Queering Space in a Place Within a Place?
Geographical Imaginations of Swedish Pride Festivals

Julia Lagerman

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ABSTRACT

I have used Massey’s (1995) concept of Geographical Imaginations together with Ahmed’s (2006) Queer Phenomenology to research the different meanings attached to Pride festivals in Stockholm and Gothenburg. In this thesis, Pride is defined as a contested place, which is held in places. To research perceptions of Pride and its hosting cities, I have interviewed people with experiences from the Pride festivals and city council employees involved with them. I have also analysed communication and marketing material related to Pride and LGBTQ tourism in Stockholm and Gothenburg. The interviews and the published material showed that Pride as a place sometimes queers parts of the city space by changing them temporarily, making LGBTQ performances more visible. Meanwhile, the articulations of Pride made by city officials, employees and tourist marketing materials showed how LGBTQ rights were understood as dependent on space and time, where both the cities and Sweden were conceptualised as “ahead” in time compared to other places, defining human rights as a Swedish national trait and a tourist commodity.

Keywords: Pride, LGBTQ, Queer Geography, Homonationalism, City Branding.

Supervisor: Rhiannon Pugh.
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1. INTRODUCTION

Pride festivals are often considered central events to LGBTQ\(^1\) consumption, culture and politics. Due to their centrality, Pride festivals often become debated topics, sometimes objected because of their (lack of) politics (Hughes, 2006), at other times hindered by governments, with Lebanon being a recent example of such opposition (Reuters, 16-05-2018). Paradoxes over what LGBTQ politics and culture is have also been mentioned in academic literature, where for example Binnie (1995) questions gays’ reliance on the market as the carrier of human rights through consumerism. He has also, together with Skeggs (2004), described how queer places are used for straight peoples’ identity construction through consuming queer space. They have theorized about a queer place, The Manchester Gay Village, as a place with different meanings for people visiting the area; offering consumption opportunities for gays, cosmopolitan identity construction for straight visitors and denying entrance to racialized visitors. Just as the gay village can be used by different actors to achieve different aims, Pride festivals are also contested places filled with different interpretations and meanings of what a Pride festival is, what a queer place is and what queer identity is (Duncan, 1996; Johnston, 2017; Valocchi, 2005). In this thesis, I therefore argue that the festival is a contested place, a place imagined and valued differently by different actors, governments and organisations. These phenomena have previously been studied with emphasis on either how the place is defined (Browne, 2007; Johnston 2005) or with a focus on how Pride interacts with city politics (Binnie, 2014; Ammaturo, 2016; Eleftheriadis, 2017). In this thesis, both themes are combined in a case-study examining how the two largest Pride festivals in Sweden are understood as a place in themselves and as an object situated in place, interacting with city politics. Including both views has led to interwoven queer geographical definitions of performative space with critical geographical theories of the contemporary city. The contribution this thesis offers to the field lies both in that combination together with a theoretical perspective inspired by Ahmed’s Queer Phenomenology (2006), as well as studying LGBTQ tourism in the Swedish context from a geographical perspective. By analysing discourses of EuroPride 2018, West Pride and Stockholm Pride, the thesis adds to the growing field of European Queer Geographies which has yet to explore many Scandinavian Pride events, adding an empirical case to the otherwise UK and US dominated field (Visser, 2015).

The debates over the purpose(s) of Pride events play a part in geographical power struggles over human rights and over space. Hence, Pride festivals should be studied from geographical perspectives that enables a focus on power relations, which is why the concepts of Geographical imaginations (Massey, 1995) and Queer Phenomenology (Ahmed, 2006) are starting points for analysis (the concepts will be explained further in chapter 2). Pride festivals are in themselves spatially situated processes that sometimes take up large areas of cities for days, temporarily

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\(^1\) Short for ‘Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Bisexual and Queer’. In this thesis the term is used broadly, including other non-straight identities as well (such as pansexuality, asexuality, intersex etcetera). Later in the thesis variations of the term will occur in quotations, my advice is to interpret those variations as having a similar, if not the same, meaning.
changing the activities that take place where they are held, questioning the identity and sexuality of that place. A process of hosting activities by and for LGBTQ communities could be considered to queer heterosexual space (Valentine, 1996). But what kind of queer spaces are made during the festivals and how is the Pride festival queering heterosexual space? Pride would perhaps be defined as a “queer space”, by many people, but what kind of queer space is it? Instead of using queer as a noun – a static description which constitutes a binary opposite of ‘normative’, queer should be understood as a verb and a process of questioning norms and binaries (Browne et al., 2007, p. 8; Valocchi, 2005). How are Pride places being queered, or how are they being straightened? Where is the queer place? For whom is it a queer place? Browne et al. (2007, p. 4) states that sexuality cannot be understood without understanding the places it is constituted in, which is why it is important to examine how sexualities are shaped in correlation with Pride Places.

1.1 Aim
The aim of this thesis is to discuss meanings attached to specific spatial events where politics, leisure, city marketing and market interests meet. LGBTQ events such as Pride festivals are contested places, and instead of concluding that they simply are queering a place (or that they are not) it is valuable to assess the different ways that they are queering (or not queering). The aim is also to widen the empirical geographical research on queer spaces, sexualised space and LGBTQ rights and culture in relation to neoliberal city governance and market processes.

1.2 Research Questions
- How are Pride organisations and participants imagining Pride places in Stockholm and Gothenburg?
- What indicators can be identified for defining Pride as queering or straightening space?
- How are different levels of places; cities, regions and the world geographically imagined through Pride?
- How are EuroPride 2018 and city branding processes affecting each other?
- What practices of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion can be identified related to the Pride festivals?

1.3 Background: Stockholm Pride, West Pride and EuroPride 2018
The starting point of transnational Pride events is defined as the Stonewall riots 1969, when LGBTQ people started protesting and marching for days after a razzia of Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street (Wennerhag, 2017, p. 35). Even though neither the razzia or the protests were the first of their kind, the Stonewall Riots are seen as the starting point of the Pride movements we encounter today (Armstrong and Crage, 2006). The first march in Sweden, inspired by the American “Gay Liberation” and “Gay Power” movements, was held in Örebro 1971 (Wennerhag, 2017, p. 52). The first Pride protest in Stockholm was held in 1977, called the “Homosexual Liberation Day”. The Liberation day was extended to a Liberation week in
1979 (p. 55), and the first time the event was called “Pride” was during the first Swedish hosting of EuroPride in Stockholm, in 1998 (p. 57). The event has kept the name Stockholm Pride since then and is run by the organisation with the same name, a non-profit organisation consisting of volunteers.

The Pride festival held in Gothenburg; West Pride, has a different history, starting in 2007 on the initiative of actors in the city’s cultural institutions: Gothenburg’s City Theatre, Pustervik (a club venue), The Museum of World Culture, the Rösska Museum, and Blå Huset (a culture center in Angered, Gothenburg). It is defined as a culture festival and the first parade held in relation to the festival was the Rainbow Walk in 2010. It goes by the name West Pride since 2013 and is coordinated through the organisation with the same name (Goteborg.com). This year, 2018, the two Pride organisations in Stockholm and Gothenburg are hosting a joint Pride festival: EuroPride 2018, which is held in Stockholm from 27th July – 5th August and in Gothenburg on 14th August – 19th August. EuroPride is an event title circulating in different European cities and the rights to host it is decided by the organisation EPOA (European Pride Organisers’ Association), who decides based on bids from cities competing to host a EuroPride (EPOA, 2018a; 2018b).

To broaden the geographical perspective on Pride festivals, I have chosen to conduct my research on geographical imaginations (a concept explained in chapter 2.1) of West Pride and Stockholm Pride. To study the largest Swedish Pride festivals has been particularly interesting this year (2018), since the connection between the festivals and city marketing processes have been explicit due to the collaboration between the city PR bureaus (EuroPride2018, 2018a), municipality councils (Vaccari, 23 sep 2017) and Pride organisations, in the joint hosting of EuroPride 2018.

1.4 Thesis Outline

The theoretical concepts used in this thesis are explained in chapter 2, which is followed by a chapter referring to previous research of city governance, LGBTQ rights and Pride festivals in chapter 3. The methods used are discussed in chapter 4, which is the last theoretical chapter. The remaining part constitutes of the analysis of Pride as a place (chapter 5) and Pride in relation to the places they are held in (chapter 6). Lastly, the thesis ends with a discussion tying the two empirical perspectives together in a discussion (chapter 7), followed by a conclusion (chapter 8).
2. GEOGRAPHICAL IMAGINATIONS AND QUEER GEOGRAPHY

In human geography, the relatedness between sexualities, space and place has been examined through an increasing amount of research, often but not exclusionary situated within the field of Queer Geography. The theories used and produced through these studies are looking at how sexualities are geographical or how space is sexualised (Browne et al., 2007, p. 2). In this chapter, I will explain the theoretical framework of this thesis introducing the terms: Geographical Imaginations and Queer Phenomenology.

2.1 Geographical Imagination and Situatedness

The first question to ask when planning to study life worlds, meanings and discourses connected to spatial activities is: “How is meaning production a geographical issue?”. A question answered by Massey (1995, p. 2), according to whom human geography is not only about understanding physical worlds, but also social characteristics of those worlds, which meaning constructions are part of. To assume that meaning construction matters can also be justified by certain ontological, epistemological and philosophical assumptions about space, cognitive theories and power structures. The first statement is that of epistemology: How do we consider humans interpretation and knowledge of their lived environment? A question that has early on been answered by Lowenthal (1961), who stated that cognitive factors are in play when humans experience the world, meaning that the imagined geographical knowledge is not necessarily a replica of the “real world”. Lowenthal assumes the existence of a physical real world, known to people who share geographic consensus about how that real world appears (p. 242-243). But not all knowledge is common knowledge (p. 244), and some knowledges are different from each other due to cultural contexts: our knowledge about our physical surroundings depend on where we are rooted (p. 242). Human knowledge of places differs from person to person based on our milieu (p. 251), which follows a behaviourist approach related to an empiricist epistemology.

Lowenthal’s point of view is revisited in contemporary social science and human geography where the notions of power structures have been added, and the acknowledgement of cognitive processes are referred to in less extent (Ahmed, 2006; Cresswell, 2004; Harding, 1992; Holloway and Hubbard, 2001, p. 149; Massey, 1995; 2007; Massey and Jess, 1995; Rose, 1993). Massey (1995) is partly in agreement with Lowenthal, explaining geographical understanding being based on individuals’ standpoints and the information they have access to and that there are several geographical imaginations that might clash with one another. However, they are describing those contradictions by referring to standpoints as not only spatially and mentally situated, but additionally as socially situated. People gain information about global places through media, not only about local places through experience (1995, p. 22-23). Hence there are two major ontological differences between their and Lowenthal’s understanding of geographical imaginations, firstly people can gain understandings about places they have never visited. Secondly those understandings are not mentioned as correct.
versus non-correct according to a shared reality. Instead there are several co-existing understandings about places which are related to different interests in how the space ought to be used and by whom (p. 15). Where Lowenthal (1961) described geographical imagination as individuals’ ability to grasp the neutral world, Massey (1995, p. 34, 41) means that there is no neutral way of understanding or describing the world and that individuals are left to understand their lived local worlds through interpreting contrasting definitions of it (p. 86). These understandings do not only differ between people situated in different localities; it also has to do to do with power relations that impacts which knowledge people have about the relations between humans (Haraway, 2008; Holloway and Hubbard, 2001). Positionality is therefore both spatial and social, and the lines between them are not always clear seeing as class, gender, race and sexuality positions are geographically constituted (Cresswell, 2004, p. 7, 104). In particularly, class and race relations have a clear spatial context due to the post-colonial power relations between those in western parts of the world and those in south and eastern parts of the world (De los Reyes & Mulinari, 2005, p. 18-19). Hence, our understandings of the world and of places are both products of, and producers of the meaning and power hierarchies of those places. This means that naming knowledge of a place a geographical imagination does not rule out the possibility of it being true, since it is not a term for defining the true common known world “out there”, but a term to describe power struggles over defining hegemony. For this thesis, the term geographical imagination has been given a central role in analysing articulations of what characterise Pride places, and the cities and regions the Pride places are situated in.

2.2 Pride as a “Place” Held in “Places”

Following the ontological assumptions of knowledge about places (geographical imaginations) being affected by where individuals are positioned socially and spatially, my thesis will rely on defining Pride as a contested place. Doing so, actors’ imaginations and representations is the matter of my empirical study and the Pride Festival is the place being imagined and represented. Massey (1995) gives examples of how a place, such as a city, town or region is contested by multiple understandings of it represented in different medias. A place could be defined as a physical area which is filled with different socially constructed meanings. Still I would also define a Pride Festival as a place, even if it is temporary and during the time I write this essay, it does not even exist physically as a place. How is it then a “place” about which people have contested meanings? A spatial phenomenon does not necessarily need to have a certain location to be called a place since different spatial activities can be located at a point where something else was located at another time (Cresswell, 2004, p. 22) and the meaning of them should not be taken for granted (Browne et al., 2007, p. 4). According to Cresswell’s description of a phenomenological definition of “place”, it is defined by the purpose or “essence” of the activity, not by latitudes or longitudes (p. 22-23). This makes sense if thinking of how Pride is a certain kind of place no matter where it is – it will still be defined as a Pride Festival or at least a related event. And festivals are in general places even though temporary or re-occurring. Even more so when relating the concept of “place” as defined by activities or “essences”, to the description
of geographical imagination as based on meanings and messages produced, not necessarily based on the experience of seeing an actual place. A place is still a place even if the individual referring to it is not there or has never been there.

Pride events and festivals are then “places” in themselves, but they are also activities held in “places”, manifested by Pride events being mapped and locally connected. Pride events are mostly named after the city, region or town where they take place and they can be geographically illustrated through mapping (exemplified by Pridekartan.se). This means that Pride events also must be interpreted as activities or objects held in places and in relation to spatial contexts, consisting of social activities which take part in shaping the identity of places.

By defining Pride as activities held in places, I wish to further clarify the social constructionism of place, meaning that places are positioned socially and spatially, and they are understood through different meanings (Massey, 1995; Cresswell, 2004, p. 1-9; Massey and Jess, 1995). According to Cresswell’s (2004, p. 49-51) summary of contesting geographical definitions of “place”, human geographers explained place as essentially meaningful, while critical geographers have described places as socially constructed through inequalities. Examples of that description are the previously mentioned Massey and Jess, (1995) and in Massey’s classic “In What Sense a Regional Problem?”. The latter contains an explanation of how economic power relations shape everyday lives of people living in regions, concluding that regions are not in themselves poor; rather they are so in a geographical context by being situated in the global economy (Massey, 1978). Spaces are from a critical geographical perspective not bounded, but shaped by social processes (Cresswell, 2004, p. 50), a category where Pride fits among several other social processes and activities which are locally situated.

2.3 Queer Geography
Studies concerned with sexualities and space (two themes highly important for Pride places) are mostly referred to as Queer Geographies (Mayhew, 2015), even though there are other theoretical concepts used when describing academic studies evolved with Sexuality Space studies (Brown and Knopp, 2003, p. 315). According to Brown and Knopp, (2003, p. 318), most but not all geography of sexualities uses post-structuralist perspectives with the intentions of identifying and questioning power relations, mainly, but not only those concerning heterosexism, compulsory heterosexuality, homo- and transphobia. There are also other sexuality studies which are not using post-structuralist Queer Theory. These studies are more concerned with descriptive research telling where activities of gays and lesbians occur, often represented in Lesbian and Gay Studies which tend to be more descriptive and from a structuralist methodological perspective (Knopp, 2007, p. 47, 58). The field of queer studies has also been summarized by Knopp and Brown (2003, p. 409-410) as “A product of the marriage between postmodernism, poststructuralism, and Lesbian and Gay Studies”, as it uses postmodern or poststructuralist deconstructing methods applied to categories of sexuality and gender in order to reveal taken-for-granted concepts. The quotation explains the connection between Queer Geography and Queer Theory, in case them sharing a name would not give the
relatedness away. Before continuing to define the field of Queer Geography, I would like to spend a few sentences on explaining what queer theory is.

According to Valocchi (2005, p. 752), it is a theoretical perspective which seeks to deconstruct assumptions of binaries regarding gender, sex and sexuality. Social scientists should not accept definitions of neither of those categories to be natural, essential or binary exclusive towards each other. Hence, Valocchi (2005, p. 753) refers to queer theory as a mean to re-think gender and sexuality which questions the modernist definition of homosexuality and heterosexuality being. The same goes for identity in general (p. 756), which is often described through Butler’s dismissal of core sexual identities emphasising them as effects of performances instead of originating performances (Bell et al., 1994; Butler, 2011, 1999; Gregson and Rose, 2000), a dismissal based on the Foucauldian theory of power; individuals regulate themselves according to social norms (Butler, 2011, 1999), additionally stated in Foucault (1977 & 1980, cited in Valocchi, 2005, p. 756). Heteronormativity is then understood as a discourse through which individuals regulate themselves. The understanding of heteronormativity as being falsely assumed to be naturally given leads not only to homophobia towards queer subjects. It also results in individuals not questioning heterosexuality and conforming gender identities as neutral and to other non-straight ways of life structures seeming invisible or unthinkable (Ahmed, 2006; Butler, 1999; Rich, 2003). This definition has been used in queer geography when discussing sexuality in individual performances, but also to define spaces as actively produced as heterosexual while assumed being naturally heterosexual (Binnie, 1997, p. 223). Understanding heteronormativity as a discourse, socially produced and regulating, will in the following chapter be shown as accurate for researching Pride places (in places), where the geographical aspects of performativity are highlighted through sexualisation of space.

2.4 Sexualised Space
In queer geography theory, the theorisation of how space is sexualized has been studied with reference to what sexualities and what activities are accepted in which places (Brown, 2000, McDowell, 1995). Space is sexualized through performances of normative sexual behaviour, surveillance and self-policing performances by actors within that space (Bondi & Davidson, 2005, p. 24). This results in reproducing acceptable sexual behaviour in a place (Browne et al., 2007, p. 2). Heterosexuality is constructed through everyday practices of imagining it as the expected while defining deviants from it as “others”. Such practices can be the assumption of someone’s partner being of the “opposite” sex (or assuming a binary sex system and assuming someone’s sex at all), homophobic jokes or harassment of non-heterosexuals in public spaces. This reproduces heteronormativity and the sexualization of spaces as heterosexual (Browne et al., 2007, p. 3). The places being sexualized are not certainly physical spaces; symbolic or imagined places are also included. Closets and nations are for example commonly studied as imagined places filled with meanings of sexuality (Browne et al., 2007, p. 4). Hence, when discussing space from a queer theoretical viewpoint, the separation of metaphorical and physical space is questioned (Knopp and Brown, 2003, p. 422).
How then, is space itself sexualised? According to Ahmed (2006, p. 92), Duncan (1996, p. 137) and Valentine (1996, p. 150), sexualised bodies extend into space, shaping the sexuality of it while sexualised spaces also can extend into bodies: “Spaces become straight, which allow straight bodies to extend into them” (Ahmed, 2006, p. 92). By repetition of actions Ahmed means that heterosexual bodies shape the spaces they use by moving in them, using them and doing so, extending their straight bodies into the space, making it straight. This is described as a two-way process, resulting in straight spaces also extending themselves into bodies and “straightening them”. An example of this two-way uses between space and sexuality is provided by Brown (2000, p. 27), who describes an event he witnessed on a bus in Seattle. On that bus a straight couple were kissing, performing heterosexuality, extending their sexualities into space. But there was also a man on the bus who performed “camp” homosexuality (p. 28), when walking onto the bus, loudly saying “That’s right people, I’m swinging my hips as I walk on by. And if you don’t like it, you can kiss my beautiful queer ass!” (Brown, 2000, p. 27). When the kissing straight couple on the bus saw him, the woman in the couple expressed her repulsion towards the camp man. For her the space was straight and that space should ideally extend its heterosexuality onto all bodies in it by closeting them, judging from her disapproval of queer performances in the straight place. But accordingly, the sexuality of the camp man was also extended into space through his performance when he responded to the straight woman’s disliking by stating that the bus was located in Capitol Hill – a gay neighbourhood, where her behaviour was the deviant, not his (p. 28). He then both extended his sexuality into the space by performing camp, while the space, according to him, was a queer space and not a straight one and hence it ought to extend itself into the bodies in space which should hinder homophobic behaviour.

Thus, space can be sexualised and while it may affect sexual performances it can also be affected by sexual performances. From the example in Brown’s observation, it is also clear that the sexuality of space is not fixed, but shaped by performances (Brown, 2000, p. 28). The sexuality of a place is imagined differently by differently positioned people and Brown (2000) shows how spaces are generally heterosexualised while queer performances are often invisible. Cresswell (2004, p. 105) interpreted Brown’s observation by writing: “To the heterosexual couple, all space is heterosexual space”, indicating that space is used to (re)produce compulsory heterosexuality. If space is heterosexual, it extends into bodies and objects in it, expecting them to be heterosexual and at the same time, heterosexual bodies extend themselves into space making it a heterosexual space (Ahmed, 2006, p. 92). Performative space, is produced through actions (including lingual actions), meaning that the identity of the space is seen as an effect of those actions (Butler, 2011, 1999; Gregson and Rose, 2000). The different performances and

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2 ‘Compulsory Heterosexuality’ is a term used by Rich (1980); meaning that lesbian experiences are held invisible, ignored or hidden, and that when heterosexuality is seen as natural it becomes compulsory, without thinkable alternatives. Heterosexuality is in this way reproduced when people (or women, as in the specific case in Rich’s text) do not encounter representations of other alternatives than heterosexuality.
the readings of sexualized space are described by Cresswell (2004, p. 108-109) as a matter of what we understand as “in-place” or “out-of-place”. He also clarifies a distinction between sexualised space and sexualized place, by defining place as the location of meanings, which may be analytically studied. Places are filled with meanings and purposes of which heterosexual meanings and purposes may often be taken for granted as the normal (p. 109), according to that definition it is hence the place which is an effect of performances in space. The theory of sexuality being spatial through expectations of performances in space will be integrated in the empirical part of this thesis for interpreting sexuality and power in the Pride places.

2.5 Queer Phenomenology

Ahmed attends to sexuality and space through the philosophical filter of Queer Phenomenology, where she has used phenomenological terms to explain queer theoretical norm-reproductions. Even though her book is philosophically situated and not explicitly geographical, it brings up physical and metaphorical space as crucial to the social reproduction of heteronormativity. Ahmed follows an abstract definition of what space is by referring to Kant’s, Husserl’s and Schutz’s uses of physical space as a metaphor for mental space (Ahmed, 2006, p. 6, 8), which is a useful approach when imagining places as non-constant locations such as Pride places are. Instead of concluding that humans achieve different sources of information depending on where they are situated physically, it is possible to also include human agency in descriptions of how they know what they know about places, meaning how they attain their geographical imagination. For this I have found Ahmed’s Queer Phenomenology a suiting starting point for shaping and interpreting my empirical research. I have earlier introduced the definition of understandings of the world as geographical imaginations, and since I aimed to grasp those imaginations I sought to apply a philosophical framework which describes further what imaginations of places might be. Either they are imaginations of what is allowed in a place, such as expectations of what identities (sexual and racial) that are expected in what places (Ahmed, 2006, p. 82, 124). Or they are imaginations of how objects should be defined based on the imagination of their purpose (Ahmed, 2006, p. 85). These are not the only theoretical concepts in Ahmed’s text, but they are the ones I have found most useful when theorizing Pride as both a place in which activities are held or as an object happening in places.

Ahmed’s use of the term space as rooms in which an object (such as a human) may direct itself towards others. She is not stressing any importance of space, instead she is occasionally mentioning the existence of it and how bodies extend to it and in those performances sexualising it. But even if she is more concerned with spatial activities of bodies rather than actual space, her references to classic phenomenological thinking are applicable to theorisation of sexualized space. If imagining being in a room, filled with objects (human and non-human), which objects does an individual orient herself towards? The opportunities of orienting oneself in a room is based on what objects are in reach for different people depending on their sexuality (p. 101-102) or race (p. 126). The space is expressed as a social setting where expectations related to material power conditions (heteronormativity, sexism and racism) constitutes how subjects
understand their possible performances by orienting themselves towards objects. Some objects will be possible to see, and some will be invisible to the subject (Ahmed, 2006, p. 55):

We might think that we reach for whatever comes into view. And yet, what ‘comes into’ view, or what is within our horizon, is not a matter simply of what we find here or there, or even where we find ourselves as we move here or there. What is reachable is determined precisely by orientations that we have already taken. Some objects don’t even become objects of perception, as the body does not move towards them: they are ‘behind the horizon’ of the body, and thus out of reach.

The quotation refers to how objects act when they are existing in space, something which depends on what their experiences and expectations let them perceive. But this has also to do with norms of what is “in place” or not (p. 62). Expectations of performances alongside the body’s own perceptions reproduce how bodies may occupy places (p. 62, 126). When imagining a Pride place extending itself through objects occupying it, what performances (such as sexuality, skin colour or other identity expressions) are expected in that place? And what performances are taking place?

The main spatial focus in Ahmed’s theory is that of objects orienting themselves towards objects, which are “not simply in front of us” (Ahmed, 2006, p. 163), but instead dependent on how we have learnt and practiced seeing and using objects. Our direction towards objects (human and non-human, physical and non-physical) is affected by how we use them and what purpose they have for us. At several occasions Ahmed uses the phenomenological classic reference of the many different uses of a table which purpose changes depending on who is using it in what contexts, such as using it for writing, socialising or doing housework (p. 3, 63, 80). She also defines the importance of purpose of bodies as objects and sexuality as modes of orientation (p. 71). When women’s bodies are perceived as tools for the man to “extend himself”, those bodies are understood to have that purpose, being made for men. The definition of the purpose of a female body affects both how men orient themselves towards it and how women orient themselves towards their own bodies and towards others which are parts of reproducing heterosexuality. This explanation of objects as shaped by our perception of them is applicable to Pride places in the definition of them, since our meanings and purposes attached to a place changes it (Knopp, 2007, p. 50), producing place as a product of performativity. How do different objects orient themselves in relation to Pride? How do they perceive it? Is it in the background being overlooked (Ahmed, 2006, p. 34)? What do they use it for? How do we approach it physically and mentally, seeing as objects are not necessarily material in a physical sense (p. 86)? Those approaches made by people’s directions are still material in their effect even if the objects concerned are often conceptual, this is because the actions taken in defining objects are having effects on that objects as well (Ahmed, 2004, p. 133).
2.6 Chapter Summary
In this chapter the theoretical framework of *Geographical Imaginations* and *Queer Phenomenology* has been presented. The first concept refers to the definition of places being *geographically imagined* differently among people depending on their situatedness and their knowledge; the meaning of a place is always contested by different imaginations which are based in power relations. A place is, according to a queer perspective, the result of performances, and imagining it is defining its purpose and who can use it for what gain. The concept is relatable to the second theoretical term, *Queer Phenomenology*. Parts of Ahmed’s theory are involved with discussions of defining objects, which she also means is inseparable from power reproduction, as the purpose of an object is related to learnt patterns of who may use what and for what purposes. This goes for places as well, which are imagined as having different purposes or identities as a result of processes or performances. Both objects and places may be defined as the results of repetition and imaginations, which have been defined socially; they are not simply there, they have become what they are - and they are changeable.
3. PREVIOUS RESEARCH: QUEER SPACE IN GLOBAL CITIES

The neoliberal accommodationist economic structure engenders niche marketing of various ethnic and minoritized groups, normalizing the production of, for example, a gay and lesbian tourism industry built on the discursive distinction between gay-friendly and not-gay-friendly destinations. Not unlinked to this is what I call the “human rights industrial complex.” The gay and lesbian human rights industry continues to proliferate Euro-American constructs of identity (not to mention the notion of a sexual identity itself) that privilege identity politics, “coming out,” public visibility, and legislative measures as the dominant barometers of social progress (Puar, 2013, p. 338).

As exemplified in Puar’s description of the re-enforcing relation between the LGBTQ tourism industry and the LGBTQ human rights industry, LGBTQ rights and lives have often been discussed in academia as part of material geopolitics and economics through critical geographical perspectives. In this chapter I present some studies concerned with how market processes and queer lives has been researched and theorized. Starting with theorisations of neoliberal city governance politics, I will summarise contemporary academic analyses of how practices of city branding and city marketing affect LGBTQ communities by defining them as symbols to be consumed, or as consumers. This is then followed by other explanations of power production related to the term *homonormativity*. Lastly, previous research on Pride places are brought up, relevant for positioning this thesis in relation to others studying similar places.

Describing the contemporary economic-political governance of cities has been done with reference to a change from state citizenship to city citizenship. This change was made through decreased restrictions on financial trades increasing globalisation, which lessened states’ political agency while increasing cities’ agency of providing citizenship (Bell and Binnie, 2004, p. 1808; Sassen, 2002). The globalising financial processes have been intertwined with *neoliberalism*, a political ideology where private market actors are seen as better social distributors compared to the state, and which assumes individualism, competition and consumerism as driving forces (Ong, 2006, p. 11). The ideology is, according to Duggan (2002) often presented as non-political, neutral and the only reasonable alternative by labelling left- or right-wing politics as extremist: “Who would be against greater wealth and more democracy?” (Duggan, 2002, p. 177). The role of the neoliberal city has also been understood as an entrepreneurial one (Harvey, 2011, p. 106), and one entrepreneurial strategy of cities is to seek clustering capital through attracting consumers and creative businesses by competing with other cities (Doel and Hubbard, 2002; Florida, 2012) for example by hosting and marketing events to attract visitors to the city based on what Horne, (2007) and Müller (2015) mean are false hopes to achieve profit for the city. Horne and Müller state that the benefits of mega-events do not justify cities’ investment in them based on them being financed through public finances which could be used for poorer citizens instead of middle-class leisure consumers. A critical stance towards entrepreneurial city governance investing in marketing strategies to attract tourists which is shared by other geographers saying that the strategies of city branding are vain, since
the state as main economic actor has not fully been replaced by state-less cities (Doel and Hubbard, 2002, p. 352, 360). But regardless of these criticisms, the practices of neoliberal city governance such as city branding, marketing, competitive bidding and strategies to “attract the creative class” are still at play (Brenner et al., 2012; Harvey, 2011; Peck, 2005), and they are continuously being brought up by literature on LGBTQ space (Bell and Binnie, 2004; Hubbard and Wilkinson, 2015; Oswin, 2015). Oswin (2015, p. 558) has called for the importance of urbanism and globalism when it comes to LGBTQ rights and argues that the relationships between global urbanism and sexual identities are complex and cannot be assumed as an unquestionable matter of “liberal calls for the inclusion of sexual others” (2015, p. 562). Seeing as this thesis aims to connect urbanism and identities through studying Pride, it may be situated not only in queer geographical theory but also in relation to previous research emphasising economic spatiality of performances, such as critical geography focusing on LGBTQ identities in cities. Hence, the inclusion of a critical geography perspective for on queer space is valuable to see how Pride politics and city governance affect each other. Pride is not only a space where performances take place, it is also, as I have mentioned earlier, an activity held in places, which makes it important to connect to political and economic circumstances by assessing how neoliberalism “can be both generative and hostile towards LGBTQ politics” (Binnie, 2014, p. 241).

3.1 The Consumption of Gays as the Symbol of Development

According to Bell and Binnie (2004, p. 1807), “city branding has become part of the sexual citizenship agenda.”. They mean that sexualized spaces of inclusion and exclusion are produced through a collaboration between urban entrepreneurialism and sexual citizenship. This is because of LGBTQ people having become symbols for cosmopolitanism and creativity leading to them being part of marketing and branding cities based on gay-friendliness functioning as a sign of cultural capital among the straight population (Binnie and Skeggs, 2004). Additionally, Pride parades have been used to measure the safety in a country (without measuring actual safety), in labelling some cities as safe and modern while those where Pride parades are opposed are labelled as dangerous and unmodern (Ammatur, 2015, p. 1159) and dividing places into categories of “gay-friendly” or “non-gay-friendly” destinations (Puar, 2013, p. 338). The role of using straight tolerance towards gays as signifying cosmopolitanism has an important role in events, not only LGBTQ-oriented ones such as Pride, but also other mainstream events like the Olympics (as examined in Hubbard and Wilkinson, 2015) and sports mega events and city branding in general, presenting middle-class gays as neoliberal, nationalist symbols of progress for western cities and nations. In city marketing strategies, discourses of inclusion and exclusion may refer to homophobes not being welcome to city events, while some sorts of sexual dissidents are not welcome either, making the tolerance symbolism restricted to including some white, assimilationist, middle-class) non-straight subjects and straights who does not oppose them being there (Hubbard and Wilkinson, 2015). Sexual diversity (although not too diverse sexualities) are then important factors in processes of neoliberal projects producing and marketing creative cities, “creating “safe spaces” for capital accumulation” (Hubbard and
Wilkinson, 2015, p. 599) The gay place also becomes a “non-threatening” commodity to consume, resulting in profits when people of different sexualities do so (Binnie and Skeggs, 2004, p. 56).

This cosmopolitan symbolism of gayness and gay-friendliness can be traced back to the neoliberal ideology of cities competing each other for urban growth, and gay populations have explicitly been mentioned as a factor for successful cities in Florida’s classic *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2012, p. 273, 298). Florida’s theory of the Creative Class (a “new class” consisting of societies’ middleclass elites such as: scientists, bohemians and professionals), is in short stating that cities can prosper by attracting those individuals. According to Florida’s ‘gay index’, a larger number of gay couples indicate a city where creativity can flourish because tolerance towards gays is connotated with being part of “the creative class” which is seen as the motor of urban growth in post-industrial cities. If people in a city are open towards homosexuals and minorities, they are also creative and hence also an economic asset. Notably, the tolerance towards LGBTQ populations refers only to white male homosexuals (Bacchetta et al., 2015, p. 771), meaning that mostly white middleclass gays and to some extent, lesbian couples, are used as symbols for tolerance while others are excluded. The explanation of the white male homosexual as to be consumed “others” in relation to the straight majority means that they are symbols of cosmopolitanism and that straight places coded as male gay can be entered and used for constructing a tolerant identity (Binnie & Skeggs, 2004). This pattern indicates that some LGBTQ rights evolve together with exotification of the male gay subject. But the assumption that LGBTQ rights are necessary strengthened by neo-liberal appreciation of “tolerance” has been questioned by Bacchetta et al. (2015) who states it as exclusionary, and by Nast (2002) according to whom the middleclass gays are not victims because of this objectification but winners in a racist-patriarchal system where white men generally are better off financially. This (potential) objectification has also been criticised for its impact on gay men according to Lewis (2017, p. 697), who argues that neoliberal city governance is harmful towards gay communities. The first ground he mentions is that spaces for gays (exemplified in his article by a study on gay men) are now spaces for everyone which may be weakening gay communities, and the second ground is that city politics valuing openness as a city branding concept does not always value gay rights per se, exemplified by cities arranging gay-friendly events in states such as Singapore or Italy where same-sex relationships are illegal or were just recently allowed (p. 697). In offering the consumption of LGBTQ identities, cities are using Pride as an object to extend itself through, a premise which will be returned to in chapter 6, examining these processes in a Swedish context.

### 3.2 The Consuming Gays and Their Rights

Homosexuals are not only symbolic ‘others’ to be consumed, they are also contributing to the capital accumulation as consumers (Nast, 2002; Bell and Binnie, 2004, p. 1809). The connection between neoliberal city politics and LGBTQ rights have been described by Valocchi (2017, p. 326), as changing the gay identity from being political, to being cultural and hence a
consumerist identity. Binnie (2014, p. 243-244) explains the connection as a relationship where LGBTQ rights have been framed as given through consumerist citizenship, where minorities are given “promise and prospect of empowerment in turn for self-regulation” (p.244). LGBT rights have often collaborated in a neoliberal manner when rights are seen as the right to consume LGBT branded commodities (also mentioned in Binnie, 1995). Gays and lesbians have thus been portrayed as “model new consumer citizens”, when self-disciplining through consuming leisure and commodities (Binnie, 2014, p. 244). The self-disciplining can be connected to the term neoliberalism, where consumption is not only actual purchasing of services, but a mode of governance according to which subjects understand their rights in relation to a “free market” highlighting individualism and free choice (Brown, 2012, p. 1066). It is however not clear if LGBTQ communities gain from being ideal consumers, mostly because not everyone is, which leads to poverty within sexual minorities become invisible (Binnie, 2014, p. 244). According to Nast (2002, p. 880), white gay men have been “colonised by the market”, meaning that financial interests capitalize on gay men’s taste in commodities and they are targeted because of their purchasing power. They are hence not victims of the market; they are in fact in a socio-economic position which increases their chance to gain from it. Nast also states that white gay men can be consumers and they have gained a greater acceptance than racialised and non-male LGBTQ’s. Nast’s article emphasises two aspects of LGBTQ politics and power: 1. Consumption is used to achieve or maintain rights, and 2. The inequalities within LGBTQ communities needs to be considered. Both of these themes are included in the empirical research when analysing the consumerist aspect of Pride, both in the place but also its connection to cities’ financial interests.

3.3 Homonormativity and Homonationalism

Together with discussing the inclusion of LGBTQ rights into production of creative, progressive cities, two explanatory frameworks have often been used to discuss the role of queer politics in neoliberalism and neoliberalism in queer politics: homonormativity and homonationalism. The first term is applicable when defining how discourses of gay rights are reinforcing neoliberal politics, and the second refers to the same discourses reinforcing nationalism. The terms are referring to the (re)production of oppressive political strategies, questioning that all neoliberal and nationalist politics are homophobic and that all queer politics are inherently anti-liberal and/or anti-nationalist. The term Homonormativity as it is used in geography today refers to Duggan’s (2002) use of the term, according to which LGBTQ politics based on neoliberal lose the possibility of questioning heteronormativity. This is because equality is framed as inclusion within heterosexual institutions instead of questioning them (Duggan, 2002, p. 190). A few examples of such institutions are essentialist definitions of binary gender, sexual orientation and monogamy together with whiteness and class relations.

A term related to homonormativity is homonationalism (a connection drawn by Puar, 2007)), which in short can be described as the phenomenon where rhetoric of queer politics is used to draw lines between progressive western societies and under-developed south and eastern
societies (Sabsay, 2012, p. 606). The term has been used to describe the politics of othering Muslims, by labelling them as a conservative threat towards (western) sexual minorities (Haritaworn, 2012; Puar, 2007), reproducing imaginations of ‘Gays vs Muslims’ (Haritaworn, 2012, p. 76). Nationalism has extended itself to include discourses of LGBTQ rights in when imagining the own nation-state as superior:

“[…] homonationalism is fundamentally a deep critique of lesbian and gay liberal rights discourses and how those rights discourses produce narratives of progress and modernity that continue to accord some populations access to citizenship—cultural and legal—at the expense of the delimitation and expulsion of other populations. The narrative of progress for gay rights is thus built on the back of racialized others, for whom such progress was once achieved, but is now backsliding or has yet to arrive” (Puar, 2013, p. 337).

Assimilationist LGBTQ politics of today can then be interpreted as a neoliberal project which not only delivers citizenship through consumption, but which also works together with nationalist narratives of protecting western LGBTQ populations from foreign, homophobe cultures. In doing so, racialised ‘others’ are excluded from citizenship-rights (Jungar and Peltonen, 2017; Puar, 2007). The narratives of protection of LGBTQ persons also plays a part in constructing nationalism through discourses of white saviours, needing to “protect brown gays from brown straight men”, while also protecting white gays from the same men (Bracke, 2012, p. 248), overall imagining the most privileged within the LGBTQ community (white middleclass homosexuals) as in need of protection from homophobia assumed generated from racialised and working-class spaces (Bacchetta et al., 2015, p. 774). Those discourses are relying on presenting oneself and the nation one belongs to as morally and intellectually superior towards African or Middle-eastern nations (Bracke, 2012; Jungar and Peltonen, 2017, p. 731; Laskar et al., 2016). The narratives also falsely indicate that rights for LGBTQ people in (some) western countries have been given effortlessly without struggles and that they are completed (Bracke, 2012, p. 239).

The concept of homonationalism as connecting LGBTQ rights to the nation and to modernity by defining non-Europeans as victims or abusers of homophobia has been defined by Ahmed (2004, p. 133-134) as an effect of including previous outsiders of a nation as insiders of a multicultural state. By members of the nation directing themselves towards the state as the diverse and open, they define other nations as failing this openness project. She suggests insights to why inclusion is the “new nationalism”: it is because individuals can identify with being open and tolerant by identifying with the state as such. The multicultural nation is reproduced by subjects identifying with it and repeatedly defining it as such, which is why it can also be taken away by intolerant subjects already being within the state, or immigrants who do not share the multicultural values (Ahmed, 2004, p. 134). In Ahmed’s definition of reproduction of the multicultural nation, it is reliant on consensus, to be included in the nation, you must agree to agree to value difference: “difference is now what we would have in common” (p. 138). The differences which are included in the nation does not apply to all
differences, but a set of those accepting certain hybrid identities which is exemplified by defining racism, sexism and heterosexism as deviant to the national identity and hence they are diverse actions but still defined as opposing the diverse nation. According to Ahmed, the nation needs those disturbances, to be an ideal it needs something else to be non-ideal (p. 145). By valuing the multi-cultural, individuals who are performing hybrids of the old and new nation-criteria become fetishized, which according to Ahmed is personified in racially mixed women symbolizing the diversity of the UK (p. 138). But in marketing the city, it might be the gay man who is the fetishized hybrid, suggested by Binnie & Skeggs (2004, p. 50) as the “safe useable other” and “unthreatening but respectable”, making them symbols for cosmopolitan identity construction (such as suggested in chapter 3.1).

The relevance of the two concepts presented in this chapter, is that they include ways to discuss politics of inclusion and exclusion in the diverse nationhood. They will be re-visited in the analysis when answering questions of how tourism and LGBTQ politics correlate in Sweden, and which patterns of inclusion or exclusion might follow those correlations.

3.4 Previous Research on Pride Places

The inclusion of other studies of Pride places is important for situating my own thesis in the field, which is why this chapter will later be incorporated in the analysis, mainly through discussing my results. Staring with the queer geography classic *Mapping Desire*, Pride parades are mentioned when referring to the official 1991 parade in Montreal which went through the city’s ‘gayboorhood’ and did not permit any flags, cross-dressing or erotic attire (Bell & Valentine, 1995, p. 14–20). The Montreal parade is described as contested by activist groups who made their own parade (p. 14) and as strengthening the borders between accepted sexual identities and unaccepted ones by prohibiting drag queens in the parade but having booked drag queens as ending entertainment. In their discussion of this event, Bell & Valentine suggests that a Pride parade can be “affirming and empowering sexual dissidents without being challenging or confrontational to the city’s heteronormative culture” (Bell and Valentine, 1995, p. 18), while it could in other cases be queering heterosexual space through queer performances (the presence of non-straight behaviour) in straight space (p. 18). The Montreal Pride Parade is defined as several things at once (mainly heteronormative, contested and queering). This shows how it is not only the sexuality of the place Pride is in which is determined through performances; it is Pride in itself as well, being understood as having several possibly contradictory effects.

3.4.1. Questioning heteronormativity in the paradoxical Pride Parade

Pride has also been understood as enabling queer performances which question the heteronormativity of a place, changing the sexuality of space during the event by enabling queer or non-straight performance at a usually straight space (Valentine, 1996, p. 152). The actions taking place can affect the norms of a certain place at a certain time. Browne (2007, p. 82) has highlighted the possibility of Pride as being imagined in various ways simultaneously and argues that the different places at a Pride (such as the parade, and the parties) contain different
meanings. Her study of Dublin and Brighton & Hove Prides, imagined by non-heterosexual women resulted in an emphasis on the Pride as “a party with politics”, meaning that the two purposes of Pride are not exclusionary of each other. The calls for viewing Pride as consisting of several different meanings based on positionality have also been stated by Markwell and Waitt (2009), who use Massey’s framework (which has been mentioned in chapter 2) to conclude that Pride is interpreted and valued differently among differently positioned people. They are using Australian news articles as empirical material to show that Pride places hold the possibility of “challenging mainstream ideas about sexuality” (Markwell and Waitt, 2009, p. 163). Pride places have then been empirically defined as diverse and complex, with the possibility of being both a party and a political action for LGBTQ rights, focusing less on homonormativity and consumerism. In her article on LGBTQ activism covered in geography, Johnston (2017, p. 651) summarises the field into three categories of perspectives: (1) The contradictory meanings of Pride festivals, (2) Discussions of whether Prides are political or just places for (unpolitical) consumption, and (3) Critiques against homonormative exclusion of minorities within the LGBTQ community. The lines drawn between these themes are sometimes thin, since scholars often admit that Prides can actually be all three things and more at once, even though they all put emphasis on different perspectives (Johnston, 2017), and also contradict each other when explaining queer politics and culture focusing on the hegemony of neoliberalism or focusing on queer politics and culture as consisting of several contrasting meanings (Brown, 2012).

Johnston herself represents the latter standpoint through her research on Pride activism (Johnston, 2017, 2007, 2005). In her book from 2005 she defines Pride space as shaped by paradoxical performances. By referring to several Pride marches in western cities, such as Edinburgh, Sydney, Auckland and San Francisco, Johnston describes several different spatial activities in the marches. The parades are paradoxical because they can consist of contradictory productions and effects of the festivals and of the participating bodies (2005, p. 123). A parade might be empowering for dissidents, while it also can come with a risk of violence or social exclusion by being visibly out in the parade. Johnston also notes the paradox of some parade participants, concluding that they may question heteronormativity and the meanings of gender through parodic gender play and questioning gender by performing it:

Pride challenges popular held assumptions about gender and sexuality because they parody gender heterosexual identities and homosexual identities. Their bodies become readable in a myriad of ways that may create anxieties and trouble. (Johnston, 2005, p. 53, emphasis in original).

The above summarised conceptualisations define Prides as subversive, queering heterosexual space, questioning gender normalities and using parties and pleasure to do so, meaning that Pride as a party is political in the sense that it disrupts heteronormative space through performances of parade participants dressing up and showing affection towards each other. But the definition of a party being political is not unopposed; Browne (2007, p. 66) situates her
standpoint on party and politics as non-exclusionary activities against Hughes (2006), according to whom hedonistic tourism has lessened the political impact of Prides.

3.4.2 Gay tourism and market processes
There are conceptualisations of Prides having changed from being protests, political places valuing consciousness, towards being party places marked by celebration and consumerism (Hughes, 2006, p. 249), which is especially the case when Prides are increasingly becoming tourist attractions. Hughes discusses if the change from Political Pride to Party Pride has occurred as an effect of increased tourism, or if the tourism is an effect of the depoliticization. Without answering which of the two is to be held responsible, he concludes that it is harmful for queer spaces to be invaded by straight tourists as an effect of events moving towards the party side of the spectrum. The worrying stance towards Pride being a place for partying reflects concerns for LGBTQ communities to lose their political agency in becoming neoliberalist symbols for non-political progress.

The conclusion that Pride is recognized as a tourist activity, opposed to its origin as a political march, with demands for human rights, is a re-occurring theme in critical geography focusing on LGBTQ (but mainly gay) commodity and tourism markets. Binnie (1995, p. 199) does so by emphasising the importance of material production of queer space, understanding citizenship and consumption. In his essay, Binnie states that bars, venues and life style consumption have a large part in shaping gay culture which he discusses in relation to their locations, where The City of Amsterdam has collaborated with gay and lesbian groups and businesses in promoting the city as the ‘gay capital’, attracting tourists while also manifesting governmental support for gays and lesbians. A manifestation of that sort is The Homomonument, symbolising the city’s investment in gay rights. Attracting gay tourists and “the pink dollar”, is according to Binnie a result of “local authorities search for new sources of income” (p. 193). The economic influence on LGBTQ politics has been related explicitly to Pride events by Ammaturo (2016), who points out nationalism and consumerism as having ambivalent impact on Pride (exemplified by Pride festivals in the UK and Italy). The ambivalence comes from the participants claims both to be included in the nation-state while protesting its exclusion of others, and the same goes for consumerist membership. According to Ammaturo, these ambivalences are spatially dependent, having different expressions depending on governmental impact on the Pride, and while inclusion in the nation and consumerism might be empowering, Ammaturo concludes the study speculating about the risks (2016, p. 38): “the logics of both nationalism and consumerism may catalyse the emergence of passive neoliberal sexual and gendered identities, leading to a reduced ability to use protest as an instrument of social change.” In discussing consumption and Pride as a tourist directed event, nationalism is included in the analysis. Politically, Pride can be an arena for LGBTQ persons to seek inclusion in or protest the nation-state while that state (or city) also has an interest in investing in LGBTQ rights and in Pride events to attract the pink dollar.
3.4.3 Critiques against homonormative exclusion of minorities within the LGBTQ community

Hughes’ statement of Pride being de-politicised re-occurs in other academic analyses of Pride festivals, linking them to the concept of homonormativity. Lamusse (2016, p. 59) concludes that Prides in general are homonormative and that they reproduce heteronormativity through articulating discourses of consensus. Drawing from the example of a queer anti-police protest held against Auckland Pride, Lamusse (2016, p. 67-68) argue that the demonstrators were dismissed as non-rational actors being defined as outside the consensus of Pride assimilationist politics. This manifested how Pride politics are held for homonormative (white, & wealthy) assimilationist gays and tourism industries while reproducing heteronormativity. Hence Lamusse refers to Pride as being neoliberal and excluding minorities, highlighting the connection between neoliberal Pride events as both non-queer places lacking progressive political impact, and as excluding those who fall outside of the homonormative whiteness and middle-classness. Another example of resistance towards homonormativity in Prides is given by Eleftheriadis (2017, p. 395), who refers to Greek activists protesting commercialisation and investments from the city council, arguing that Pride should not be used for market interests. Such statements are reminders of the connection between tourism, markets and homonormativity, where commodification of Pride is seen as unethical by some. The unethical aspect of consumption at Pride and queer space in general have also been explained by it being white consumption, which excludes racialised LGBTQ’s and queers (Bacchetta et al., 2015; Nast, 2002). The explicit exclusion of non-white queer subjects from Pride events has also been exemplified in Volger’s (2016) case study of a Kansas City Pride, where the organisers shaped Pride by consideration of the tastes of straight allies (2016, p. 181) and excluding minority LGBTQ people by holding the Pride in an area where black, minority or trans people would not feel welcome, and where people wearing the wrong clothing (for example a man wearing a V-ringed t-shirt (p. 182)) was denied entry, a restriction resembling those at Montreal Pride (mentioned above in 3.4). Homonationalist discourses have also been discussed by Laskar et al. (2016), who analysed the ways in which Pride flags have been used. One form they found was the symbolic use in Swedish city branding, showed by a debate that followed a Swedish city’s hoisting if the flag. In that debate, some implied that the threat for LGBTQ people comes from immigrant populations in Sweden, a conclusion affirming homonationalism, connecting homophobia is connected to immigrants (p. 201).

3.5 Chapter Summary

Pride can be understood as a contested place within a place; an activity shaping the place whilst simultaneously being a place in itself. In queer geography, Pride has been explained as politically changing places by people in parades performing non-straight identities, resulting in the queering of heterosexual space. However, in theorisations of other queer places, as the Manchester’s gay village, the market is assumed to be changing the sexuality of a place to make it a commodity (Binnie & Skeggs, 2004). When the materialist emphasis on consumption has been applied to Pride it has most notably been to deem them unpolitical (compared to their past), and to highlight their role in an economy where cities and companies seek to attract the
‘pink dollar’, including LGBTQ rights in city branding (most notably described about Amsterdam in section 3.4.2). A third way to describe LGBTQ space and Pride has been to criticise homonormativity and heteronormativity by pointing out the unequal access to consumerist sexual citizenship. Based on this, LGBTQ spaces and Pride may in Geography be defined as 1. Subversive, 2. Market processes and/or 3. Privileging white gay men while excluding virtually all others.

These perspectives are relevant for interpreting, presenting and discussing the results of my own empirical study in this thesis. They have also played a large part in shaping my research questions, enabling a focus on all three themes when examining 1. Performances at Pride, 2. The connection between festivals and the cities and 3. Homonormative and homonationalist exclusion processes. The first topic is to be answered by questions 1 and 2, the second topic through questions 3 and 4 and the last topic will be answered by question 5.

1. How are Pride organisations and participants imagining Pride places in Stockholm and Gothenburg?
2. What indicators can be identified for defining Pride as queering or straightening space?
3. How are different levels of places; cities, regions and the world geographically imagined through Pride?
4. How are EuroPride 2018 and city branding processes affecting each other?
5. What practices of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion can be identified related to the Pride festivals?
4. METHODS

This chapter explains how I have conducted my study of West Pride, Stockholm Pride and EuroPride 2018 through a case study. I have used the term case study based on Yin’s (2009, p. 18) definition, focusing on one phenomena in-depth by using multiple sources of evidence through triangulation. The study of the case; Pride events in Sweden’s largest cities, has been guided by theory (see chapter 2-4) and is designed to answer “how-questions” (see previous page), which according to Yin is also a criterion for a case study (2009, p. 18).

4.1 Cases

There are justifications which can be made for choosing West Pride, Stockholm Pride and EuroPride 2018 as cases for this study. Firstly, there is need for more empirical research on queer place-making and queer spaces and particularly Pride spaces, of which there are few geographical studies (Browne et al., 2007; Hughes, 2006, p. 238). The importance of studying Pride places needs to be done not only by referring to its significance for LGBTQ lives, but also for the studying of events through a geographical perspective. Prides today come in different forms, and the largest ones are mega-events such as Pride events in New York, Toronto and San Francisco (Hughes, 2006, p. 242). The Pride as a tourist- and as a mega-event has previously been studied through different perspectives (see chapter 3-4), out of which most cases stem from larger cities in the UK, USA or Australia. It would therefore gain from being researched in a different spatial setting, such as smaller Pride events in comparison, situated in scarcer national contexts. Queer Geography studies have been criticised for its eurocentrism (Visser, 2015, p. 82), but is there really one western Pride context and not several? The self-reflections within Queer Geography have also been occupied by statements of how it is not only western areas that are examined most frequently, but urban western areas (Knopp and Brown, 2003, p. 412), which is why I see the importance of studying Pride events in a Nordic country with a smaller population. “What is possible in Toronto and Sydney is not possible everywhere” (Nash and Gorman-Murray, 2017, p. 1527), which means that even though I am studying urban areas, they are less densely populated and have different characteristics compared to cities like London, Manchester, Sydney and San Francisco. That is why I have chosen the case of a “mega”-event in the Swedish context represented in EuroPride 2018, which could be described both as one case or as two cases, seeing as it is held in two cities. By conducting my fieldwork in a small western country, I seek to broaden the data on western queer places while adding material from smaller cities (compared to those in the UK, USA and Australia) and examining the meaning making processes evolved in EuroPride 2018. To do so, I have gathered my material from several sources consisting of documents and qualitative interviews.
Online sources:

- Official web pages
- Facebook pages
- Web pages linked to on the Pride web pages or social media accounts
- News articles covering EuroPride 2018

Interview sources:

- 3 employees in the cities whose work are related to EuroPride 2018
- 4 interviewees who have attended Pride in Gothenburg or Stockholm

I have found triangulation not only pragmatic but necessary to answer my research questions. Marketing strategies are best examined with visual discourse analysis while the perceptions of Pride and the cities they are held in should be examined together with people who have experienced them either through work or through leisure time and sometimes both. According to Yin (2009, p. 116), the term triangulation refers to the combining of different data, perspectives, evaluators or methods and he strongly recommends data triangulation in social science and especially in case studies (p. 114). According to that recommendation I have used not only different sets of data, but additionally I have combined methodology and methods which have been shaped to match different types of data: images, texts and interviews.

For my visual method I have used discourse analysis when studying images and texts published online, but for my interviews I have chosen to do a phenomenological study. This is to some extent a choice based on valuing triangulation, but more so it is based on the possibility to use phenomenological methods to get closer to the participants world-views to then analyse them as performances. For this, I have found methods based on phenomenological roots fruitful for capturing meanings through narratives (Aspers, 2009; Sandberg, 2013) and for capturing discourses showing power relations through narratives on what constitutes normative and non-normative lines of Pride festivals. I have therefore used a phenomenological-inspired method in combination with Ahmed’s (2006) queer theoretical version of phenomenological philosophy. The application of phenomenological interviewing has been used by others to theorise about how geographical imaginations of certain spaces are interpreted in relation to power relations (Heyes et al., 2016; Sandberg, 2013), which has inspired me to do so as well. The combination of phenomenological interviewing and visual discourse analysis is also a way of questioning essences of methods, defining them after how I use them and for what ends (Binnie, 1997, p. 234).

4.2 Methodological Elements
My method design is based on a structure suggested by Crotty (1998, p. 2-3), who lists four elements which are connected to each other: epistemology (theory of knowledge), theoretical
perspective (philosophical standpoint/s), methodology (reasoning behind method decisions) and methods (how data is collected). Crotty (1998, p. 4) visualises these elements in a pyramid, which I have replicated below:

![Crotty's Pyramid](image)

*Figure 1. Crotty’s Pyramid (Crotty, 1998, p. 4). Replicated by the author.*

In my application of Crotty’s pyramid, I have defined the content of these categories for this thesis: Through social constructivist epistemology, leading to queer geography together with critical geography, I have used the two methodologies discourse analysis and phenomenological interviewing, applied in techniques of visual & text analysis together with qualitative interviewing.

![My application of Crotty’s Pyramid](image)

*Figure 2. My application of Crotty’s Pyramid.*

If Pride events can be understood both as spatial activities and as places in themselves, which are socially constructed and filled with competing geographical imaginations and representations, they need to be empirically studied as such. That is why a social constructivist perspective has composed the core of my empirical research in order to follow the set aim for the study: to empirically research geographical imaginations of Pride events in order to theorise
about how such events are queering places (if they are queering places). The social constructivist perspective also enables analysis of power relations and inequalities “hidden” under a veil of taken for granted definitions of a phenomenon as natural with the possibility of questioning how we understand it (Hacking, 1999, p. 6). Following the definition of places as geographically imagined and constructed through different social processes (Massey, 1995; Cresswell, 2004), I have used ontological and epistemological theories based on social constructivism as analytical tools to shape my own empirical research. To examine “place” as a social construct can be done with reference to discourse analysis (Rose, 2016) and phenomenology (Ahmed, 2006; Cresswell, 2004; Holloway and Hubbard, 2001). Thus, I have integrated those epistemologies into two sets of practical methods: discourse analysis of online material, followed by phenomenological qualitative interviews with actors working within Pride spheres and actors having participated in Pride festivals as visitors and volunteers.

4.3 Ontological Assumptions
The fact that the ontological and epistemological assumptions this thesis relies on are socio-constructivist, may not be surprising following my description of Geographical Imaginations as socially constructed, situated knowledges (see chapter 2). Rather, the social constructivist approach is coherent for researching how space and place are imagined, following feminist research notions of knowledge being situated by locally and socially positioned subjects (Browne et al., 2017, p. 1377; Haraway, 2008), and questioning ways of understanding the world which we might deem natural, or essential (Knopp and Brown, 2003, p. 410; Rose, 1993, p. 64). It is important to be aware that assuming that something is socially constructed does not mean it does not exist in reality, which can be explained in two ways. Firstly, the understandings of the world (ideas) can be interpreted as products of material conditions (Marx and Engels, 1998), a description similar to those of situated knowledge meaning that we perceive the world from different social and spatial positions (Haraway, 2008, p. 231; Massey, 1995). Our material positions within a social web of power inequalities affects what we know. But the imaginations of social constructs are not only products, they are also reproducing, for example through looping effects where our imagination of an object affects our actions in relation to it (Hacking, 1999, p. 34). The notion of a socially constructed object as real can further be strengthened by thinking of a Pride festival. Is it constructed by humans or is it a natural phenomenon existing without involvement of social action? It would not exist outside of a social context, but it is still existing. The same could be said about our socially constructed perceptions and representations of Pride, which are the objects of my study. Through a social constructionist perspective, the imaginations of Pride are assumed to be a part of affecting the shape of the actual festivals.

To further explain the epistemological assumptions of this study, let us return briefly to the methodological norm in norm-critical queer geography, which is the use of queer postmodern or post-structuralist theory as the analytical tool for interpreting research in Queer Geography (Binnie, 2007, p. 31). This is often done by referring to Butler’s (1999) term performativity, which is mentioned in several texts (Brown, 2000; Gregson and Rose, 2000; Browne et al.,
2007; Valocchi, 2005 to name a few). This is due to Butler’s Foucauldian description of gender and sexuality as non-essential categories, leading to them being reproduced through performances (Butler, 1999). But the definition of gender, sexuality and power relations as performances does not assume fully autonomous human subjects who are acting without regard to societal inequalities. Instead Butler (2011, p. 171) states that discourses “precedes and enables the I”, meaning that performances are done through social norms, not independently of them. Sexuality is then performed in the light of social norms such as heteronormativity, making queer performances less visible and less expected than straight performances. When performativity is used in research about places, it can be done by assuming that performances of objects (human or non-human) extend themselves into space which assigns sexuality to a space (Ahmed, 2006, p. 92; Brown, 2000, p. 27; Cresswell, 2004, p. 104; Duncan, 1996, p. 137; Valentine, 1996, p. 150). Space can then in its turn extend into the bodies occupying it, when it “allows straight bodies to extend in them” (Ahmed, 2006, p. 92). According to such use of performativity and space, queer theory may offer explanations of how bodies may be allowed to perform in a certain place, and how they are not.

4.4 Visual Method and Discourse Analysis

The material analysed consists of news articles found using the keywords “EuroPride”, “2018”, “Göteborg” (Gothenburg), “Stockholm” and “Pride”. The search also included all publications on EuroPride’s webpage and Facebook page together with publications on West Pride’s and Stockholm Pride’s web- and Facebook pages dating back to June 2017. The time frame (June 2017-May 2018) was based on getting data describing EuroPride 2018 and the most recent Pride festivals in Stockholm and Gothenburg.

To analyse images and texts used for marketing EuroPride 2018 and images used for city branding which related to EuroPride and LGBTQ tourism, I have used discourse analysis adapted for text- and visual analysis. Since the two elements of images and texts are very much intertwined in their presentation as images and texts worked together in the material, a clear distinction between the methods and their application would be questionable. Instead, they both are understood as language, sending messages which are part of constructing the social world (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, p. 16). In the Foucault-based discourse analysis suggested by Rose (2016), both image and text are mediators of discourses (Rose, 2016, p. 192), making it a sensible approach when discussing power relations performed through language:

“Discourse has a quite specific meaning. It refers to groups of statements that structure the way a thing is thought, and the way we act on the basis of that thinking. In other words, discourse is a particular knowledge about the world which shapes how the world is understood and how things are done in it.” (Rose, 2016).

As a base of visual analysis, (Rose, 2016) presents four sites of images: audiencing (who sees the image and how?), production (how is the image made?), circulation (how is it spread?) and the image itself (what does it tell us?). In my usage of visual analysis, I have focused on the
meaning of the images. This is because they respond most clearly to questions of what is said in marketing images through discourses (Rose, 2016, p. 218). To then find meaning in images (Rose, 2016, p. 206), I have followed methodological strategies of looking at interpretative repertoires, which are texts referring to ‘common sense’, and I have been searching for both visible and inviable (left out) messages. When approaching an image, I have started by coding the image according to what I actually saw in it to identify key themes in an attempt to find as much detail as possible (Rose, 2016, p. 212-214).

I have combined the guidelines provided by Rose (2016) with the discourse analysate method I have used for coding text; Discourse analysis inspired by Laclau & Mouffe (1985). They provide a definition of the term discourse which is similar to that found in Rose (2016), where discourse is seen as the structure made up of statements. According to their definition, discourses are the result of lingual and social practice where meanings of words (and actions) are articulated (through acting or speaking), and a discourse can be explained as dependent on the fixation of moments, which are related to each other in a web shaping the discourse. In the same web there are also nodal points, a privileged moment which gives meaning to other moments (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000, p. 33). Signs which are not clearly fixated to the discourse are labelled elements, and the passing for a sign from element to fixated moment is never complete and total; the discourse is never too stable to resist changing (p. 35). Articulations reproduce or question the discourse being part of struggles defining the discourse (p. 36).

4.5 Qualitative Interviewing with Phenomenological Method
The interview study consists of 7 respondents, with 3 of them were representing city councils while the remaining 4 persons were participants at previous Pride festivals who were planning to attend the 2018 EuroPride as well. For ethical reasons, they are referred to by pseudonyms. Due to the number of respondents and their varied gender identities and sexual orientations, the representation of gender/sexuality identities are not valid, meaning that even if their social position might affect their experience, it is not seen to in this thesis. My first interview study was done with 3 persons working for the city councils. Both Jenny and Eva worked in tourism and city marketing while Louise worked with LGBTQ rights at the city council.

Table 1. City Council Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Gothenburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Gothenburg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For my second interview study I met with 4 LGBTQ identifying persons of different ages who have experience of attending Pride festivals in Stockholm and Gothenburg:
Table 2. Participant Interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Prides attended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Gothenburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emil</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophie</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Stockholm &amp; Gothenburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviewees referred to in this second study consists of people working closely to Pride and people having experiences of attending a Pride in at least one of the two cities. At an initial point, repeated contact attempts were made to reach Pride organisers and additional city council employees through email and snow balling, as well as through other respondents. Unfortunately, those attempts did not result in reaching any organisers or as many city council workers as I had anticipated. Therefore, I broadened my study to include the voices of participants, in order to see their geographical imaginations of Pride. I sourced participants through posting messages on my own private Facebook, which was shared and spread by my contacts, and on various LGBTQ group pages in Uppsala, Sweden.

4.5.1 Phenomenological interviewing

Phenomenology has most notably been geographically applied in humanistic geography (Cresswell, 2004; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1991), where it has been used to explain how humans perceive and understand their surroundings, based on the philosophy of Husserl (1960), and its interpretations by Heidegger (2008) and Merleau-Ponty (2013). The humanistic geographical theorisations rooted in existentialism have been criticised for not acknowledging material power inequalities, based on gender (Rose, 1993, p. 53) while also giving “place” an essential meaning rather than a contested one. Malpas, (2014) for example, has stated that place exists before the socially constructed, an assumption contrasting postmodernist queer theory entirely, which argues that no essential place exists; it is produced through discourse. Despite the philosophical inconsistency of a queer theoretical perspective and the essentialist origins of phenomenology, I have used a phenomenological method due to its applicability to qualitative research on individuals’ experiences of a phenomenon such as Pride. Note that I have turned to sociological phenomenological method based on Schütz (1980), which has similar philosophical standpoints with queer theory compared to Husserl’s classic phenomenology (Chouliaraki, 2008). This epistemological naughtiness could also be defended by me following the example of Ahmed’s (2006) use of phenomenological philosophy in queer analysis, which has also been done by others following her theories (Heyes et al., 2016; Sandberg, 2013). Additionally, not everyone agrees on the two ontologies necessary being contradictory (Rodemeyer, 2017), and if the verb queer refers to questioning dichotomies this should be possible regarding methodology as well. The ontological similarity between sociological phenomenology and queer theory is that they are both being socially constructivist theories, in contrast to Husserl’s essentialist claims. My phenomenological interview technique is therefore
used to let the interview bend according to topics relevant for the interviewed and not to seek essences in perceptions of Pride.

The practical implications of the phenomenological perspective in this thesis have been inspired by Aspers’ (2009) suggestion of using a thematical interview guide grounded in previous research, Bevan’s (2014) suggestion of interview questions, and coding strategies inspired by Gioia et al. (2013). By referring to explicit modes of interview design through the use of phenomenological interviewing, I have sought to increase the transparency in my methodology and to show how I have designed my interview guides. Through semi-structured qualitative interviewing, I have sought to answer my research questions about geographical imaginations of Prides by giving space to the lived experiences of the interviewees. Phenomenological interviewing is often used for this, according to Kvale (1997, p. 54-56), who states that the method emphasises the importance of different life-worlds, a concept combinable with the previously mentioned concept of Geographical imaginations as fluctuant with situatedness, life experiences and knowledge (see chapter 2).

4.5.2 The Interview Guides
According to Asper’s Empirical Phenomenology (2009, p. 4), empirical research on meanings and perceptions of a person ought to be researched through dialogue. Interpretation of meaning can be achieved in a dialogue where two people use the same signs and language expressions for the same meaning. In order for a researcher to then understand the meaning constructions of the interviewed, they need to gain understanding of each other to mediate meaning through language. In the case of my research this has led to me taking two decisions. The first was that the method of empirical phenomenology is most valid through semi-structured interviews, and less suiting for studying one-way mediated material, which is why I have not used it in my visual analysis. The second decision was to use empirical phenomenology when designing, conducting and interpreting qualitative interviews. I have sought to understand the first-order meanings constructed by persons involved in organising Pride festivals, to then interpret them, constructing second-order meanings which can be connected to the theory I have presented (Aspers, 2009, p. 3). I have done this by designing interview guides (using Guide 1 for interviews with city employees and Guide 2 when interviewing participants) based on four themes: the individual’s relation to Pride, the individual’s experience of participating in or working with EuroPride 2018, their definition of the purpose of EuroPride 2018, and their thoughts of how Pride is connected to the city it is held in. The themes and the questions included in them were designed to respond to the theory used in this thesis, meaning they included themes of place, city branding and queer space. By designing the interview questions with theory in mind, I sought to increase the validity of connecting the data with previous research (Aspers, 2009, p. 6, 9). The main purpose of my phenomenological interviewing was to understand the actors’ perspectives (Asper, 2009, p. 8, 10), which was done through thematic interview guides instead of list-shaped ones (p. 8-9). Along with my interview schema, I have also added example questions based on a model described by (Bevan 2014, p. 139), who
suggests using a combination of contextualisation questions, Apprehending the phenomenon questions and Imaginative Variation questions. Contextualisation questions are open-ended questions which can help for knowing how to continue the interview. Therefore, I started my interviews asking respondents to tell me freely about their relation to Pride. Contextualisation questions were also suiting for giving interviewees some agency to direct the interview towards topics meaningful to them initially. I also framed some questions for Apprehending the phenomena, asking respondents to explain their experience and how they resonated in past situations when attending Pride. Lastly, I found Imaginative Variation questions useful for asking about how participants would imagine hypothetical arrangements. The two last question types were alternated to hear about what people thought of experiences of Pride and how they perceive future Prides, or a flawless Pride festival.

4.5.3 Coding
To analyse all data; websites, texts, images and interview transcripts, I used an inductive coding strategy guided by Gioia et al. (2013), who emphasise the importance of coding closely to the interviewer’s perspective. I did so by finding themes through axial coding taking out 1st-order constructs, using the respondents’ own terms to find re-occurring differences and similarities in the material (p. 20-21). I then used these constructs to take out categories, (see Appendix 6 and 7 for a summary of categories found and used in the thesis, included to increase transparency), which first after the coding were compared to the theory and previous research introduced in chapters 2 and 3. The analysis will be presented by referring to those themes, which I have translated from Swedish to English. In attempting to keep as much as possible of the original lingual structure, some of the quotations might seem to be slightly grammatically problematic because of this.

5.5.4 Concluding comments on the Interview Method
To conclude, I have conducted phenomenological semi-structured interviews to increase the chances of understanding how respondents orient themselves towards Pride and how they perceive it. Following this I have also let the participants have some agency in shaping the interviews by sending them my interview guide and letting them read and comment on the transcripts of their interview, in additional attempts to increase the validity of my research. I also sent copies of the quotes and pseudonyms. This was to make sure that the respondents agreed with what had been said during the interview (Creswell, 2013, p. 252). Sending out the Guide in advance led to a possibility of the respondents being prepared for what the interview would focus on, and I did not get the impression that anyone had prepared set answers to any of the questions provided. Even if this would have been the case, the interviews never followed the questions in a set order but was taken in different directions depending on what themes occurred during the session. After receiving a list of quotes included in the thesis, all interviewees agreed to me using them. During this last check, I also confirmed pseudonyms and pronouns, enabling the respondents to make corrections if disagreeing with used pronouns, such
as ‘he’, ‘she’ and ‘they’\textsuperscript{3}, which one respondent did. Another respondent wished for a different translation of a term, which I also changed according to their suggestion. The decision to involve the respondents in more interview stages than the actual interview was made to increase the validity of my results by making sure the interviewed would recognize and agree with their own statements. The decision was also based on ethical reasons, ensuring that the respondents knew how I would refer to them. The method is risky as it could have led to wishes for changes of important part of the thesis, a risk I decreased by sharing only my 1\textsuperscript{st} order constructs, and not the theory connected to them which turns them into 2\textsuperscript{nd} order constructs. It was also a risk I preferred to the risk of sharing misinterpretations of interviewees statements.

\subsection*{4.6 Research Purpose, Situatedness and Ethics}

My theoretical framework is based on interpretations of the world and of different events being socially constructed, both affecting and being affected by social positions and power relations. Am I then “objective” in my research? No, not if the term objective means ‘aperspectival’ (Daston, 1992), in the sense that the researcher is ideologically external to their own research by not being biased by one’s own geographical imagination. If I would strive for that kind of ‘objectivity’, it would collide with the ontological assumptions of socially constructed and contested places. Following the assumption that “a view from nowhere” does not exist (Browne et al., 2017, p. 1377), my own view needs to be assessed. A researcher’s reflexivity towards their own research process is an acknowledged part of feminist research methods, based on the impact the scientist’s values have on the results (Harding, 1992, p. 572). The promotion of self-reflexive research is also justified with reference to the power relations which shape our scientific knowledge. Such knowledges are affected by western, colonial, masculinist, heterosexist values making “neutral research” synonymous to research following normative political interests of social groups with more power; western, whites, men, heterosexuals etc (Haraway, 2008, p. 231; Harding, 1992, p. 574; Rose, 1997, 1993, p. 5, 63). What does it mean then to define the whole research process (including the results presented, not only the data collection and interpretation) as affected by the researcher’s situated knowledge (Haraway, 2008, p. 574)? Reflexivity has two aspects: interpretation and presentation of data (Rose, 1997, p. 312) and the power relation between the researcher and the researched. The first point concerns the study’s validity while the second point is relevant for the discussion of ethics. To start then, with how my situatedness affects my research I make two claims: I do not intend to show a universal description of Pride places and I have through all my chapters strived to show the steps of my research, avoiding risks of covering my intentions.

Regarding the second point about my own position in relation to my interviewees, I have reflected upon the ethics of my study based on my position as researcher and my social identity positions. As a researcher I decided what me and the researched subject was to talk about and I held the privilege of interpreting and presenting the material in this thesis. With that inequality

\textsuperscript{3} They/Them being a gender-neutral pronoun (similar to the Swedish ‘hen’).
in mind I let the interviewees see the transcripts of our interview, giving them the option to comment it if they wanted to. No one asked to have any parts removed or edited. To further secure an ethical research approach, I followed guidelines stated by Kvale (1997, p. 105), according to whom ethical research consists of several judgements among some key points are it being: 1. Based on informed consent from interviewees, 2. Securing anonymity, and 3. Consequences for the interviewees. Regarding the integrity of those researched, I have made precautions to keep my informants anonymous by not referring to their real names, and I have left out specific organisational names. Before the interviews every respondent was given an information letter (See Appendix 4 and 5), and I asked for consent before recording the interview. I also provided information of the possibility for a respondent to withdraw from participation at any time before, during or after the interview. When it came to my visual analysis, I followed advice on social media ethics by Townsend & Wallace at Aberdeen University (2016). According to their guidelines, the Facebook material I have used is to be considered ethical due to its public content, being arenas for reaching out as organisations. Getting informed consent when using such material is not always possible. It is legal to use the material, due to the user consenting to let their material be used by a third part when joining Facebook (Townsend & Wallace, 2016, p. 6), and due to the public intention of the material I have deemed it ethic to use without consent since it is collected from open forums (p. 10).

4.7 Limitations
Despite repeated attempts to reach people within the Pride organisations of West Pride and Stockholm Pride, I did not manage to get anyone to agree on an interview. This means that their perspectives are unfortunately not represented in this essay to their full extent. I have referred to discourses in published material by and about the organisations which is still valuable data since it also expresses place imaginations, definitions and opinions about the event and the hosting cities. However, I recognise the advantages which could have been obtained by meeting in person with the people responsible for the event. A further limitation of my material is that it could be complemented by studies of EuroPride during EuroPride to better capture specific experiences and reasonings related to the actual event during its physical being. The analysis of Pride as a place would benefit from being narrowed down to an in-depth study of one or two specific Pride festivals, which again was hindered by the timing of my study.

An additional limitation regarding the presentation of my study is that I did not manage to get replies from all organisations to use images published on their website. This meant that due to copyright laws, a lot of the images intended to be presented in full are not included in the thesis. They are however referred to, so the curious reader has the opportunity to find them via the internet sources in the list of references. The two images used in this thesis are presented with permission from the West Pride organisation.
5. PRIDE AS A PLACE

As the first of two analytical chapters, this section shows how Pride place itself is imagined through discourses manifested in interviewee narratives and online posts from the organisations. It will be followed by a chapter analysing how the places where Pride is held are described through discourses.

5.1 Questions Answered in This Section

- How are Pride organisations and participants imagining Pride places in Stockholm and Gothenburg?
- What indicators can be identified for defining Pride as queering or straightening space?
- What practices of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion can be identified related to the Pride festivals?

5.2 Pride as a Place According to Participants

In this section, the narratives of four Pride participants are presented below in order to present and discuss possible geographical imaginations of Pride-goers. These narratives are described through five categories, presented below in subchapters. They all take up different aspects of what characterise a Pride place and what elements Pride goers thought belonged in them.

5.2.1 Visibility

When discussing Pride experiences, the term visibility re-occurred as an important part of Pride, particularly in relation to the viewers of visible LGBTQ performances. Visibility was often talked about as a concept that reminded non-LGBTQ people of LGBTQ existence:

People who are not LGBTQ persons become aware that we exist. Since they see the flags, they can’t just pretend like we are some kind of group outside in the periphery. […] It becomes very “in your face” and made visible. And the flags’ visualisation, well just the fact that the flags are seen have a symbolic effect that: It is us sort of, we are seen. The flags are seen and that means that we are seen (John, 12-04-18).

According to John, spatial markers such as flags, tents and people talking about LGBTQ-related issues made LGBTQ people visible towards the straight majority, who at other opportunities might not be aware of LGBTQ people existing. John described West Pride activities as making queerness visible by it becoming ‘in your face’, indicating that the quantity of activities and especially Pride flags were indicators of ‘queerness’ that became visible to the straight population. This assumes that the straight population do not see LGBTQ activities unless they are made obvious; they need to be clearly visible through symbols such as flags. Thus, it confirms the assumption of space being heteronormative whereby straight people expect to see all space as straight space (Brown, 2000, p. 27-28; Cresswell, 2004, p. 104), and through John’s
quote it might be implied that straight people would at other occasions imagine LGBTQ people as being outside of their space (in the periphery). By describing Pride place as a place where LGBTQ performances are visible, the heteronormativity of the space gets pointed out as well, since straight performances don’t need to be ‘in your face’ to be seen, while LGBTQ performances do. This follows Ahmed’s (2006, p. 55, 62) description of bodies and space, in the sense that some objects, in this case the LGBTQ-coded object, will not come into view for individuals who do not expect them to be there. The non-straight body therefore needs to be made more visible than the straight one since it is not expected to exist. The straight space makes it easier for straight performances while LGBTQ performances require more effort; more visibility and symbols such as the rainbow flags.

The same term, *visibility*, was seen as important at Pride when referring to being seen by other LGBTQ people, which enables people coming out and feeling less lonely or strange. John meant that the lack of visible LGBTQ people in their up-bringing led to coming out later than they could have done. But this enablement provided by visibility was still related to the straight population: “[…] that’s what I think is the best part of the LGBTQ-festival and Pride, that LGBTQ-persons do feel seen, and sort of noticed and that they are respected and accepted and all that”. In their quote, John meant that visibility and acceptance are important aspects of Pride place, which is interpretable as the capability of bodies to extend into the space; at the Pride place LGBTQ bodies are to a greater extent allowed to extend themselves into space so that they can be seen (and respected).

Pride as visualising LGBTQ identities was also brought up by Sophie and Emil who mentioned visibility in terms of being part of the *majority* as opposed to representing the *minority* during other times of the year and in other places. Changing the ‘majority’ of a place might be a way of changing its sexualisation. Maria and Sophie quite explicitly described experiences of passing or not passing as LGBTQ meaning that at Pride they were assumed to be LGBTQ because it was expected; the queer space extended itself onto their bodies as a result of expected queerness (as defined by Valentine, 1996; Ahmed, 2006). The emphasis of visibility being connected to the straight observer was also mentioned by Sophie, who expressed the importance of participating in the Pride parade to show the diversity of the LGBTQ community by becoming visible: “That we are many and that we exist, and that we are diverse as well, sort of.”, confirming that Pride activities include an ‘in your face’ element manifesting the existence of LGBTQ people. Maria, who also described the importance of being visible as a statement of LGBTQ people being deserving of respect, meant that visibility during Pride also increases because it is expected:

I experience that there’s more. when you walk to and from [Stockholm Pride] and move in the metro it happens that one stands out more. People look more, people stare. When I normally pass, I don’t pass [during Pride]. But it’s also nicer and kinder and many more who are visible and open LGBTQ-persons (Maria, 26-04-18).
Maria’s perception of visibility was two-folded; it was experienced as increasing the threat from others, while it was also perceived as inherently good that more open LGBTQ identities could be seen and that the atmosphere was nice and kind. When LGBTQ bodies are more visible through Pride, the space in and around the Pride place becomes less heteronormative; LGBTQ identities become more visible which is something Maria experienced as mostly positive but partly negative.

Other than being a place for visualisation, Pride was also understood as a place for meetings and the two themes correlated since visibility referred to being seen by outsiders as well as being seen by community members. Pride was described as giving increased opportunities for meeting people as friends, as hook-ups and as fellow community members. These meetings were sometimes explained as being made possible due to the lack of expectation of straightness, implying that the space extended itself onto bodies, queering them (by making queerness the expected). This expectation of one being LGBTQ also included a feeling of being in the majority, meaning that the place was geographically imagined as having a LGBTQ majority population. It was also explained by the amount of LGBTQ people being gathered at the same place having travelled to Pride. Both Sophie and John shared stories of meeting people outside of strictly defined Pride places, when being on their way, moving from or towards a Pride event or club. Their stories, together with Maria’s description of feeling threatened during Pride week, but not within the “borders” of the events, describe how Pride is changing the assumption of heteronormativity not only in the parade or the seminars, but also in other parts of the city, blurring the borders of Pride and the rest of the city space. Stating that this means that Pride extends itself easily onto the whole of the city was contested by Emil, who did not encounter any significant difference of moving in Stockholm during the Pride week; he experienced little to no change to the city character outside of the Pride places, showing that both geographical imaginations of places might differ, but so can the perceptions of sexuality of the space.

Other meeting opportunities were related to club events and seminars, where the feeling of “belonging to the majority” in a place was explained as a factor of having a nice time and connecting with people, either with old friends or with people they might not ever have spoken with again. The wish for spending time with or in the same place as others and sharing experiences was explicitly stated by Emil, who liked to “visit niched clubs” and hang out at niched seminars at Stockholm Pride, where he had met people who had similar life experiences. When discussing the positive aspects of club venues with a large percentage of either queers, trans people, gays or lesbians (for the respondents often, but not always referred to clubs accustomed to their specific identity groups), two of them mentioned the lack of club alternatives during the rest of the year. Sophie and John returned to the theme of majority and minority in a place when mentioning the lack of gay clubs outside the Pride festivals. John said that there were no gay clubs at all in Gothenburg, only gay-friendly straight clubs which are sometimes called gay clubs, an opinion shared with Sophie, whom also meant that gay clubs in
Sweden often were not as gay as she would have liked. The mentioning of club venues shows a connection between Pride as a place and Pride in a place; Pride is a place with a broad selection of clubs, while the cities (especially Gothenburg but also Stockholm) are not considered places with satisfying gay/queer club scene.

5.2.2 Policing performances at Pride

As indicated by Maria’s mentioning of feeling unsafe due to expectations of her being LGBTQ, being visible at Pride could lead to risking policing behaviour from others, feeling unsafe at public transport or feeling uncomfortable at being watched. In those cases, the heterosexuality of the space made itself prominent in the threat of homophobic and potentially violent encounters. In the case of Maria, the unsafeness was spatially situated outside of the official Pride places, but during Pride time. The Pride place was not mentioned as hostile, but places in between the Pride areas were mentioned as increasingly surveillant due to the awareness of nearby Pride activities, manifesting the paradox described by Johnston (2005, p. 123), stating that queer performances can make spaces both safer and more hostile through increased visibility.

Another Stockholm Pride participant, Emil, also pointed out a moment of disruption of Pride as a queer place where all non-straight performances was tolerated, telling of how a person was told off by guards at the Pride area for showing a bare chest. When telling about the incident of a person not being allowed to be without a top because of their female-coded torso, Emil questioned the behaviour of the guards, implying that they should have been better educated to be allowed to work there. One aspect of his definition of Pride is then a place where everyone should be allowed to be topless or perform queerness in other ways. This reasoning was followed by referring to the policing being a problem related to other identity performances:

Pride feels like a context where.. like, if you’re in Pride park, why wouldn’t you be allowed to walk bare-chested regardless? I mean regardless of how your breasts look like. [...] and that [the incident] they received a lot of criticism from trans persons like: “What are you even doing Stockholm Pride? You can’t really have any kind of guards here”. And who are safe to come here? Is it this cis gay man who is white and has lived comfortably all life? On who’s terms are we here? (Emil, 26-04-18).

The questions stated assume what a Pride is supposed, ideally, to be; for everyone, while they also state that this is not the case due to different privileges. By talking about inclusivity at Pride, Emil refers to criticism towards neglecting power inequalities within the community, meaning that some queer performances are policed while others might not be. His quote shows an understanding of Pride place as a definition of what is “in place” (Ahmed, 2006, p. 62; Cresswell, 2004, p. 108-109) at Pride. Pride Park ought to be a place where everyone can walk bare-chested regardless of their physical appearance, and it should not be an unsafe place
excluding LGBTQ’s not being white cis\(^4\) men. At the same time, the quote indicates that the Pride place in mind might actually only be for white cis men to occupy (in Ahmed’s terms (2006, p. 62, 126)), defining a failed, but actual Pride place. The geographical imagination of Pride is hence several definitions of its’ purposes: What performances are actually there, and which performances belong there. The geographical imagination of Pride is that it is supposed to be a place without homo- or transphobic policing while it simultaneously might be intruded by exclusionary actions showing a discrepancy of the intended character of the Pride place and the material power relations played out at Pride. Thus, there might be two contesting imaginations and material processes deciding what bodies that are able to occupy Pride space; all queer bodies or certain privileged ones.

The uncomfortableness of travelling in heterosexual space during the time of Pride and the questioning of oppression in Pride place could be interpreted as a reminder of the fact that even if Pride is imagined as a queer space by the participants within the community, and possibly by bystanders as well, the heterosexuality of the place can resist queering attempts. As stated by Brown (2000, p. 27-28) and Cresswell (2004, p. 104), to heterosexuals all space can be heterosexual space, a conflict highlighting the struggle between geographical imaginations. According to Emil, bare chests are in place at Pride, but for the guard they were out of place, which could be theorised as him imagining the place as queer, allowing performances that straight places might not, while the guard still defended the straightness of the place. Regardless of queer performances, questioning heteronormativity as a given, straight bodies still may have the authority to define the place as heteronormative by still interpreting all space as heterosexual space.

5.2.3 “Who the hell let you in?” Political parties and companies in the Pride place

Related to the definitions of what belongs in Pride place are the articulations of whether certain groups should be allowed at Pride places, mainly referring to the parades but also when talking about other areas such as the Pride parks. In different ways, the attendance of companies, state authorities and political parties (mainly outspokenly conservative parties) was questioned, exemplified by John:

[...] when you see that in the march there are political parties who, up until very recently were extremely homophobic and extremely sort of making invisible everything that is not white hetero cis-men. There I think that Pride has a responsibility to demand: ‘What are you doing during the rest of the year for Pride-issues so that you can walk in this march?’. Cause I don’t think everyone should have the right to go in the march as political parties, for example. I think that’s bullshit. I think that, to get to go in a march, you as an organisation or as a political party should be able to show that you do something the rest of the year that actually support Pride, I mean LGBTQ-issues. It can be something that small as you actually having an equal gender division at your work place which shows that you are including, or that you, that you kind of

\(^4\) ‘Cisgender’ refers to non-transgendered people whose gender performance is seen as coherent with their sex assigned at birth.
have some sort of awareness of LGBTQ-issues. But some of these parties that walks in the march makes me wonder: “Who the hell let you in here?” (John, 12-04-18)

Others also mentioned parties, organisations, companies and state authorities as out of place at Pride. Emil described it through an experience of watching the Stockholm Pride Parade instead of being in it. As a spectator, he got annoyed when watching authorities like the police and the migration office and political parties who have opposed marriage equality and the quite recent removal of a sterilisation law⁵, marching in the Stockholm Pride parade. He also mentioned the annoyance over a gym company proclaiming that “Exercise is for everyone”, while not having any gender neutral changing rooms. The scepticism towards political parties, organisations and companies was also in this case connected to them either not doing anything to support LGBTQ rights, or even actively hindering those rights when voting against legal changes. They do not belong in Pride if they have not proven that they are strengthening LGBTQ rights, and their history was mentioned as a reason for them not belonging in the place. Not only were they considered out-of-place, the interviewees called for actions of not allowing them to participate as organisations. They added that everyone can walk in the parade as individuals, but when walking under a banner, that banner needed to prove it’s right to be at Pride, stating that the annoyance of their participation was that they were doing it for self-gain (receiving good publicity or using Pride as a chance to increase sales). To be in-place at Pride, groups needed to be relevant for the place character by proving their support through actions. According to another respondent, Maria, the right for organisations and companies to participate was conditioned on their activity at Pride; they had to discuss LGBTQ-related matters, not only promote themselves by being there:

I think that if unions and political parties are there they should have a good range when they talk about what issues they actually pursue, what they stand for and why. They can surely have really good opinions, they can show that too and not talk about their other issues (Maria, 26-04-18).

Another reason for why political parties do not fit in to Pride place was brought up by Sophie, who commented on their heterosexuality and its effect on the parades. She meant that it is good that non-LGBTQ identifying people show support, but that in doing so they bring the risk of contributing to the (unwanted) change of the place. After first objecting them marching as outsiders of the LGBTQ-community, Sophie then reasoned that she found it acceptable for straight people to walk as themselves in the parade, but not when representing a political party:

[…} when you see these political parties walking, the youth sections have, and it’s great that they are there but when you notice that, well now maybe one should not generalise, but when you notice that like: ‘Oh, but basically the majority here are heterosexual people. You’re only here to show, then well I guess it’s

⁵ To change your legal sex, you had to go through sterilization first. The law was abolished in 2013 after years of criticism, political campaigning, protests (Levandehistoria.se).
always twofold. You’re here to show support and sure that’s good, but it’s also in a way... You’re doing it under this banner, under your party program to in a way... Well it is to score political points, to show that you are there.’ Can’t they show that they're there as individuals? (Sophie, 22-04-18).

Sophie’s definition of political parties as eventual intruders was to do with an annoyance of groups promoting themselves by using Pride as a tool, but it was also to do with their sexuality being unfit for the place. Their (assumed) heterosexuality in a way proved that they were in the parade to gain the political organisation. The articulations of organisations, political parties, authority organs and companies at Pride manifested a re-occurring geographical imagination of Pride as a place where actions must be beneficial to the LGBTQ-community. According to the participants, a political or commercial grouping could, theoretically speaking belong at Pride, but only under the condition of working or having worked actively for LGBTQ rights. Showing support for the community by being in the parade was not seen as in-place per se but could rather be a signal of groups using the place as an object for themselves. These criticisms again show that geographical imaginations of Pride as a place can be based on what the place ought to be, not based on the actual performances taking place seeing as they were at times considered intruding.

5.2.4 Purposes of Pride according to participants
One way of defining the shape of Pride as a place is to discuss why it exists as an activity which is connected to imagining it geographically, following that imagining a place is to give meaning to it, defining the shape as suitable or unsuitable to fulfil the assumed purpose of the place, based on the assumption that individuals approach objects based on how they can use them (Ahmed, 2006, p. 3, 63, 80). This connection of intention and place character was brought up in the interviews when discussing eventual conflicts between party space and political space. None of the respondents defined parties as out-of-place, rather they all had history of attending Pride parties and clubs and they expressed appreciating parties, claiming their importance. Sophie debated if the increased emphasis on partying had led to “forgetting why we have Pride”, discussing if there is a conflict between Pride being a festival instead of a political march:

[…] and it is a festival [translated from the term folkfest], in a way. But where’s the activism, In the festival? What are we having the party for? For LGBTQ rights? Yes, but can we define that a bit more? What are the rights we want now? (Sophie, 22-04-18).

Sophie’s ambivalence about eventual discrepancies between partying and politics was connected to a wish to clarify the aim of Pride and wishing for a unified goal. Wishes indicating the inconsistency of the Pride place seeing as it contains meanings understood as contradictory and non-coherent. Sophie finished her discussion by concluding that Pride can be political while also being a festival, since there are seminars held during the week, and that festivals are needed where LGBTQ people can represent the majority of the place. The festival is according to Sophie, both contradicting Pride’s roots as a protest march, while still having an important

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purpose by changing the territorial claims to the place during Pride. Another criticism towards emphasising the party, or festival atmosphere during Pride, came from Emil, who mentioned Stockholm Pride’s marketing strategies as displaying Pride as fun, with catchy theme songs and campaigns encouraging people to party or dance as a strategy against discrimination. They both partly defined the festival-aspects as potentially diminishing of LGBTQ rights, by taking them too lightly while they also meant that parties had an important role at Pride. One who did not speculate on Pride as being too cheerful was John, who said they wanted more of the party spirit, not less.

5.2.5 Other experiences of Pride place
Two additional perspectives found in the interviews are worth mentioning: John’s experience as a volunteer at West Pride and Maria’s experience of being at Stockholm Pride as a parent. John was telling me about how the volunteers at West Pride have a heavy workload, and they expressed empathy with those who will volunteer during EuroPride 2018, wishing they could be paid. From a volunteer’s perspective, I got the glimpse of a part otherwise neglected in this thesis: the labour shaping Pride place, which was experienced as fun and important but very stressful. This suggests that focusing on the connection between voluntary work and the production of Pride place is highly relevant and a topic which would gain from further investigation in future research. The volunteers were also mentioned by Maria, who said that the accessibility for children at Stockholm Pride varied depending on decisions and attitudes among the volunteers working. Regarding Maria’s Pride history, she has often brought her children to the festival pointing out that even though it often works fine there are some aspects showing that the Pride Park in Stockholm is not designed for children. Especially this was because of the troubles she had had when finding food and drinks for her children who did not drink fizzy or alcohol, neither was the food designed for children’s tastes. She also mentioned the troubles of Stockholm Pride as a private place, not allowing one to bring drinks or food into the park, highlighting two aspects of power relations shaping the Pride place: market interests and age. The selection of what to drink and eat in the park is decided by the companies in the park, giving them a material resource to define parts of the place. In the case for Maria, this caused problems as the perceived food or drinks consumer was adult, making it troublesome for her children to have a place in the park.

5.3 Pride as a Place Expressed Through Pride Marketing Channels
This section mainly consists of an image analysis of pictures shared on websites and Facebook pages belonging to EuroPride 2018, Stockholm Pride and West Pride. As the previous section, its subchapters are shaped according to categories found during the coding. The images of Pride are for both cities contain a mix of parade pictures taken of large groups or few individuals, or photos of artists on stage. On the Gothenburg pages (EuroPride 2018c), most images are of the

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6 Emil referred to a criticised campaign where the organisation encouraged people to use the hashtag #jagfestarmot, which means ‘I party against’ (Wallroth, 2014-05-28).
parade, while on the Stockholm pages more pictures are of artists on stage, or photos focusing on a few people or a specific group in the parade.

5.3.1 The Pride flag

Most of the images contains Pride flag colours in different presentations and forms, in logos, on products and on actual flags. On the official EuroPride 2018 page, there are 2 images representing Stockholm Pride and West Pride.Accompanying Stockholm, a photo of people holding rainbow umbrellas is displayed. It is taken from beneath, hiding faces and showing a bright shining sun (EuroPride 2018b). In the image, the flag-umbrellas are most viewable seeing as the faces are not. Additional flag symbols are seen in the person closest in view who is wearing a wristband and holding a flag, and in the logos outside of the picture and even in the boxes leading to other information pages. There can never be enough Pride colours and they seem to be included whenever possible, highlighting the flag as important for defining Pride place. This was also mentioned by several interviewees, both participants and city employees. One city employee in Gothenburg held the flags as the most central part of West Pride:

\[\ldots\] during West Pride, in Gothenburg it’s visible over exactly the whole city. It is flagged on Landvetter [the airport], it’s flagged on Drottningtorget [a square], in Nordstan [a large mall], Gustav Adolf’s Torg [a square], Avenyn [the avenue], everywhere there are rainbow flags. So it becomes a like a giant manifestation in the colours of the rainbow every year (Louise, 05-04-18).

The quotation shows that at a Pride place, the number of flags can never be enough, and the more the better, leading back to the visibility of LGBTQ identities increasing with the help from interrupting symbols in the city environment; the flags. Louise also emphasised this by saying that Gothenburg has over 10 000 flags visible during the week and that they might be the city in Europe with the most flags during Pride. A Pride place is then marked by rainbow patterns both in flags but also in other items as shown in the picture from Stockholm Pride where almost everything that can be painted in rainbow colours is so.. Often the flags are situated in the background, or rather their repeated appearance make them a background when they are so many and in so many shapes that they are just simply there, making them an almost natural part of a Pride landscape while they are still interrupting the space when not being there all year around. Still in the background they have an important part in making the place, which was exemplified by the city employee Jenny, who described Pride places without flags as dissatisfactory when describing Riga Pride (described further in chapter 6.1.1). The Pride flag is then, like other flags marking nationhood of the place, playing a major part in defining a place as a Pride place.

On EuroPride 2018’s Facebook and web pages, when the Pride flag comes in the shape of a flag it is more often held as a background symbol in Pride images, with people standing in front of it or holding it. Occasionally it was also presented as the main element in a picture when the Pride colours are put on a different product, that product is in stronger view, as seen in the
picture of the umbrellas at Stockholm Pride. This is especially noticeable on the EuroPride Facebook page including commercial images of rainbow tea boxes (Facebook/Europride2018a), and rainbow coloured bead bracelets made for the non-profit foundation ‘Young Cancer’ (Facebook/Europride2018b). The products are not situated in the physical Pride place, but they indicate an imagination of how the rainbow pattern automatically can define something as Pride-related giving it a place in the marketing of the event. In the place, the flags are in the background but on products they become the central object in view. This was also the case in photos from the parade of organisations and companies in the images from Stockholm Pride 2017 (StockholmPride.org1), who often had enormous Pride Flags and rainbow coloured balloons as the background of a commercial message. This was most clearly shown by the main sponsoring companies, having loads of flags and balloons on their floats. This is making them both in- and out-of-place according to different imaginations of Pride place; the flag marks belonging in the place while the company logos do not (according to the interviewed participants).

5.3.2 Individuals and the crowd
The first image on EuroPride’s webpage showing West Pride (EuroPride 2018e) also contains a lot of Pride flags, symbolised in their logo and link-boxes being rainbow-themed. The image used to describe West Pride also contains actual flags and not so much other products with a rainbow pattern (figure 3).

Figure 3. Screenshot from EuroPride (2018e), containing picture from West Pride. The photo is taken by Jennie Lindén. Link: http://europride2018.com/gothenburg/westpride/ [2018-05-21].

In contrast to the image of umbrellas from Stockholm Pride, the Gothenburg image contains no visible attire with flags, but a lot of actual flags. The visitors are watching something on stage, still they are in focus- we do not know what they are watching, which indicates that Pride places
are made by the crowd, the angle taken from the front sends a message of collectiveness and the people’s actions: waving flags, and especially the person in the middle raising their arms, indicates joy.

If comparing the presentation of people in the Gothenburg Pride picture with the Stockholm Pride picture, they represent two different discourses: individuality and community. The photo from Stockholm Pride show a few people walking in the same direction but not close to each other, the people closest to the camera are clearly more visible than those next to them. The image shows people as individuals walking, even though their faces are shadowed due to the perspective. In opposition to this, the image from Gothenburg shows a crowd of people standing closely to each other. The comparison between the two pictures is not representing a difference between the cities, as both types of images can be found representing Pride place in both cities when looking at their online material (the uneven access to images also hinders a comparison between the cities, as Stockholm Pride had more photos available than West Pride). Some images are of individuals, focusing on a few people looking in to the camera, while others are of the parade or the park showing anonymous faces in a large mass of people, doing something together such as watching a stage or walking in the parade. On the Stockholm section of the EuroPride 2018 webpage, most images have some sort of individualist focus giving more space for speakers, artists and the organisers walking in the parade. In both the images of artist and the Pride parade, the crowd is represented as bystanders instead of being the main focus of the picture (EuroPride 2018d). A similar pattern was found at the Stockholm Pride website describing Pride Park, which was a place where the entertainers were the main focus (StockholmPride.org2). The crowd is important to the place represented in the photos of Stockholm Pride, but often as audience, indicating that the central elements of the place are those performing, drawing a line between those who watch and those who are being seen. There are several images on Stockholm Pride’s web page displaying individuality with the crowd in the background; all images from the Pride Park are of performers on stage in extravagant outfits, and most parade pictures have a clear focus on selected participants highlighting some of the individuals in the parade, especially those who stand out wearing ambitious or colourful outfits.

Overall, the images of people at Pride express three different geographical imaginations. Firstly, Pride is a place where people are gathered and sharing the place. But it is also a place where they express their individuality through performances, mainly in the parade by expressing non-straight identities through clothing and movement, and also by being in the parade in the first place. A third place definition is that of Pride as a festival where the crowd is an audience watching the festival instead of being the festival. The images from Stockholm’s Pride Park indicated an imagination of such a place as all images were of entertainers on stage where the crowd is in the background, manifesting who have the biggest agency to impact the place; those organising and performing at Pride. This works as a reminder of how imaginations of the place might differ, but different actors have different means of shaping the place after their perception of it.
5.4 Discussion: Pride as a Place

This last section of chapter 5 contains a discussion, relating the geographical imaginations of Pride place to previous research (referred to in chapter 3), while suggesting answers to the relevant research questions about geographical imaginations of Pride, queering or straightening of space, and inclusion or exclusion from the place.

5.4.1 How are Pride organisations and participants imagining Pride places in Stockholm and Gothenburg?

The participants’ and organisations’ viewpoints manifest different, contesting geographical imaginations of what belong or do not belong in the Pride place, confirming previous theorisations of the possibility of Pride being multifaceted and paradoxical (Johnston, 2017, 2005), while also being considered a mix of party and politics by the respondents, showing similar results as Browne’s study (2007) which concluded that LGBTQ women defined Pride as a “party with politics”. A difference in imaginations of the interviewed Pride goers and the marketing channels was the view on companies at Pride, something the participants defined out-of-place, whereas EuroPride 2018’s marketing channels promoted the companies and included them on parade photographs on the Stockholm Pride website. This manifests a struggle over what constitutes a Pride place where the visitors might enjoy the consumerist citizenship due to their appreciation of nightlife at Pride while protesting a consumerist citizenship which includes companies and products which are not connected to LGBTQ rights or culture, a place articulation shown at other Prides as well (Ammaturo, 2016; Eleftheriadis, 2017). From the organising side however, these protests were not mentioned, and they are the ones who decide to permit companies and political parties entrance and who market them through their web pages, showing their belonging in the Pride place. This means that in the struggle between geographical imaginations, some actors (organisers and companies) have more agency to shape the hegemony than others, manifested by the participants’ disagreement of some current elements at Pride.

5.4.2. What indicators can be identified for defining Pride as queering or straightening Pride space?

In a place defined as displaying a majority of LGBTQ identities and where those identities extend into space resulting in LGBTQ identification being the assumed, can the space become queer? The passage describing visibility towards straights suggests that the repetition of LGBTQ performances in a concentrated area might change the sexuality of the place, queering it. This is based on the mentioning of assumptions of identities; LGBTQ identities are expected and can therefore be seen. Still, following Ahmed’s definition of the totality of heterosexual space, it cannot fully be explained as changing by this since we do not know from the comments in what way the straight population code the LGBTQ performances. The possibility of straightening them cannot be entirely ruled out, even though it seems less likely than usual for them to do so, due to the ‘in your face’ aspect. The visibility also shows that even if Pride as a
place is interpreted as one where LGBTQ identities are in majority, it also uncovers the heteronormativity of the space by showing that queer performances are only expected if the extension of queer bodies into space is manifested by explicit symbols such as the flag. A straight body does not usually need to carry a flag or be ‘in your face’ for it to be straightened while the queering of a body and of the space craves grander gestures. Hence, Pride can be geographically imagined as a non-straight place where (straights) exploiting it for their own gain are seen as out-of-place, showing that the geographical imagination of it as a place is related to definitions of its purpose and territoriality; it is not a consequence of the performances in the place since those can be deemed as non-belonging or wishes for them to not be allowed to be there.

5.4.3 What articulators of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion can be identified related to the Pride festivals?

The flags displayed both in the background of events, on products and sometimes in logos or pictures focusing only on the flag are almost exclusively Gay Pride flags. There are several other flags which can be connotated with EuroPride 2018 such as Trans-, bi-, pan-, lesbian- and asexual Pride flags and others, which are seen (in the background) of some images, especially on photos published on Stockholmpride.org, but they are few, popping up occasionally in a sea of rainbow flags. They hence belong in the Pride place, but their impact is less noticeable, and they are not used to brand products. In this context, it might be possible to then diversify the notion of queering or straightening the place when asking if the inclusion of all non-straight identities under the Pride-flag is straightening of non-gay identities or a straightening of them to be labelled under one and the same flag. Ahmed (2006) means that straight subjects straighten lesbian subjects by reading couples as friends, sisters or wife and husband instead of girlfriends or wives, when they expect heterosexuality. The Pride flag might work in a similar way, but de-queering when assuming the homosexuality of a place, possibly reading all queer identities as monogamous, cis, middleclass homosexuality. Even though images show some minority identity performances (black, brown and Sami participants), most images portray whiteness, indicating the homonormativity of the places as described by Bacchetta et al. (2015) & Lamusse (2016) as excluding non-white identities, even though not doing it as explicitly or as violently as in Lamusse’s example. Power inequalities of the Pride place was further indicated by the assumption of the place questioning heterosexuality, but not questioning gender norms and patriarchal expectations of bodies displayed. This was articulated through Emil’s comment on a guard asking a bare-chested person to cover themselves because of their chest being female-coded, meaning that some queer performances in the parade are still not guaranteed being in-place on the same terms as others, implying homonormativity of the event; performances being too queer might not be welcome. This has been the case at several other Pride events described in the literature where parades have had strict dress codes (Bell and Valentine, 1995; Lamusse, 2016; Volger 2016)
6. PRIDE AS (AN OBJECT) HELD IN PLACES

This chapter takes the discussion from Pride as a place, moving it towards Pride in places and geographical imaginations of the places Pride is situated in. The articulation of Pride as an object defining cities, nations and regions were found in the narratives of city employees and marketing channels of both Pride and the cities, who were not only defining what Pride place is, but also defining the city and the nation by explaining Pride and LGBTQ rights as an object coherent with the aims of the city.

6.1 Questions Answered in This Section

- How are different levels of places; cities, regions and the world geographically imagined through Pride?
- How are EuroPride 2018 and city branding processes affecting each other?
- What practices of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion can be identified related to the Pride festivals?

The groups arranging EuroPride; West Pride and Stockholm Pride are non-profit organisations, independent from the cities, but their communication and marketing are to a large extent intertwined with the city organs and officials. The website europride.org links to tourist information on the cities’ tourist company websites; representatives from the Pride organisations have together with city officials and politicians been at international Pride and tourist events, and there are links between online material published by the cities and by the organisations and the cities. The collaboration between the organisations and the cities are also explicitly stated on EuroPride 2018’s webpage (EuroPride 2018a), and the Pride festivals receive money from the cities. Additionally, the bid for EuroPride 2018 was designed in collaboration with city officials and the Pride organisations, according to one of the interviewees, Jenny, who also said that the organisations work closely together.

The geographical aspects of the Pride events were at several occasions mentioned explicitly by referring to concepts of place and time. To explain and exemplify this, consider the motto of EuroPride 2018: “TWO CITIES, ONE COUNTRY – FOR A UNITED EUROPE, OPEN TO THE WORLD” (europride.org). It thematically specifies where it is, indicating imaginations of 1. Cities, 2. The country, 3. The region, and lastly: 4. The world (Europride2018a).

6.2 Two Cities

The decision to have Stockholm and Gothenburg as the hosting cities of EuroPride 2018 was taken in 2016. The process leading up to this was, according to an informant from Stockholm City, based on the two cities both wanting the event and thus bidding on it together instead of competing for it. The hosting is hence a result of communication between the two Pride organisations (West Pride and Stockholm Pride) together with the city owned tourism and city
marketing companies. The particularity of having two Euro Pride hosting cities is mentioned repeatedly as a sign of the event’s uniqueness, being held at 10 days in Stockholm and 6 days in Gothenburg with a pause of 8 days in between them. Both cities are to hold one parade each, with the parade in Gothenburg being the official Euro Pride Parade. Uniqueness of shared hosting was also, according to the informant from Stockholm City, the very reason for EPOA (the organisation holding and giving rights to use the title EuroPride), to let Sweden host the event 2018.

6.2.1 “The Open Stockholm”

Stockholm shall be an open city for everybody, it is with happiness and love we welcome the whole world to Sweden. In Stockholm you can become who you want, do what you want and love who you want (Karin Wanngård, commissioner for finance of Stockholm, in Stockholm’s Stad, 2017a).

Local politicians (such as Wanngård, quoted above) and employees from Stockholm, when making comments about EuroPride often seize the moment to articulate their geographical imagination of what Stockholm is; open, welcoming tourists and a place where you either can become who you want, or be who you want to without anyone stopping you. The statement above was repeated in a video published on EuroPride’s Facebook page on the International day against homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, (IDAHOTB) the 17th of May (Facebook.com/Europride2018c) Wanngård’s quote suggests that there is no homo-, bi- or transphobia in Stockholm, and there are no hindrances for anyone to travel there; making the city a vacuum where social positions and sexualisation of space do not exist. The situating of homo-bi- and transphobia outside of Stockholm is further emphasised when using IDAHOTB not to talk about LGBTQ rights, but to re-tell the brand of “The open city”. Another, partly contrasting definition of Stockholm can be found in the city’s budget document according to which Stockholm should work for increasing the visibility of Pride to show Stockholm’s LGBTQ-friendliness:

EuroPride is a title that is given yearly to a European Pride festival and that attracts many international visitors. This means a possibility to display Stockholm as a LGBTQ-friendly city that cares about the human rights. Visitors and residents in Stockholm are to notice that Stockholm celebrates EuroPride 2018 and arrangements to make the festival visible will be made all over the city (Stockholms stads buget 2018, p. 57, own translation).

EuroPride is from the perspective of Stockholm City, a mean to increase tourism by displaying that Stockholm is a LGBTQ-friendly city. The quotation is from a section in the budget called Human Rights and a gender equal city, in which it is the only paragraph mentioning tourism and the appearance of Stockholm. The remaining part of the section is about introducing and implementing policy programs and integration of minorities and people with disabilities. One of the policy programs that are to be implemented is a Program for equal rights and equal
possibilities regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. This is however mentioned separately from EuroPride, showing no explicit connection between the city’s LGBTQ-policy and the hosting of EuroPride. The program is about improving human rights, whereas Pride is explained as a proof of the city’s progressive attitude. EuroPride’s purpose for the city is then in the budget document defined as displaying that Stockholm is already a place where LGBTQ people have the same rights and possibilities as others, even though they admit elsewhere (Stadsledningskontoret, Stockholms Stad, 2017) that those rights need improvement through city council actions.

The function of EuroPride as a displayer of Stockholm’s progressiveness is confirmed by Jenny. She defines the role of Stockholm’s marketing bureau as one where they show the openness of Stockholm as a city, and in that definition EuroPride can be understood as proving progressiveness: “[…] for us, to have a EuroPride is an evidence of us being an open city”. EuroPride is then understood as manifesting the identity of Stockholm used for marketing strategies abroad. As part of that marketing, Stockholm city has published a video, which has also been shared on EuroPride’s web page (EuroPride 2018b), implying that manifesting Stockholm as “open to everyone” (the video is further described in chapter 6.2.2).

The articulation of EuroPride manifesting Stockholm’s ‘openness’, meaning that sexual orientation and gender is no hinder to visit the city as a tourist, has also been stated in a video posted on another EuroPride’s Facebook-page (Facebook.com/europride2018d). The clip shows an introductory part of a panel discussion at World Pride 2017, where the mayor of Stockholm presents a summary of how Stockholm is working with LGBTQ rights. She does this by referring to Stockholm as an equal city; “I live with a city with equal between men and women, and a city having openness, diversity and respect as core values”, re-telling the brand of Stockholm being a safe and LGBTQ-friendly, post-hierarchical place. Openness remains a theme when marketing Stockholm abroad, convincing international tourists that the city is safe for them and they will not encounter any violence. When defining that openness in relation to other cities, this was done by the city employee Jenny who referred to Stockholm being safer than other places, such as EuroPride 2015 in Riga: “Here there is flagging with Pride flags everywhere when it’s Pride. In Riga, then it was only a small, small flag on Pride House because no one dare to show openly, because then they would be beaten”. According to her, the Pride flags are more often seen in Stockholm because there is no risk of being assaulted, as opposed to the risk in Riga, which articulates the amount of Pride flags as a consequence following LGBTQ rights, reaffirming the city’s perception of Pride as displaying the progressiveness of the place. She also commented on being confronted abroad about the lack of a gay village in Stockholm, a scenario more common in other European cities:

Here you can go hand in hand with no trouble. It is the open city. […] There were some at [a large fair], who had commented that there is no specific LGBTQ quarter or LGBTQ area, so they didn’t understand. Since
it’s so dedicated abroad that there are LGBTQ areas, they didn’t understand that, like, that’s how it is all over Stockholm. Here everyone is welcome. Here it is open (Jenny, 12-03-18).

The questioning of lack of clustered LGBTQ-venues was connected to safeness and the risk of assault. Since Stockholm is perceived safe due to its perceived post-homophobic state, there is no need for a LGBTQ area. All of Stockholm is defined as a LGBTQ area, not because of the possibilities of consumption and entertainment which otherwise define such places (Binnie, 1995; Binnie & Skeggs, 2004), but because of its residents being LGBTQ-friendly. Stockholmers are also articulated as less violent than in other cities seeing as the risk of hate crime is defined as non-existent in the quote. The definition of a gayboorhood as a proof of a non-gay friendly place is also stated in Stockholm’s official LGBT tourist guide:

In a city as open as Stockholm, there has never been a need for a special “gayborhood”. Lesbian, gay and gay-friendly hotels, bars and restaurants are scattered throughout the city and rainbow flags fly high in many of Stockholm’s central districts (Visitstockholm.com).

By defining the lack of a gay village as a consequence of tolerance, other cities which have gay neighbourhoods ought to implicitly be stated as more homophobic than cities which do not, showing a geographical imagination of Stockholm’s economic structure as determined by its gay friendliness. LGBTQ bars, shops and club venues are only located where there is homophobia and imagining Stockholm as non-homophobic means that its club life and city centre (lacking gay clustered alternatives) is defined as the ultimate gay-friendly city structure: you do not need niched consumption alternatives in the open city where you are allowed to consume straight leisure activities. This however, shows a fluidity in when queer culture and consumption is deemed as a proof of Stockholm being a tolerant city, because while gay villages are defined as part of less tolerant cities, EuroPride is understood as proving tolerance by being situated in Stockholm.

6.2.2 Marketing Stockholm through EuroPride 2018

Starting with the Stockholm-section of Europride.org, the first page shows an image of people, photographed from below, holding rainbow-umbrellas on a sunny day (see chapter 5.3.2). Next to the image is a description of the highlights of EuroPride in Stockholm and rainbow coloured links to Stockholm Pride’s webpage, tickets sales page, the festival program and three tourist-oriented webpages: QX’s Gay map, The LGBT Guide to Stockholm and Visit Stockholm. The first section of text describes EuroPride in Stockholm as following:

All around the city there will be Pride hubs and pop ups where EuroPride visitors can meet and take part of different events. Last year there were over 600 programs items – events at Pride House, Pride Park, museums, clubs, LGBT organisations, etc. […] We expect there will be more events and activities this summer all over the city including sports, activities for families and Stockholm sights (EuroPride 2018b).
The city is still a central theme when it is used to describe how large the festival is measured in space and activities: They will be all around and all over Stockholm. Regarding the activities the number of them are made important: a larger number is better, and they are spread in so many places they cannot all be mentioned in the text (“etc.”). At the festival, the attendants are EuroPride visitors who can consume different events by taking part of them. The last section of the quotation highlights a difference between regular Stockholm Prides and EuroPride 2018. The latter will have more events, and the types of events being most important, seeing as they are mentioned while other activities are not, are sports, family activities and sights. The imagination of a EuroPride place to visit could then be a place physically healthy people enjoying sports (if sports activities are meant to be experienced and not watched), families, and tourists who would enjoy sights. Other Pride activities such as politics, parties and culture are toned down in since they are part of “different events” and described by where they are instead of their character. The last section of the quote also indicates that EuroPride will have more of the three mentioned event types than Stockholm Pride usually has.

On the main webpage for EuroPride in Stockholm (EuroPride 2018b), different Pride places in Stockholm are mentioned: EuroPride House, EuroPride Park, Kinky Quarter, Rainbow Stage and the EuroPride Parade. Before all those place presentations however, stands a campaign video for Stockholm. The video has also been shared on the Pride organisations’ Facebook pages and was brought up during one of the interviews when talking about Pride, LGBTQ and tourism in Stockholm. This means that even if it does not mention Pride, or show any images of a Pride place, it is seen as important for defining it through city marketing as it is used in marketing EuroPride 2018. The definition of what Stockholm is as a city re-occurs in the presentation of the video: ”The one thing that really makes the city stand out internationally is its progressive values: Stockholm is a city for all.” (EuroPride 2018b). Stockholm is then portrayed as standing out internationally, being progressive and being for all to visit.

On the Youtube page where the video is published (Youtube.com), there is a link to an extended version of the letter in written form (Visitstockholm.com2), according to which Stockholm is “made of openness”:

Cause this is what I’m made of. Openness. The idea that everything should be accessible to everyone. That no-one should be excluded or left behind. It’s in every heartbeat; the constant aspiration to challenge the existing in order to find new, better ways (Visitstockholm.com2).

The message points out the inconsistency in using discourses of diversity in marketing: The city is open, meaning that no inequality exists and no power structures matter, but if those structures do not matter, why would there be a need to make a video proclaiming their non-relevance? To be open, someone else needs to be closed, showing how the self-image portrayed in the video needs the non-open antagonist to exist (Ahmed, 2004, p. 134). The city is portrayed as equal in an unequal world, manifesting the city as more progressive than others and
indicating that it is a better place to visit. If focusing on what is not mentioned in the definition of Stockholm as the Open City is however the material condition to travel there. Even if the city as a fictive actor, represented by the tourist bureau, does not care if the visitor is “rich or poor” (Youtube.com), the possibility for people of different classes to actually travel does not change. The video has a marketing purpose and the intention of attracting tourists could be assumed to attract money, a thing that poor people lack, making the articulated carelessness inconsistent with the purpose of the marketing. Not to mention the fact that Stockholm is situated in a nation-state where both assets and a passport is needed before becoming a tourist, again something everyone do not own.

6.2.3 Gothenburg: from “The Gay Bashing City” to “The Best LGBTQ City in Sweden”

Narratives from city employees and Pride organisers in Gothenburg also occasionally highlighted how Gothenburg stands out in comparison to other cities. But whereas the narratives about Stockholm emphasise what Stockholm is today; open and equal (in comparison to other cities), narratives of Gothenburg and LGBTQ rights make a comparison in time as well when talking about the identity of the city. This is especially done by re-telling the hostility LGBTQ persons used to meet in the public sphere, which is sometimes understood to have been worse in Gothenburg than elsewhere, mentioning the old reputation of it as “Bögknackarstaden”, which translates to “The Gay Bashing City”:

There’s not much more than 10 years ago that Gothenburg was known as Gay Bashing City really, and there were pretty many hate crimes and there was a lot of prejudices and things like that. To, today using West Pride as platform and at the same time push the questions in society, together with the city, have managed to do incredibly much (Eva, 09-03-18).

Eva, who’s working for the city of Gothenburg, defines LGBTQ rights in Gothenburg as progressive or even the most progressive ones in Sweden. This statement was also made by Louise, who said that Gothenburg has made a journey from being “The Gay Bashing City”, to today be called “Sweden’s best LGBTQ city” by RFSL. LGBTQ rights in the city are commonly defined as new ones, and as the result of a journey (in time), which has also been explained as starting from the severe homophobia and an imagination of the past Gothenburg as generally violent. This journey is expressed in a local news article (Vaccari, 2017-09-23) introducing EuroPride 2018, where the head of the LGBTQ-council describes homophobic hate crimes as the reason for the city having the first LGBTQ-council in Sweden. These narratives show geographical imaginations of what defines Gothenburg as more progressive than other cities, not despite being “behind” them historically but because they were behind other cities which encouraged both the civil society and the municipality to act. These definitions of Gothenburg’s identity having changed is telling a story of how the city differs from other cities in being “ahead” of them regarding LGBTQ rights, while at the same time acknowledging that homophobia still exists but stating that it is not as bad as it used to be. Based on this, discourses of LGBTQ rights as geographically situated is used to define Gothenburg both as more
progressive than other cities and as more progressive than other times, including history as well as place. The notion of geographical imaginations as a part of LGBTQ rights, was also brought up as an intersectional matter of perceptions of the typical Gothenburg resident: A male, straight, masculine harbour worker (in slang terms also described as ‘Go Gubbe’). According to Louise, the masculine straight worker used to define the imagination of the city which was a reason for the creation of what came to be West Pride:

Then you see in this report, that “No, there are other ways to live, there are many people- gothenburgers who are not a “Go Gubbe På Varvet” [very roughly translates to a “lad” (but of any age) working in the harbour]. And then people at the cultural institutions made an initiative together with the civil society to fund an association which after a while became the West Pride association (Louise, 05-04-18).

West Pride is then understood as a result of homophobia as the catalyst together with activism, culture and action taken from local politicians. It used to be considered as more hostile towards non-straight performances in the public sphere than other places, due to its masculine character based on imagining it as a city of and for male harbour workers. Now however, the city is imagined (by the actors working for the municipality) as a city generating a better life quality for LGBTQ people due to political actions. These actions are not however strictly related to the issue of safety in public and protection from gay bashing. They are also to do with norm-critical perspectives and decreasing heteronormativity in city authorities. In addition to this, Louise also described the current Pride as a vitamin injection, highlighting the need of LGBTQ issues, describing Pride as both a result of homophobia, a result of activism together with public work and an activity improving LGBTQ rights in the city.

6.2.4 LGBTQ Gothenburg
Just as for Stockholm, LGBTQ rights and human rights are being integrated in the city marketing of Gothenburg:

Don’t miss the chance to see the city of Gothenburg covered in Pride colours, securing its reputation as one of the most LGBTQ-welcoming cities in the world. Combine your stay with a visit to the stunning West Coast archipelago right on your doorstep! (EuroPride 2018c).

The statement is further strengthened by a pin telling of the city being listed as a top 10 destination in the British LGBT Awards. The gay-friendliness of the city is marked by a quantity of Pride flags which is the indicator of the city to be more welcoming towards LGBTQ tourists than other cities, again emphasising competition. Combined with telling of Gothenburg as especially LGBTQ-friendly, other tourist landmarks are mentioned and shown, such as the “archipelago on your doorstep” and the inclusion of a tram passing by (which are often held as symbols of the city) in the image below. The emphasis on symbols of Gothenburg in relation to Pride is also represented on EuroPride’s webpage about West Pride, including an image taken
from the perspective at the large square ‘Götaplatsen’, where the central focus is not on the parade, but on the statue of Poseidon which is also a city landmark (see Figure 4).


In the focusing on Gothenburg as a place for LGBTQ tourists to visit, both the EuroPride-page and the linked tourist guide webpage (Goteborg.com) have a more restricted definition than in Stockholm. Gothenburg is portrayed as a LGBTQ friendly city due to its LGBTQ council and motivated by a British LGBT Awards nomination for “Best LGBT Destination” (Jansson, 2018-05-05) and RFSL listing the city as Sweden’s best LGBTQ city. Bringing up the nominations indicates two things. Firstly, city branding and municipal politics are intertwined in Gothenburg where the local LGBTQ-council is defined as making it a better tourist destination. Secondly, it shows how LGBTQ-friendliness is a competition, giving connotations to Florida’s statement of tolerance as measuring the city’s chance of economic growth. It also displays how the idea of progressiveness is sellable (Binnie & Skeggs, 2004), and that in neoliberal city governance, LGBTQ politics can play a central part being used as a tool for the cities to market themselves.

The emphasises on the city being identified as either extraordinary gay-friendly (Gothenburg) or welcoming to everyone regardless of who they are (Stockholm) are similar and both imply the progressiveness and attractiveness of the cities; they are better than other cities and a good choice for a pleasant gaycation. The branding and marketing of the cities also defines Sweden as being particularly gay-friendly, which will be explained in the next section of EuroPride 2018’s Place-specific motto: One Country.
6.3 One Country
In Sassen’s (2002) theorisation of the role of the state, it has been said to decline in power while the cities financial agency has increased, due to globalisation. This has also been held as an explanation for why city branding and marketing has become more popular strategies exemplified by Stockholm and Gothenburg’s engagement in EuroPride 2018 motivated not only by their impact on LGBTQ rights but also the chance of increasing tourism and strengthening the city brand, competing in being “the best LGBT destination”. But when both cities express individuality of their cities, they do so by including expressions of the nation-state as well. In Gothenburg, the city is sometimes related to other Swedish cities by defining it as previously less LGBTQ-friendly and currently more LGBTQ-friendly than other Swedish cities. Simultaneously, Sweden as a sovereign state and gets labelled as progressive nation-state in comparison to other countries, such as in the example of Lithuania mentioned by informants who have been at EuroPride 2015 in Riga (see chapter 6.2.1).

In the city marketing arenas examined, examples of imagining the gay-friendly state were found on Stockholm’s marketing bureau’s webpage (Visitstockholm.com3), where they have a list of law changes evolving LGBTQ rights and the listing if what year the law changed. It goes from the de-criminalisation of homosexuality in 1944 to the cancelling of mandatory sterilisations when changing legal gender in 2013. The Swedish state is considered to be such a big part of visiting Stockholm’s city that it’s legal changes are listed in the tourist guide. The rights only include Swedish citizens, yet they are shown among activities that international tourists (non-citizens of the Swedish state) might enjoy. The mentioning of the rights clearly differs from the other categories in that they cannot be consumed by the international tourist, which means that they are either there to attract migrants (perhaps members from the ‘creative class’), or that they are used to display Stockholm being “The Open City”, meaning that the possibility of enjoying rights is not in focus, the list instead symbolizes the national identity as LGBTQ-friendly, using laws to describe that LGBTQ-friendly hinting that all battles for human rights for LGBTQ persons are already won. The theme of Sweden as a progressive country is also mentioned in Gothenburg’s tourist communication: “Same-sex relationships are widely accepted in Sweden. Gothenburg is progressive in LGBTQ-rights and it’s illegal according to Swedish law to discriminate against anyone because of sexual orientation or gender identity.” (Goteborg.com).

Here, the city and the nation-state are expressed as being the same when it comes to rights: Gothenburg is progressive, while Sweden is tolerant of same-sex relationships and have laws against discrimination, showing that state politics and regulations can be absorbed in the discourse of the competing, neoliberal city. The imagining of Sweden as a LGBTQ-friendly place is not only spread by Swedish organisations and actors, it is also confirmed through different international articles, focusing on the country as a destination during Pride festivals. One article linked to on EuroPride’s Facebook feed describes the geographical imagination of a tolerant Sweden as a well-known fact: “We all know that Sweden’s so forward thinking when it comes to LGBTI-rights” (Gay Star News, 04-04-2018). The article supports this knowledge
by referring to legal rights such as de-criminalisation and marriage equality stating that: “This goes to show just how far ahead the country is when it comes to LGBTI rights. So its cities are worthy hosts!” (ibid), articulating EuroPride as an event a country deserves after handing out legal changes. A similar description of Sweden was made in Huffington Post (2017-08-08) when commenting on Stockholm Pride 2017, also bringing up law changes. Both articles confirm statements of Sweden being a good country to visit based on allowing LGBTQ persons access to state institutions earlier than other countries have, linking state politics to tourism. The political struggle behind the rights are neglected when describing it as a passive happening when “Sweden became the first country” (Huffington Post, 2017-08-08), while the progression is also articulated to be the nation’s doing stating that Sweden has been at the vanguard” (ibid).

In the discourse of LGBTQ tourism, the nation is reproduced by giving it agency to improve LGBTQ rights while not mentioning that the nation-state also was the very institution criminalising same-sex relations and labelling homosexuality a disorder in the first place. Through reading the Huffington Post quote, homonormative neoliberal patterns described by Duggan (2002) becomes evident confirming rights as given by the state without conflict.

The mentioning of Sweden in Pride channels is not all about city marketing directed towards visitors, it is also about the rights of LGBTQ people, which has been stated both by informants mentioning that full equal rights are not yet achieved. Such comments show to the paradox in using LGBTQ rights and Pride as displaying an attractive sellable city: Without homophobia there cannot be tolerance, which enables contradictory definitions of the places as both tolerant but still homophobic. The mentioning of these rights has also been connected to a threat of them being taken away. In a debate article published on Stockholm Pride’s news blog and elsewhere (Aftonbladet, 2017-09-18; QX, 2017-09-14), fourteen LGBTQ activists and political parties together express a fear of increased homophobia:

Nazis are frightening and they are visible. Their banners and presence are scary enough for many to avoid participation and instead go back in to the wardrobes. But as long as they are just standing there and not breaking any laws it is their democratic right. […] The Nazi homo-hatred is easy to condemn and to gather around. But the threat and hatred towards LGBTQ people in the world comes, in the same degree, from religious fundamentalists. Even here the public Sweden needs to stand united behind us (Stockholmpride.org3).

The country in this statement refers to the local governments and the state, which needs to protect LGBTQ people from right-wing extremists (and left-wing extremists which are mentioned elsewhere in the text) and religious fundamentalists. The articulation of Sweden is that it is (or ought to be) protective and united against extremism and fundamentalism, which are organisations not included in the Swedish “us”. The statement includes discourses of both homonormativity and homonationalism, repeating the patterns of labelling every activity other than liberal politics as extremist (Duggan, 2002). In the message all examples of threats are from right-wing extremists and Nazis, but still they are expressed as perhaps less dangerous
than those from left-wing extremists and religious fundamentalists even though no examples of their violence are given in the text. Nazism is dangerous, but it is a democratic right even if it might lead to less people daring to live openly (being forced back to the closet). The hatred from Nazism is both the reason for the text, while it also is articulated to not be a major problem seeing as “it is their democratic right” and “it is easy condemn” contrasting homophobia from other “extremes”.

The article is also reproducing discourses of homonationalism, saying that they are “proud over how far Sweden has come”, which is pointing out the exceptionality of Sweden as an inherently non-homophobic country that can collectively condemn Nazism. The threat of this acceptance come from outside; in the shape of religious fundamentalists, a definition done by others to mark out racialized others (Muslims) as threatening the diverse nation (Puar, 2007; 2013, p. 337; Haritaworn, 2012, p. 76). The threat also come from members inside the nation-state, but who are not included in the diversity national identity as they oppose the openness discourse the nation-members all share (Ahmed, 2004). The tendency of labelling the threat as coming from outside the tolerant nation is also clear in the article “We are under attack”, as it is introduced with a picture of a Pride flag photographed from below, reassembling nationalist symbolism where the Pride flag marks out the open and tolerant nation.

6.4 For a United Europe, Open to the World

Defining Europe as a place is done mainly by manifesting Sweden, Gothenburg and/or Stockholm as different from other European places. Jenny mentioned Riga as a Pride which was not very successful due to its lack of flags, and another respondent, Eva, also described the difference between Pride in Gothenburg and Pride in Madrid:

 […] I think it is important that a Pride festival is for everyone. If you look back shortly in time, I was at World Pride in Madrid and in that forum there was absolutely a very large majority of men who participate. You don’t at all se as many girls. You don’t see many children and such. And it’s about intersectionality and that everyone should feel welcome even if it’s… Pride festival that is about humans’ equal rights, but it’s not always so easy that everyone’s needs are met in that group (Eva, 09-03-18).

Eva described the exclusionary processes of Pride, acknowledging the criticism towards the event only gaining gay cismen, which was also articulated by the Pride participant Emil (see chapter 5.2.5) and in academia by Nast (2002) and Bacchetta et al. (2015). This problem was however exemplified not by a Swedish Pride festival but by referring to a Spanish Pride, situating the problem outside of Sweden keeping the national image as inclusive intact. This has been more explicitly stated by the Swedish minister for culture and democracy:

I have participated in several Pride events in Europe during my years as minister. What differentiates Swedish Pride is that there is a lot clearer politics on the agenda. You still manage to combine it with
celebrations. This I felt in Madrid as well – that I would have liked to see even more political engagements (SVT Nyheter, 2017-07-02).

In her statement, the minister is defining what a Swedish Pride place is: political, and what a European Pride Place is not: as political as a Swedish Prides. Both her and the interviewee means that Madrid, as a European Pride differed from what the Swedish Pride will be, defining it as less political and less inclusive. The role of a EuroPride in Sweden could also, according to Jenny communicate and “make visible the work [being done to achieve LGBTQ rights] outwards to Europe to infuse hope among those who might not have it as easy”. The geographical imagination of Europe is then used for the imagination of Sweden, being less political, less inclusive and more hostile, Europe manifests the progressiveness of Sweden, which indicates that homonationalist discourses are not always tied to conceptions of West and East (which is often the topic of other studies, such as described in chapter 3.3). Rather, a western country can also use elements of difference towards other western countries to reproduce the image of the inclusive and modern nation-state. Contrary to the articulations above stands the definition of a United Europe, which defines the commonness more than the differences:

But above all it feels incredibly important that we in the European Pride movement intensify our common international work to reach change in the parts of the world where the oppression and violence against LGBTQ persons are more markedly than here in Europe (Stockholmpride.org).

The quote resembles discourses of homonationalism; dividing west and east, a statement clarified by the post’s title: “A Proud Europe Gathers in Gothenburg”. This definition is closer to the title of EuroPride 2018, since it defines the continent as united, describing homophobia as something that is out there in “the world”, not as much in Europe, alluding both the internationality of LGBTQ rights which partly might contest nationalist production. But it might also be understood as indicating that “brown gays need to be saved from brown straight men” (Bracke, 2012; Jungar and Peltonen, 2017), situating those being saved geographically in “the world”, outside of Europe, and the saviours in Europe.

Imagining Sweden as a LGBTQ friendly often comes with imagining other countries as non-LGBTQ-friendly compared to Sweden. When The world is mentioned, it is often being defined as a hostile place for LGBTQ people, and a place towards which EuroPride in Stockholm and Gothenburg can both invite people to come visit from and a place that a Swedish EuroPride can affect by sending out a message abroad:

[…] I really think one has the possibility to use EuroPride as a platform to highlight important issues and to get people to meet, and to work against the prejudices that in the highest degree still exist. And maybe send a signal to the rest of Europe and the world and show that these issues are still important, and to show
how important openness is. And try to give hope and courage to those who might right now be in more
difficult situations in the rest of the world (Eva, 09-03-18).

Eva states that prejudice exist without spatially situating it at first, including Sweden as a place
where homophobia still exist, contrasting assumptions of a post-homophobic state. But by
saying that a Swedish EuroPride can send signals outwards, the prejudices are understood as
worse elsewhere, followed by stating that the world is more homophobic than Sweden.

6.5 Discussion: Pride in Place
Just as in chapter 5, this chapter will be rounded off with a discussion guided by the research
questions, which includes geographical imaginations the cities and regions (mainly the Swedish
nation-state). They also involve city branding and practices of inclusion and exclusion.

6.5.1. How are different levels of places; cities, regions and the world geographically imagined
through Pride?
Through discussing the use of Pride as an object for the place to extend itself through (based
on Ahmed’s (2006, p. 3, 63, 80, 85) description of orientations), different places such as the
cities, the nation and the world are described according to measurements of how LGBTQ-
friendly they are, using Pride as a proof or as a mean to show this. In an economy where cities
compete for tourist incomes, the meaning of Pride fluctuates depending on who use it, and the
use of it follows the interest of the city to increase tourism and growth. Just as have been showed
by Binnie (1995), the city can use LGBTQ politics and Pride events to market itself to the gay
consumer by offering niched consumption possibilities and sense of belonging. In the Swedish
context however, it is not the entertainment which is in focus of LGBTQ marketing, even if it
certainly is part of it. Instead, what is marketed is the nation-state and the cities as safe havens
for LGBTQ people. In doing this, the nation is reproduced, showing what Ahmed (2004) argues
is a national identity based on diversity, meaning that the self-image of those in the Swedish
nation depend on including previous non-nationals (queers) into the diverse nation. The diverse
places are also imagined as equal where no structural inequalities exist, manifesting a
homonormative discourse where inclusion is defined as a-political and neutral (Duggan, 2002),
which was articulated through statements of not caring about ideology when welcoming tourists
(chapter 6.2.2) or when pleading for state protection of LGBTQ rights (chapter 6.4).

6.5.2. How are EuroPride 2018 and city branding processes affecting each other?
The use of the national identity in city marketing displays perception of what place Sweden is,
which is just as the both cities, imagined to be more inclusive towards LGBTQ communities
than other places, or historical places, such as Gothenburg in the 90’s. The selling of the national
identity could be connected to Binnie & Skeggs (2004) definition of cosmopolitanism as a
sellable good, but in this case, the emphasis on the nation-state is more evident than emphasises
on class belonging.
Evidently, LGBTQ politics are overtly a part of the city brands of Stockholm and Gothenburg, where EuroPride 2018 is used to manifest that brand, being a tourist activity, as suggested by Hughes (2006), but not as entirely a-political. Instead state politics are part of the city brand, marketing the city as safe, rather than fun. Additionally, voices in the Swedish context emphasised that Pride needs to be political, using a brand based on tolerance and diversity which might be considered ideologically neutral through hiding struggles leading to legal changes (see chapter 6.4), and by calling for rights as universal and rational above party politics and struggle. The politics manifested in doing this however, is state politics which was part of the marketing strategies, selling the tolerant nation-state as the city brand, leading to an explicit form of attracting the creative class by attracting the gays (Florida, 2012), or attracting the gays as consumers generating incomes.

6.5.3 What practices of socio-spatial inclusion/exclusion can be identified related to the Pride festivals?
The imagining of the inclusive place includes an inconsistency of needing antagonistic homophobic articulations in order to identify as diverse (Ahmed, 2004), which in this case was shown by marking other places as homo- and transphobic. But another paradox in the place definition occurred; awareness of homophobia, transphobia and heteronormativity in the place was a condition for it to be nonhomophobic, non-transphobic and inclusive. The cities both manifested their tolerance outwards through displaying the inclusive city brand, while they stated their work against non-tolerance in their work inwards, or both such as the LGBTQ council in Gothenburg both highlighting inequalities in the city while also manifesting the equality of the city. The paradox in this lies in neoliberal articulations of equality as something already achieved (Duggan, 2002), while part of this achievement lays in accepting that homophobia exists in the city, marking it as out-of-place, othering the homophobe (Ahmed, 2004; Hubbard and Wilkinson, 2015). The branding of a diverse nation is then inclusive of LGBTQ populations, while excluding homophobes and ideological extremists who are not allowed into the national identity.

The articulations of the places however, stated that everybody is welcome and that no one should be denied entry to the cities, meaning that in theory, there is no exclusionary circumstances. But in practice, the inclusion is connected to tourism and consumption when everyone is allowed to visit to spend money, which does not make it easier for all people to travel, or to take part of the rights emphasised in the city marketing. The inclusion of the state through citizenship is by definition exclusive and a lot of the world population do not have the funds to travel or the possibility to hold a visa, leading to poor people being excluded from both state and consumerist citizenships.
7. DISCUSSION: PRIDE AS A PLACE SITUATED IN PLACES
This study has shown that Pride is a contested place, where actors imagine it differently depending on what is in perception and how they might use the object (Pride) they perceive accordingly to a purpose (in terms used by Ahmed, 2006). In this last chapter, these contesting imaginations of Pride and the places it is held in will be discussed under two themes, highlighting the major questions of the thesis: What constitutes a Pride place? And how is it used (as an object) to constitute the places it is situated in? The first of the questions is treated in 7.1 Pride as a Contested Place, where theorisations of sexualised space (introduced in chapter 2.4) are re-visited. The second question is seen to in 7.2 Homonationalism through City Branding, which seeks to combine the critical theoretical perspectives (from chapter 3) when looking at the imaginations of cities through Pride.

7.1 Pride as a Contested Place
Previous definitions of other Pride places have emphasised the Pride parade as queering space (Johnston, 2005; 2007; Valentine 1995; Bell & Valentine 1995), as a party with politics (Browne 2007), as an unpolitical place of consumption (Hughes, 2006; Ammaturo 2016) or as homonormative, excluding non-white and genderqueer performances at Pride (Eleftheriadis, 2017; Lamusse, 2016). These themes could be connected to Stockholm Pride, West Pride and EuroPride 2018, which were defined as queering the place according to narratives from participants, who all meant that LGBTQ performances were expected, which indicates that the space extends itself sexuality onto objects, queering them, as opposed to everyday space being heteronormative. In the telling of experiences from Stockholm Pride however, the expectations of queerness could lead to increased hostility from the straight population. This could be a confirmation of the space being queered (Johnston, 2005), but it also shows that to the straight population, “all space is heterosexual space”, as noted by Brown (2000, p. 27-28) and Cresswell (2004, p. 105). The norm to them is still straight behaviour, regardless of the effect the queering of space might have on other people, meaning that the sexualisation of a place is never complete or uncontested, queer space will not extend itself onto all bodies just as straight space do not. There is always a struggle of defining the place and its sexualisation meaning that it can be contested, which validates queer geographical statements of space being discursive, shaping the place through a discourse which is never complete but always changeable.

Pride as a place is a place of consumption, with closed areas (chapter 5.2.5), with leisure being important (5.2.4) and products given an arena (5.2.3; 5.3.2), but the idea of it being so was repeatedly challenged, implying that the agreement of being included in a consumerist citizenship (Binnie, 2014) is resisted. However, the resistance was not articulated towards companies and parties per se, but it was explained as being because of them not contributing to LGBTQ rights, indicating that some companies might be acceptable if they would not be exploiting Pride through their own gains. Pride was, from the participants’ perspectives articulated as a place where opportunistic elements should be excluded, but all people should be included, a geographical imagination shared with the city employees. This is an imagination
of what Pride ideally is, contrasting some of the elements shaping the experience of Pride: entrance fees (although this is not the case in Gothenburg), private spaces, fewer areas for children (5.2.5), policing of appearance (5.2.2), and photos dominated by white people (5.3). According to Nast (2002), mainstream LGBTQ culture mainly benefits middleclass cismen who have purchase power and who are targeted by the market, meaning that Pride as a place is shaped by patriarchal and racist power discourses, just as any place, resulting in a cultural sphere attempting to include a vast range of identities (which is also displayed in photos seeing as there are a diversity of participant appearances included even if most are white and able-bodied). The ideal Pride place is inclusive, but the material place might not always be, even if the cases in Stockholm and Gothenburg are less explicitly excluding than the cases drawn in some previous research (chapter 3). Some homonormative expressions were identified, shown in the objection to the presence of political parties and state institutions which previously had worked against LGBTQ rights. The amount of different political actors indicated imaginations of Pride place as unpolitical when a party can both be against most law changes regarding LGBTQ rights and still walk in the Pride Parade. Furthermore, all parties (except the Swedish Democrats) walked in the parades which means the political meaning of Pride fluctuates, or that it is not assumed to represent politics at all, being “neutral”.

7.2 Homonationalism Through City Branding
The geographical imaginations of places related to EuroPride 2018 show some of the power structures involved in struggles over who define the places and for what aims. In these definitions, different lingual concepts referring to time have re-occurred when respondents and others have described the identities and purposes of places and Pride place by distinguishing the place spatially and in time. Terms describing time such as the past, and the present have together with concepts describing movement been used to understand and present LGBTQ rights in different places in position to other places; ahead or behind. Sweden was articulated as ‘ahead’ of others (see 6.3-6.4), explicitly stated in travel articles and implied in the timeline used in Stockholm’s city marketing. The timeline is used to show how much sooner in time decriminalisation of homosexuality and marriage laws has been made. The time as in the year for when a law has passed becomes a proof of the place’s LGBTQ-friendliness compared to other places where these laws were introduced later or have not been introduced at all. Describing LGBTQ rights in a place with imaginations of time is even more neatly performed by actors describing Gothenburg situated in time; it used to be homophobic, but now it is ahead of other cities in Sweden (and the world). When situating places (the open city and the LGBTQ-friendly nation) in time, they are defined as previously homophobic, assuming that homophobia primarily exists in different times (the past) and places (the world), situated somewhere else or in a different time.

In this study it has been shown that branding the city as LGBTQ friendly, using human rights as a symbolic commodity and as a symbol of the city’s progressiveness, is done by differencing the city from others, not only south and eastern cities (as examined in Bacchetta et al., 2015;
Bracke, 2012; Haritaworn, 2012), but also other European cities, indicating nuances in homonationalist discourses where Europe can be included among the homophobic others. The distinguishing is done in both time and space, highlighting a modernist discourse assuming progress as improving over time, and where LGBTQ inclusiveness today can be displayed both by distancing the current place identity against the historical one (chapter 6.2.3), but also by referring to the place always having been less homo- and transphobic than others (2.4). This inconsistency in the discourse can be understood through the perspective of defining Pride as an object in places, according to Ahmed’s (2006) explanation of an object’s shape as decided by how others orient themselves towards it. For the city, LGBTQ rights are (partly) an object which can be used to extend itself; a tool for an attractive city brand, which means that the object of Pride is shaped to suit that purpose, making it possible to articulate contrasting elements in the discourse, shaping the place history to fit the narrative of progressiveness. The city is LGBTQ-friendly and therefore its history, its politics and its structure are given meaning accordingly, being used to explain the city’s openness. I want to stress that this does not mean that the narrators neglect that homophobia and discrimination exists in the own places as well, because the do mention repeatedly that the cities work towards equal rights which are not yet achieved, defining full equality as a possible future. This could however, also be theorised as having a purpose for the city since acknowledging injustice is necessary to display the LGBTQ-friendliness (chapter 6), additionally shaping the elements in the discourse to imagine the place as inclusive even by calling out on existing homophobia within it.

Because of the entanglement of nationalism in city branding and marketing, the “gay as a symbol of development” (chapter 3.1) is included, since the LGBTQ community is both intended visitors (hence also being consuming gays, as described in chapter 3.2) of the cities and proof of the city being a gay-friendly tourist attraction. The city’s attractiveness is measured by its capability to manifest itself as tolerant, using LGBTQ persons as symbols and as consumers. Ahmed (2004, p. 138) describes the racially mixed subject as the symbol of an ethnic and racially diverse UK, but I would argue that such fetishization is done for other “hybrid deviants” as well, such as gays in Richard Florida’s index. The monogamous (same-sex household) middleclass gay man is a fetish of the tolerant city and is being held as a proof for straight tolerance, leading to him being an object for the city more than a subject in it. He is furthermore a hybrid since he deviates from heterosexuality in directing himself physically towards men, while he does so in a classically heterosexually coded relationship: monogamy and possibly marriage. When Ahmed (2004, p. 122-145) describes the creation and reproduction of the multicultural nation, she does so by describing love as the condition of being a worthy citizen: Members of the nation must love differences and love people different to themselves. And those not valuing diversity are not loving. Together this means that homonationalism is dependent on 1. Loving diversity, 2. Other nations or citizens being perceived as not loving, or even hating diversity and 3. Fetishization of hybrid diverse objects, which in the case of my study is exemplified in the white middleclass LGBTQ consumer who has been “given” rights from the state and who represent the openness of the city confirming
its market value in a neoliberal competition for tourists and the creative class (as described by Florida, 2012).
8. CONCLUSION

By studying Pride as a place in this thesis, I found that those places can be imagined in sets of varied ways, where my sample of Pride goers confirmed the queerness of the place, but also the potential backlash of straight performances intruding that space and de-queer it. The queerness was explained mainly through visibility. When LGBTQ identity performances cluster, they could be “in-your-face”, questioning heteronormativity and increasing the possibility of that clustering to change the sexualisation of the space, making it queer, and hence the space could extend itself onto bodies in it, resulting in expectations of queerness rather than straightness. According to the same narratives, the threats to the queerness of Pride came from the straight population being increasingly aware, raising the risk of them keeping the heterosexual order through violence. The straightening of space during Pride was also done by guards policing non-conforming outfits (in this case, a bare chest), and by companies and political parties using the parade for their own gains.

To use Pride as an object (in place), is to give it meaning as for the own body (or organisation) to extend itself through (Ahmed, 2006). The different directions towards Pride as an object showed further how it was given meaning by being for something. For the participants, Pride was for increasing acceptance, for learning, for having fun and for meeting people. For the companies it was a PR-opportunity, and for the cities, Pride was used to define the city brand. The hosting of EuroPride 2018 was used by the cities in their marketing channels, both to attract tourists, but also to strengthen the self-identity as inclusive and equal in doing this. Both Stockholm and Gothenburg articulated their place brand to be strongly connected to LGBTQ-friendliness, for example by Stockholm using the slogan “The Open City” and using the IDAHOT day to market the city as a destination. It was also manifested by Gothenburg competing for the award for “best LGBT Destination”. The incorporation of Pride and LGBTQ rights in city marketing is confirming the three themes presented in chapter 3: Consumption of Gays, Consuming gays, and Homonormativity & Homonationalism. It is consuming gays, by using LGBTQ-people as objects shaped to define the city brand, while it is doing this to attract the consuming gays, meaning the tourists coming from other countries. Those countries are articulated as more hostile, and through homonationalist discourse the cities use nationalist perceptions of the progressive nation-state, proving Puar’s (2013, p. 338) description of labelling gay-friendly destinations as opposed to other not-gay-friendly nations. Homonationalism together with the contemporary capitalist system was also seen to produce exclusionary mechanisms which has to do with the consumerist citizenship (Bell and Binnie, 2004), and LGBTQ rights being articulated as the right to travel. In calling attention to IDAHOT, the city council of Stockholm welcomed LGBTQ tourists and used the day to spread its city brand, which stands as a good example of how oppressed LGBTQ people are encouraged to be out in Sweden during their vacation, and then return home to their closets. They are not welcome to stay, and the city has no obligation to increase their rights where they are (assuming
they do live in more oppressive states). Instead the richer world population can enjoy “loving who they want” when in Sweden on holiday.

The results of my analysis can be connected to previous research by showing nuances in homonationalism. Others have defined the racialised other as the Muslim (Puar, 2007), the brown straight man (Bracke, 2012) or the African (Jungar and Peltonen, 2017), but the “not-gay-friendly destination” can also be a European destination, or USA, as it was western examples brought up in this study: Riga, Madrid, USA and “other parts of the world”. This shows how the homonationalist discourse in Sweden not only differs between welcoming and hostile cities, it manifests a discourse where most, if not all, other destinations are either patriarchal (excluding women from Pride in Madrid) or hostile (Riga, USA and other parts of the world), implying that this is not the case in Sweden. The homonationalist discourse also had a clear historical aspect, defining Sweden as modern because of the state approving marriage equality as early as 2009, or understanding Gothenburg as particularly progressive due to its homophobic history in the 90’and 00’s as a catalyst. Based on this, and other articulations (chapter 6), the study suggests that the discourse of progressiveness is reproduced by all means possible. This includes several paradoxes in the explanations of why the place was LGBTQ-friendly. One inconsistency is the importance of admitting homophobia and discrimination existing in the city in order to be a city where it does not exist.

In this thesis, I have combined several theorisations of sexuality and place. Both my theoretical concepts of Geographical Imaginations and Queer Phenomenology have promoted blurring parts of the ontological and epistemological dichotomy by showing how ideas and culture have a material aspect, concluding that our perceptions matter and can be used to produce power legitimisation. This was the case when looking at how city and state actors perceive Pride according to their organisations’ interests in attracting tourists by simultaneously nurturing the nationalist image of a diverse state (Ahmed, 2004). The strength of including a vast range of perspectives has evidently been that it provided a large tool-box for interpreting the data, enabling to see both queer and critical definitions of the Swedish Prides, and to look closer into how it might be possible to use these together in order to find correlations between the concepts of LGBTQ rights, sexualised space, neoliberalist governance and homonationalism. Searching for interrelations of the theoretical concepts might however have come at the risk of missing depth. I do not rule out that following a narrower path could have brought the possibility of a more coherent analysis. But viewing several things at once, I believe, has made it possible to bring the analysis closer to the topic itself by seeing it from different angles, lessening the temptation of explaining the Prides simply as subversive or oppressive and instead focusing on how they are those things.

Lastly, this study shows the possibility to use Queer geographical perspectives to research not only the Pride place in itself, but its spatial situatedness as well. In doing so, the perspective makes it possible to look at how power can be sustained through discourses of nationalism and
tourism. It further adds to contemporary debates of what queerness and homonormativity is when LGBTQ rights are incorporated into city and nationalist politics, being an object used for city and state governments to extend themselves through.

8.1 Future Research

There is potential to continue to research this topic, but a consideration of what data and theory to use and when is necessary. I mentioned the risk of my perspective being too broad, which is why a closer look at some of the perspectives, or at one festival at a time, would add rigour. Preferably, this could be done during an actual Pride festival, to increase validity of the material by studying how Pride is imagined while it is a physical place. During a Pride event, observations would also ultimately be conducted in combination with interviews. Further triangulation could also be done if adding a quantitative analysis (highly recommended by Laitin, 2003). With the exception of Browne (2007), few quantitative elements have been included in studies of Pride places so far. Based on the calls for mixed methods and for seeing phenomena through different scientific tools means that future studies ought to not only develop which Queer Spaces and Places we study, but also how we study them.
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Interviews

APPENDIX 1

Interview guide (translated)

Intro: The interview will be centered around 4 overlapping themes:
- Your personal/professional relation to the Pride-event(s)
- How you think Pride interacts to the city
- What you believe is the purpose of Pride
- Experiences of Pride

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Your relation to Pride</th>
<th>2. The interaction between Pride and the City</th>
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<th>3. The purpose of Pride</th>
<th>4. To be at/work with Pride</th>
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Other reasonings about Pride:
APPENDIX 2

Example Questions: Council Employees (Translated)

Intro, contextualisation
-Can you tell me about your work with LGBTQ issues and Pride?
-Can you tell me what LGBTQ means to you?
-Can you tell me what Pride means to you?

Pride Places
-What usually happens with the city when Pride is arranged?
-What will happen this year?
-Do you have an example of a Pride event you have appreciated?
-Are there any activities you do not think belongs at a Pride?
-Are there any activities central to a Pride event?
-Do you have any thoughts about inclusion or exclusion of people during Pride?
-Can you describe the connection between EuroPride 2018 and Stockholm/Gothenburg?
-Do you have any experience from other Pride events?
-Do you think EuroPride 2018/Stockholm Pride/West Pride differs from other similar events?
-Which?
-How?
-Do you think EuroPride 2018/Stockholm Pride/West Pride resembles other similar events?
-Which?
-How?

Purpose
-What is your professional role in working with Pride/LGBTQ issues?
-Why have you chosen to work with Pride/LGBTQ issues?
-How have the work evolved during the time you have engaged in it?
-Can you tell of a situation when the working with Pride/LGBTQ issues have taken a direction you have not agreed with?
-Have you encountered any conflicts in your work?
-What were they about?
-How did you solve them?
-What did you think of that?
-What purposes are there with EuroPride 2018 according to you?
-What is the best about Pride?
-Can you tell of such a situation?
-What is the worst with Pride?
-Can you tell of such a situation?
-Who do you hope will visit Pride?
-Have you experienced that anyone misinterprets Pride?

Questions specific for employed at the LGBTQ section of Gothenburg’s council
-What do you think about Gothenburg’s work with LGBTQ issues?
-What role has Pride in that work?
-What have you accomplished?
-What do you hope to accomplish?
- Are there any negative consequences you want to avoid?
- Do you encounter any resistance or agreeance from people outside of the council?
  - Is that resistance/agreeance related to Pride in the city?
APPENDIX 3

Example Questions: Pride Participants (Translated)

Intro, contextualisation
-Can you tell me a bit about when you have been at Pride?
-Which event(s) did you attend?
-What made you go?
-Can you tell what Pride means to you?
-Will you attend this year?

Pride Places
-What usually happens with the city when Pride is arranged?
-What will happen this year?
-Do you have an example of a Pride event you have appreciated?
-Are there any activities you do not think belongs at a Pride?
-Are there any activities central to a Pride event?
-Do you have any thoughts about inclusion or exclusion of people during Pride?
-Can you describe the connection between EuroPride 2018 and Stockholm/Gothenburg?
-Do you have any experience from other Pride events?
-Do you think EuroPride 2018/Stockholm Pride/West Pride differs from other similar events?
-Which?
-How?
-Do you think EuroPride 2018/Stockholm Pride/West Pride resembles other similar events?
-Which?
-How?

Purpose
-What is your best memory from Pride?
-What is your worst memory from Pride?
-What purposes are there of Pride, according to you?
What’s the best with Pride?
-Can you tell me of such a situation?
-What’s the worst with Pride?
-Can you tell me of such a situation?
-If you would describe a perfect, or a very bad Pride event, how would you describe it?
-How close is that description to Pride events you have attended?
APPENDIX 4

Information letter: City Employees. Final version (Translated)

The Establishment and Meaning of Pride Festivals
-an interview study about Swedish Pride festivals

Do you want to participate in a study of what Pride is today and how Pride festivals interacts with the cities they are held in? I am looking for participants in a human-geographic study of Swedish Pride festivals. The focus of the study is how different actors and interests in a city interact in planning and realisation of Pride festivals. I would therefore like to get in touch with you who work with the organising of EuroPride 2018, or in any way is involved in the event’s interaction with the city, for example as employed at a municipality, region or marketing bureau.

The study is conducted as a part of my master’s dissertation in Urban and Regional Planning and will be included in a master’s thesis which will be published this spring. The purpose of the work is to examine connections between sexuality, activism and place, and how Pride affects, or is affected by the cities they are arranged in. My hope is to reach actors from different organisations to include different viewpoints.

What does it mean to participate in the study?

Being in the study means participation in an interview with me, which will take approximately one hour. I will ask you questions about your thoughts, opinions and experiences of EuroPride 2018 and Pride festivals in general. You will get the opportunity to tell what Pride means to you and what you believe is the meaning of EuroPride 2018. The interview will be recorded and coded, but recording can be excluded if you wish. To guarantee the highest possible degree of anonymity, you will be referred to by a pseudonym in the thesis. No one except for me will be able to take part of the recording or your real name. I may however describe the organization you work for but leaving out the name of the organization. After the interview you will be given the possibility to read the transcript from the interview and leave comments if you in hindsight, would like to leave out something you have said.

Participation in the study is voluntary and you can cancel your participation when you wish without giving a reason. If you are interested in taking part of the thesis once it is done, I would gladly send it after it is published. To participate, or ask questions about the study, please contact me via email:

Lagerman.julia@gmail.com

Julia Lagerman, Master’s Student at Uppsala University

The study is conducted within the Master’s Program in Urban and Regional Planning, The Department of Social and Economic Geography, Uppsala University. The work is supervised by Rhiannon Pugh (rhiannon.pugh@kultgeog.uu.se).
APPENDIX 5

Information Letter: Pride Participants (Translated)

The Establishment and Meaning of Pride Festivals
-an interview study about Swedish Pride festivals

Do you want to participate in a study of what Pride is today and how Pride festivals interacts with the cities they are held in? I am looking for participants in a human-geographic study of Swedish Pride festivals. The focus of the study is how Pride festivals are experienced and understood in different ways by different individuals and actors. I would therefore like to get in touch with you who plan to attend an event during EuroPride 2018 or who have participated in an event during either Stockholm Pride or Gothenburg Pride, 2015-2017.

The study is conducted as a part of my master’s dissertation in Urban and Regional Planning and will be included in a master’s thesis which will be published this spring. The purpose of the work is to examine connections between sexuality, activism and place, and how Pride affects, or is affected by the cities they are arranged in.

What does it mean to participate in the study?
Being in the study means participation in an interview with me, which will take approximately 30-45 minutes. I will ask you questions about your thoughts, opinions and experiences of EuroPride 2018 and Pride festivals in general. You will get the opportunity to tell what Pride means to you. The interview will be recorded, but recording can be excluded if you wish. To guarantee the highest possible degree of anonymity, you will be referred to by a pseudonym in the thesis. No one except for me will be able to take part of the recording or your real name. I may however describe the organization you work for but leaving out the name of the organization. After the interview you will be given the possibility to read the transcript from the interview and leave comments if you in hindsight, would like to leave out something you have said.

Participation in the study is voluntary and you can cancel your participation when you wish without giving a reason. If you are interested in taking part of the thesis once it is done, I would gladly send it after it is published. To participate, or ask questions about the study, please contact me via email:

Lagerman.julia@gmail.com
Julia Lagerman, Master’s Student at Uppsala University

The study is conducted within the Master’s Program in Urban and Regional Planning, The Department of Social and Economic Geography, Uppsala University. The work is supervised by Rhiannon Pugh (rhiannon.pugh@kultgeog.uu.se).
APPENDIX 6

Coding Schema: Council Employees & Marketing Channels

1. Time
1. Forward
1.1 Sthlm
1.2 Gbg
1.2.1. Move with Pride 2017
2. Present
2.1. Sthlm
2.1.2 “Open”
2.1.3 No risk of homophobia in public space
2.2. Gbg
2.2.1. Progressive city for LGBTQ Rights
2.2.2. HBTQ-council in Gbg City
2.3 Sweden
2.3.1 Risk of going backwards
2.3.1 Ahead of others
3. History (Gbg is no longer)
3.1. Hostile
3.2. Homophobic
3.2. Bögknackarstaden
3.3. Normative (Goa gubbar me fruar)
3.4. Homophobia started activism in the 90’s
3.5 Sweden used to be moving forward
4. Future
4.1 Risk of backlash
4.2 Now it’s moving backwards
4.3 Increased homophobia due to extremism

2. Place
1. Sthlm
1.2. The Open city
1.2.1 No gay cluster: openness
1.2.2 No homophobia/discrimination
1.2.3 Attempts to decrease homophobia/discrimination
2. Gbg
2.1. More progressive than other cities in the world
2.2. Best LGBTQIA city in Sweden
2.2.1 Only HBTQ-council in Sweden
2.2.2. LGBTQ politics through politicians, not against them
2.3. West Pride in collaboration with the municipality
2.3.1 Municipality asks West Pride for aid in HR work
3. Sweden
3.1. More progressive than other places
3.2 State *given* legal rights (early)
3.3. Needs to be united towards threat of Nazis and fundamentalists
4. Europe
4.1. Proud Europa
4.2. United Europe
4.3. Open Europe
4.4 Non-gay-friendly Europe
5. The world
5.1. The world is homophobic
5.1.1 Contrasting progressive Gbg
5.1.2. Contrasting Progressive Sthlm
5.1.2. Proving Swedish progressiveness
5.1.3. Work internationally in Europe to decrease homophobia elsewhere

4. Politics
4.1. Party politics
4.1.1. LGBTQ rights to be protected by all parties
4.1.2. Absence of ideologies
4.1.3. LGBTGIA rights as knowledge
4.1.3.1. Rights increased by spreading education
4.1.3.1.1. Informing the public
4.2. The state (the role of the state)
4.2.1 Should protect LGBTQ rights
4.2.2 Should manifest support for LGBTQ rights
4.2.3 Protects gay rights

5. Purposes of Pride
5.1 Pride as a platform
5.1.1 Talk about rights
5.1.2 Educate others
5.3 Pride as a party
5.3.1 International tourists
5.4 Party is not as important as education
5.5 Party is still important
5.6. Pride as a place for culture
5.7. Pride as manifesting openness
APPENDIX 7

Coding Schema: Pride Participants

1. The parade
   1.1. Visibility
   1.1.1 Important/main reason
   1.1.2 Rainbow flags
   1.2 Emotions
   1.2.1 Being observed
   1.2.2 Being uncomfortable
   1.3 Inclusion/exclusion
   1.3.1 Political parties
   1.3.2 Companies
   1.3.3 Deserving a place through action
   1.3.4 Ambivalence when defining who belongs in the parade or not

2. The club
   2.1 LGBTQ majority
   2.1.1 Many alternatives
   2.1.2 Contrasting usual scarceness of clubs
   2.1.3 Assumption of sexuality (as non-straight)
   2.1.4 (new) Hook-up possibilities
   2.2 Meeting people

3. The purpose
   3.1. Party
   3.1.1 Not party enough
   3.1.2 Potentially too much emphasis on party
   3.2. Meeting people
   3.3. Visibility
   3.4. Politics
   3.4.1. Politic roots are lost
   3.4.2 Opposing opportunism
   3.5. Exclusion
   3.5.1 Parties, authorities and companies
   3.5.2 Politics vs party
   3.5.3 Class, gender, racialization, ethnicity

4. Pride in Place
   4.1. Stockholm
   4.1.1 More extravagant
   4.2. Gothenburg
   4.2.1 More political
   4.3. Other cities
   4.3.1 Gay clusters
   4.3.2 More fun
4.4. The country
4.4.1 Gay friendly
4.4.2 Few LGBTQ clubs outside of Pride
4.2.1 Few LGBTQ’s at LGBTQ clubs outside of Pride