorical hate and the hateful act itself. The negativity and potential harm of hate is not taken seriously enough, even by the queer activists themselves (cf. Wilson, 2015).

[6] This text used to be on the Pleasure in Struggle/Kamplust website, but is not accessible anymore.

For counter-hate to work, it is necessary for the irony to be obvious and to help the spectator distinguish between the 'original hate' and the parody of hate (Harvey, 2012). In the picture described here, this is not obvious. For many spectators, the picture implies a serious threat to specific individuals and thereby appears to be morally objectionable and unintelligible.[7] The collision between the vision of a loving world and the violent picture is probably an intentional performance of ambivalence and a striving for hyperemotional politics (Cobb, 2005; Harvey, 2012) that aims to grab attention and trigger emotions and confusion: 'Are they serious? Or…?' In addition, the ambivalence provides a way of dealing with emotions, i.e. a channeling of the feelings that have developed as a result of living in a world in which LGBTQ people still risk harassment and death. Following Wilson (2015) it is also possible to interpret this as a channeling of feelings of loss of loved/hated ones and loss of the possibilities of heterosexuality. Another interpretation of this picture is that the activists use what Cobb (2006) calls 'lying' as a way to tell their story. The stories, in this case images, are used strategically and say nothing at all about the 'true' emotions or plans of the activists. At the same time, speech acts and images are not innocent. They have material effects and take place materially, i.e. words and images *do* something. The weapon directed at the Reinfeldts is a threat about something that bodies *could* do, about harmful effects – and, in addition, the interpretation of the message is in the hands of the interpreter and therefore out of the control of the queer activists (Hutcheon, 1995; Harvey, 2012; Wilson, 2015).

Since 2010 was an election year in Sweden, the hate was primarily addressed to the Alliance. On the website of Kamplust one can read:

> The Alliance is today the biggest obstacle to the happiness of humanity and therefore has to be outmaneuvered from real political influence. Everyone that votes for the Alliance is straight. Long live the transmilitancy, everything for everybody – death to the Alliance. (---) the war against the Alliance [is] something that all the good powers in

[7] There was a hateful debate about this on Newsmill in 2011, a site that is now inactive.

> the society can join. Regardless of whether they use creative art attacks or brutal, anti-social confrontation methods, everyone has something to contribute. (Pleasure in Struggle/Kamplust 2010)

A distinction between good and evil is sketched out. The evil ones – people who belong to the Alliance – are said to prevent human beings from being happy, and therefore should be eliminated. Humor is, as I see it, present in the words 'Everyone that votes for the Alliance is straight'. In the movie *The Day of Hetero Hate 2010* (2010), humor is also expressed in the ways the war against the Alliance is embodied: cheek-to-cheek dancing and gymnastics accompanied by the song *Cry Alliance of Our Hatred* in front of the Conservatives' (Moderaternas) polling hut, and jumping on pale blue 'conservative' balloons. In an interview on the *Queers Against Capitalism* blog, one of the activists explains the humor and symbolism of the violence:

> Speaking for myself, symbolic violence (understood as symbolism or rhetoric alluding to violence) can be many different things: a way to modify respect for established power, a code that signals radicalism, a therapeutic tool for dealing with frustration and anger, or absurd humor. (Queers against capitalism, 2010)

From this statement it is obvious that the activists see the violence as taking place at a symbolic level and that hate is considered a rhetorical resistance tool. The expression that most clearly captures the ambivalence in the strategy is the formulation: 'our pleasurable hetero hate' that appears in the blog Queers against Capitalism (2010). The hate is portrayed as a pleasure, something to enjoy, maybe in line with what Cobb (2005) calls hyperemotional politics. The hate rhetoric can be seen as generating the power that is needed to prevent oppression from making queer people passive, ashamed and bound by the dirt that weakens them. According to this view, hate gives them power and strength. Shame is an emotion that is thoroughly discussed in research (e.g. Scheff, 1990) and often used in queer politics. The gay liberation movement tried to turn shame into pride, and queer groups have used shame in a more ambivalent way in order to deconstruct definitions of shame and use it for queer politics (e.g. Jeppesen, 2010). Since the hate is outwardly directed, it changes the feeling of being the one hit by the hate. If we follow Wilson's theories

(2015) here, two things are implied: first, that the hate expressed towards heterosexual people such as Reinfeldt originates from a hate for the loss of something loved/hated, maybe one's parent of the opposite sex or the possibilities of heterosexuality, and second, that this hate is to be taken seriously, and that we should acknowledge its potential for harm. From the opposite perspective, Lundberg (2008) writes that the ambivalence that is central in laughter cultures implies that mocking is never unilaterally negative or destructive, but also life-giving and generative.

Black Rainbow Riot

At the end of the HBT Festival in June 2010, a big parade called 'The Rainbow Walk' was organized through the centre of Gothenburg. Responding to this, Gothenburg's Queer Institute and a group called 'The Rainbow Rabulists' arranged a Black Rainbow Riot, which according to them was an anti-capitalist, anti-racist and anti-sexist queer alternative to the liberal and assimilationist politics that the HBT Festival was deemed to pursue. On the website of Black Rainbow Riot one could read:

> We are a black block that constitutes a symbolic (but quite concrete) reference to the politics that the rainbow liberalism tries to belittle, disqualify and dismiss. (---) We want to make visible the queer potential in the deviant, not learn how to fulfill the expectations of norm society. As grassroots activists, we are at the center of the queer movement. No hetero collaborators have the mandate to speak for us, and the LGBT movement cannot out-define us unpunished. (Black Rainbow Riot, 2010)

The resistance is addressed specifically to the HBT Festival and the gay movement, but on the website it is stated that the struggle goes way beyond that. The Black Rainbow Riot also claims to revolt against the nation state, the meat industry and wage slavery, and they encourage prospective participants to 'take the opportunity to demonstrate against everything you want'. Dancing, speeches, confetti and soap bubbles are promised. Under the banners' tab, it appears that several of the slogans that the organizers had published on the website, for use during the riot, have been censored by the board of the HBT Festival, since they were deemed too violent and hateful. This illuminates the tension between

the gay movement and the queer movement; a tension that ought to be analyzed with caution. Queer activists often appreciate the work of the gay movement and they sometimes even participate in this work. Thus, there is no sharp boundary between the different forms of struggle. Even so, it seems remarkable that one group of queers deems attacks on another group of queers productive. They risk losing an ally in the struggle against heteronormative oppression and they risk weakening the movement as a whole. However, since the gay movement is seen as 'hetero collaborators' and as supporting the capitalist project by making gays a strong consumer group, it is not as remarkable as it may first appear. Jeppesen's research about vomiting in public as a queer strategy of resistance actually includes examples of queers vomiting on the stairs of gay shops, as a way to show disgust for queer consumerism (Jeppesen, 2010). This kind of direct action can be a productive and radicalizing force for the gay/queer movement, but it can also be destructive and weakening.

Among the remaining slogans on the website we find: 'Free asylum for all queers'; 'We hate your lives, we hate your children, middle class leave the city'; 'Destroy children families and small enterprises'; 'Hormone rain for every child'; 'Ban boys' sports'; 'Introduce male taxes' and 'Abort heterosexuality'. These slogans are evident examples of how the activists combine hate rhetoric with irony and humor. The question is: who is embraced by this irony and who understands it? Is it directed only at those already within the emotional community (Hutcheon, 1995)? Jumping on blue conservative balloons may lead to some laughter from outside spectators, while the slogan 'hormone rain for every child' appears unintelligible to everyone not involved in the queer movement or unfamiliar with trans issues. Importantly though, the aim is not to make others laugh with you. It is, as Lundberg writes, the very process, the *doing*, that is in focus, not the result nor the spectators (Lundberg, 2008). Openness to the unforeseen, the unpredictable, is important, as is having fun.

It is striking how frequently the activists use the figure of 'the child'. The child is hated, showered in hormones, crushed in its family form, aborted if it is expected to be heterosexual, and forbidden to participate in sports – if it is a boy. The child is often associated with innocence, purity

and hope for the future (Smith, 2011). It is a holy thing, or symbol, that is in focus. If I understand Cobb's (2005, 2006; cf. Harvey, 2012) theory about religious hate speech as a potential for queers, this is a productive way to use it. The child – and the nuclear family – are cornerstones in the religious hate speech against gays and queers, and to delve into that hateful language, using the same themes and symbols, may give queers access to the 'sovereign' language/world. It certainly arouses emotions in the surrounding audience and in the field of politics. But since it is impossible to control the effects of such speech, it is dubious whether it has the effects that the queers count on. Yet, for queer activists, it is not important to appear rational, intelligible or nice to anyone. The activists have been asked why they arrange such a block and why they call it a riot. In an interview on the blog Queers against Capitalism (2010) an activist responds as follows: 'It is not because we plan stone-throwing or burning cars. Those kinds of things are not promoted. Instead, it can be understood as a linguistic resistance and a queer strategy.' He says that it is impossible to escape the negative words that are directed towards queer and radical activists. According to him, it is better to embrace the words and make them your own: 'If you say we are perverts and a threat to the family – sure! If you say that as soon as we gather in public space the riot is not far away – well, then maybe it is so.' It is the produced uncertainty that is seen as the effective tool in the resistance.

In the film *Black Rainbow Riot 2010* (2010), parts of the riot are documented. In the film, we follow a pink and black car pumping out music and bearing banners such as 'Intersectional solidarity – the unity of the queer collective' and 'Revolutionaries never walk in straight lines'. From the car, people are chanting 'We are angry, not nice, we are intersectional'. When the riot reaches the halfway mark, it is met by a counter-demonstration; some members of the religious sect 'The Word of Life' (Livets ord) are standing with big signs with slogans such as: 'God loves you' and 'Do not delude yourself'. In the film we can see how the queer activists are booing, dancing, getting close to the religious demonstrators and screaming: 'Fags hate God' and 'We are here, we are queer, we're gonna fuck your children'. Satisfied by their victory, we see the queer activists move on, having silenced the members of the religious sect (Black Rainbow Riot, 2010).

It is obvious that the activists use abjectification here; they are playing with the image of homosexuals as pedophiles. In the debate on YouTube linked to the film, this is played down when an activist writes that 'everyone is somebody's child' and that it obviously is grown-up, consenting individuals that are referred to (Black Rainbow Riot, 2010). This shows how difficult it is to fully use abjectification strategies. 'We're gonna fuck your children' is a provocation, an attack on something holy, that actualizes something objectionable and dirty. The activists take a big risk by using these words, but in a queer spirit they don't care too much about the risks – they rather see them as assets. The abject is excavated and used (cf. Douglas, 1984). Cobb discusses this strategy and argues that the connection, or in Ahmed's (2004) words, the stickiness, between homosexuality and pedophilia is something that queers have not chosen themselves and that they *cannot* escape. A more fruitful strategy, according to Cobb, is to do as the activists in Gothenburg do; use the horror of pedophilia as 'a queer advantage', with the aim of expressing queers' anger and resentfulness (Cobb, 2005, 2006). Besides working as a channel for emotions, it can function as a moment of surprise; as a very provocative act that arouses a lot of emotions. If the stickiness between homosexuality and pedophilia is so strong that the stigma can't be washed away, we can see the use of pedophilia rhetoric as a last desperate way out: 'this is how you see us, here we are, we can't get away from here'. Following this logic, the activists appear as people who have nothing to lose.

In the last minute of the film, we can see participants in the riot perform a choreographed dance to the music video *Moralists Instruction Musical: The Revolutionary Conduct* (2010). Hate rhetoric is used, as in the following lines from the song: 'Before, when I was alone, it was hard to carry, all my hatred, and it was only mine, a pure private thing. But now, we are so many standing here, and with an organized anger, the hate carries us instead.' These lines implicitly state that it is only when hate has become a collectively experienced emotion, which has also been verbalized collectively, that it can work as a strategy that gives restitution. The relation between private and public is also central here. When handled alone, in private, it appears as heavy and unproductive, but when expressed publicly together with others, it gives power – to act, to move, to change. The hate *carries*, it is said. The words about organized anger show the process behind hate as resistance; the aggression and the anger need to

be organized in order to work as a tool of resistance. Without organization it is 'only' an emotion.

In the music video there is a humorous scene in which queer activists succeed in silencing the figure of 'heteronormative man' by showing him a dildo and placing bloody menstrual products on his body. Menstruation blood is often considered dirty per se (e.g. Malmberg, 1991), and it becomes double dirty when it appears in the wrong place. The used hygiene products are disentangled from the hidden place in the trousers; the pad is put on the man's mouth, the tampons are hung as earrings and the menstruation cup is emptied over him, then placed on his head as a hat. The whole scene is formed as a parody of a Swedish nature TV program called *Hajk* and the tone is jovial, informative and objective. The intimate physical act, with its flair for details, that is performed is characteristic of the laughter cultures that Lundberg (2008) discusses. By demonstrating his/her/hir[8] gender through the display of an enormous dildo and bloody pads and tampons, the wished-for gender ambivalence is achieved through an abjectification strategy.

Cry Alliance of Our Hatred

Before the national election in 2010, some queer activists – United Musical Activists, the Transmilitant Brigade, the Panther Militants and Gothenburg's Queer Institute – made a music video as a contribution to the political debate: Cry Alliance of Our Hatred (2010). The music video, which was spread via social media, is a pastiche of Bonnie Tyler's song 'Total Eclipse of the Heart'. Some of the original scenes, such as the beautifully decorated table that ends up covered in a mess of food and drinks, or the recurring image of faces being transformed into masks, are re-used in the queer music video, with a queer touch and with its own dirty symbols.

Dirt/the abject is used in many different ways in the video. The opening scene is clearly inspired by Bonnie Tyler's opening scene. Tyler's flowing fabrics and 1980s hairstyle are replaced by figures of blond, long-

[8] Hir is a gender-neutral pronoun, used in objective, possessive and reflexive form, see for example https://genderneutralpronoun.wordpress.com/tag/ze-and-hir/

haired women dressed in pink, fluffy dresses with lots of tulle, dancing in a green and beautiful forest. Dirt, seen as the ambiguous or improper, which provokes loathing and becomes rejected (cf. Douglas, 1984), is already present; the figures wear excessive and vulgar make-up and their genders seem ambiguous. In the next sequence, a transformation takes place; the dirty approach is reinforced at the same time as a process of purification takes place. The dirt is symbolized by the female figures smudging the lipstick away, pulling off their wigs and putting on berets and green military clothing. It is a complete destruction of the beautiful, feminine illusion and a reinforcement of ambiguous and transgressive gender. The scene shifts to a concrete jungle underneath a bridge, with the figures wearing fake mustaches and sideburns, and militant marching with red banners. This transformation can thus also be seen as a purification process, in which the characters throw away the false and fake, and dress up in something more truthful. But this is only an illusion; they take the parody to the next stage. They deconstruct the militant marching and the demonstration of power with the help of the next scene, in which an almost naked human being, with angel wings made of bracken blades, breasts covered by flowers, and genitalia concealed by a flower phallus, is walking into a muddy puddle, accompanied by song lyrics that express doubts about how a democratic society is possible when 'the macho left is marching in straight lines'. The nudity, the gender ambiguity and the dirty puddle here constitute dirt symbols, and the use of them can be analyzed as resistance to 'straight lines', i.e. a resistance towards the pure and ordered. A phallus made of flowers is not in itself a dirty symbol, but it is definitely a way to express disorder and aims to provoke feelings among the audience (cf. Cobb, 2005, 2006). As I see it, the fact that it is made of flowers strengthens the ironic intent, which makes it work as a resistance tool (cf. Hutcheon, 1995; Harvey, 2012).

Even in a dance scene that works as a 'liberation scene', in which activists dressed in white and colored clothing come together, dirt is present, this time combined with hate rhetoric. Genders are unclear, the 'fuck finger' is held high and they sing about their uniting hatred of the bourgeois/conservative Alliance. A child and a pregnant woman take part in this scene. The pure and innocent figure of 'the child' (cf. Smith, 2011) is again polluted by hate rhetoric. The 'pregnant belly' of the woman is an

ambivalent figure, since it carries connotations of the holiness of life, while also representing the unruly female body that swells all over (Johansson, 2009). The use of the child and the pregnant woman in queer hate rhetoric may be seen as being in line with Cobb's (2005, 2006) argument about using the very same holy symbols that religious hate rhetoric uses in order to achieve access to 'sovereign worlds' and arouse emotions (cf. Harvey, 2012). Interwoven in this scene is a 'coffee gathering' that corresponds with the sequence in Tyler's video where some formally dressed men are gathering around a table. Some very gender-ambiguous 'aunt' figures are holding a coffee reception in the countryside. An embroidered tablecloth with the text 'Crush the gender roles' hangs on a rock and the aunts wear nice 'aunty' clothing. The idyllic scene is destroyed when coffee cups are crushed and the aunts smear cream pastries in each other's faces, then lick it off and caress each other's thighs. There is an obvious sexualization and pollution of the coffee gathering. Even if it is far from the queer vomiting and public sex that Jeppesen (2010) describes, it has connections with this resistance strategy. Instead of hiding and closeting queer desire, it is exposed in a vulgar, smudgy and shameless way. Some people probably even feel strong disgust looking at this scene, which makes it even more effective, following the logic of this sort of queer resistance. As Harvey writes: 'In raw moments of sexual pleasure, intimacy and disclosure we can make our most intense connections to others, but only if shame is productively transformed into dignity, joy and pleasure' (Harvey, 2012: 476). Vulnerability is an essential part of this, according to Harvey, since it is 'more honest' and paves the way for non-authoritarian social relations (Ibid.).

In one scene, we return to the flower-decorated human being in the muddy puddle. Muscular, with hairy armpits and dirty hands, s/he is standing, tossing a cobblestone up and down in one hand, threatening and close-bitten. The 'cobblestone' is a figure that recurs in several of the filmed queer manifestations in Gothenburg. Most often it is made of foam rubber, but here, in the puddle, it looks like an authentic cobblestone. The cobblestone carries very specific connotations: hatred, threats of violence, riots and memories of the violent events in Gothenburg in 2001, during an EU summit when a young man was severely injured by a bullet from a police officer's gun. It still conveys these earlier meanings, but in the new

context new meanings are generated (cf. Butler, 1997a). It can be soft, it may cause laughter, and when handled by a flower-decorated naked human being, a distance to violence is created, something that enables the communication of irony. The video closes with the activists walking away from a meadow, turning their backs on the audience, their 'fuck fingers' raised, singing: 'Cry Alliance of Our Hatred'.

Seriousness and humor are mixed throughout the music video, something which should make the irony obvious to the spectator (Hutcheon, 1995: Harvey, 2012). But, as Hutcheon (1995) claims, it is not likely that everyone is reading the message in the same way. In the case of this music video, many people just saw the hate and the use of dirt, which resulted in hate attacks on the activists on the Internet (Cry Alliance of Our Hatred, 2010).

Dirt is performed through the picking up of abject phenomena. The activists are 'poking in the garbage' (Douglas, 1984) and by doing so they are transcending and challenging boundaries. Crude make-up, smudging, gender mixing, hatred, broken china, licking, obscene gestures and the wrong things in the wrong places are portrayed and used in a confrontational manner. The naked human being is literally standing in dirt, in a kind of dirty puddle; a symbol of how embodied the abject is, showing how queer people are anchored in the rubbish heap. Abjectification is about using the dirt as a starting point, making it visible, demanding space for it and thereby challenging boundaries between purity and dirt, showing that purity is an illusion (Douglas, 1984; Wasshede, 2012). The body is tangible and central in the music video: naked, dirty, painted, dancing, marching, pregnant, licking – abjectification is a very embodied resistance strategy. An interesting aspect in the video is the transformations of figures that take place, for example from 'young girl in pink', via 'the militant macho leftist guy', to the 'petting, coffee-drinking aunts'. The figures are performed in a stereotypical and grotesque manner, with surprise moments that turn the order upside down, probably hoping for utopian laughter and catharsis (e.g. Bachtin, 1986; Lundberg, 2008; Johansson, 2009; Wettergren, 2009).

Abjectification problematized – conclusions

Hate and dirt are performed in a variety of ways in the three cases analyzed for this article. The hate is often explicit in the song lyrics, slogans and articles on the websites. It is directed towards heterosexuality, heterosexual people and the bourgeois Alliance, but also towards the figures of 'the child', 'the LGBT movement' and 'God'. As a background to this hate rhetoric, we also see weapons, military uniforms and black clothing, flowers, hearts, balloons and the color pink. On the one hand, the hate takes place as a celebration, with music, confetti, dance and speeches, and on the other hand it takes place as a form of threat. Dirt is not performed so explicitly in the texts, but symbols of dirt often occur in the visual performances. The use of dirt, i.e. abjectification, aims to destabilize the division between purity and dirt, and ultimately shows that purity is an illusion. The body is a battleground on which symbolic clothing, excessive make-up, sexualization, desires, blood, smudging and constant gender ambiguities are exposed. In addition, the body comprises the visible part of the power with which they wallow both in the dirt/the abject position and in the pleasures of life. With their bodies they demand space in the world; 'the body itself becomes the message' (Jeppesen, 2010: 472). To put these bodies at the frontline is not only a provocative act of resistance, it is also a way to expose vulnerability.

The meaning of the use of dirt and hate is multiple. First, it is about resisting normalization and assimilation. The logic is that through normalization and assimilation we will be deprived of the power that dwells in the disordered and ambiguous (Douglas, 1984). Second, it is about emotional work. Hate rhetoric in the form of abjectification is a way to channel feelings of grief, pain, anger, etc., (Cobb, 2005, 2006). Third, it provides a breeding ground for the creation of a 'we' and a common platform to struggle from. Strong emotions and passions contribute to this (Hutcheon, 1994; della Porta & Diani 1999; Mouffe, 2005). Fourth, the use of hate and dirt seems pleasurable and offers a way to have fun. The mix of hatred, dirt and humor may create space for liberating laughter (e.g. Lundberg, 2008; Wettergren, 2009).

Turning one's hatred towards the world that considers you sick, disgusting or sinful is, according to Ahmed, a way to restore oneself.

She argues that the hatred uncovers the historical process in which the human being has been exposed to a violent exclusion and made into an 'alien'. Ahmed writes about this in connection with colonized people: 'To undo the violence of such a history the native must expose the violence and channel himself against it' (Ahmed, 2010: 168). This description of how the oppressed must expose the violence and channel him/herself towards it is central for understanding the use of hate and dirt. The activists actually repeat the hate that they criticize, with the effect that they appear to be as hateful as their enemies. The spectator sees a violent activist and not the process behind it. However, an expression of hate can never have exactly the same effect as the original/previous hate, that is, it is not the same hate, the same emotion, that is repeated. The unforeseen in the hate and dirt rhetoric means that change can take place and new life and bodies can be possible (Butler, 1997a; cf. Lundberg, 2008). But it also means that the hate can be interpreted as plain hate, i.e. as a harmful emotion (Kirk Whillock, 1995) that is counter-productive since it makes the activists simply look violent, hiding other parts of their political work (cf. Wendt, 2006).

The queer resistance that has been analyzed here is hard to read, since it is not easy for 'outsiders' to interpret the activists' messages. Spectators and/or those addressed by the hate seldom have access to the language and the symbols used, resulting in problems sensing the irony with which the seriousness is mixed (Hutcheon, 1995). Further, the spectators probably do not embrace the discussion about the creative potential of dirt (Douglas, 1984; Bachtin 1986; Lundberg, 2008). They tend to see the already rejected and disgusting as confirming how disgusting they are, something that leads the viewer to reject them again. They only take them seriously – here literally – and miss the play with ambivalence that exists in the performances of hate and dirt. This does not seem to be a problem for the activists though; on the contrary, they are in a pleasurable 'here and now', experiencing the possibilities of the doing, the abjectification. Lundberg formulates this attitude as follows:

> The interesting thing is to find connections, interstices and places for comic mutations and meetings, and whether someone watches or not is not important. This is important: it is the production of the comic that

> awakens pleasure, not primarily showing it to someone who appreciates it or rejects it. (Lundberg, 2008 p. 19)

This may seem contradictory, since the activists move in public space and say that they want changes. We face another ambivalence here: at the same time as it is very important that others see, react and act, the activism is not driven by determined goals, but instead takes place as a happening, a performance, where (almost) anything can happen and where their own pleasure is in focus (cf. Jeppesen, 2010).

Hate is seen as a 'bad' emotion since it represents a lack of control, emotional maturity and cultivation. Further, it is about what hate *does* and what it aims to do: obliteration. Hate hits where it hurts the most and tries to destroy the hated object (Kirk Whillock, 1994; Ahmed 2004, 2010; cf. Hochschild, 2003). Obliteration can be understood as the opposite of life; death – something that contributes to the condemnation of hate strategies. At the same time, it is important to highlight that not all hate is deemed bad or objectionable. To hate terrorists is deemed legitimate, even expected, while hate aimed at invisible, structural violence, such as racism and heteronormativity, is often deemed a bit strange or inconvenient by the majority of the population. This is a question of power relations and interpretative prerogative. Hating the evil appears to be legitimate, but what is deemed evil varies. Since structural, invisible violence is part of our normal power apparatus and most of the time is not seen as something evil, the queer activists' hateful reaction to it is deemed unintelligible and rejectable – and in its turn worth hating.

It is important to note that it demands a certain privilege to be able to practice the form of hate rhetoric that is discussed in this article. You need to have access to the language and the representations that are used, and you also need to have access to the social network that constitutes the resistance culture. Ahmed claims that participation in the resistance depends on access to the capital needed to endure the risks that the resistance entails (Ahmed, 2004). People that lack enough capital may refrain from certain forms of activism, but on the other hand, people with extremely little capital may feel like they have nothing to lose, and therefore are able to participate in the struggle.

The gay movement has an ambivalent relationship with queer activism, which can be explained by the fact that the gay movement has to handle some of the critique and discontent that queer activists give rise to – the dirt spills over on to them. On the other hand, the gay movement gets more space to maneuver thanks to the queer movement, since the queer activists demarcate an outer limit for possible and conceivable resistance. This has the effect of making the gay movement's activities appear feasible and reasonable, which makes it easier for them to succeed in their political demands. The ambivalent relationship is further strengthened by the harsh critique and the hatred that queer activists direct towards the gay movement and the assimilation politics it is said to pursue. As a result of this critique, there is a risk that the long-standing activist efforts of homo-, bi- and transsexuals all over the world, which sometimes involve risks to their lives, become invisible. Directing hate towards 'your own', could be described as the ultimate ambivalence. When the queer group Folkkampanjen mot hbt-festivaler/Folk Action Against LGBT Festivals (2010) asked people to burn the rainbow flag, this ambivalence, put in a global context, became even more distinct – and the strategy more problematic. Burning the rainbow flag is not an option if you live in a country where you struggle for your right to live and be protected against violence by the law. This intentional split that queer activists create within the broader LGBTQ movement may be a radicalizing power but at the same time may weaken and destroy the movement. Harvey (2012) claims that in the end it is a question of judgment whether the strategy is effective or not. This discussion is beyond the scope of this article and something that needs to be further researched.

The queer use of hate and dirt strategies may seem peripheral, as something easily dismissed. But, as has been shown, these strategies teach us something about our society. In spite of juridical progress and openness towards LBGTQ people, hate and disgust for human beings that deviate from the heteronorm are still common. The dirt still sticks to queer bodies and the strategic exposure of hate and dirt can be understood as a way of coping with this – always with unforeseen effects. This article has shown how resistance and queer strategies are deeply complex and not only stem from conscious and rational choices of 'the

best ways' to put up resistance, but also from sometimes hidden emotions and desires. Wilson's (2015) words about accepting the negativity of hate and its capacity for harm, when it comes to feminist politics, are adding something to the analysis of queer resistance. It is not only a joke, not only a performance for fun. Hate can never be a positive feeling and our aspirations to frame it as working for the good actually weakens its power. Further, Wilson locates the hatred in the loss of those who we both love and hate ambivalently from the beginning, i.e. our parents of all genders. As far as I know, there are not many queer theoretical texts that illuminate the grief or longing of LGBTQ people for heterosexuality. My guess is that this is due to forced demands to defend the 'deviant' sexuality and the LGBTQ community from attacks and utterances about 'the right and natural form of sexuality'. But if heterosexuals mourn their lost same-sex relations/desires/homosexuality (Butler, 1997b), of course queers can mourn their lost hetero-sex relations/desires/heterosexuality too.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the anonymous peer reviewers, as well as Anna Hedenus and Åsa Wettergren for their constructive comments on the manuscript. I would also like to thank Lambda Nordica for allowing me to publish this text, as a revised version of an earlier version in Swedish (Wasshede, 2013).

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