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Intimacy and Mobility in Male-stream Sexuality. A Norwegian Study of Men's Personal Ads Online¹

Over entire new spheres of life and intimate conduct, the dramatically increased intensity of ordinary people's instant and unfiltered mediated outlets, represent core features of today's participatory media-culture. Split-second twitting and me-first reportages, distributed through autobiographical vlogs, blogs, social network societies and personal ads, endorse the ever-updated newsletter, no matter how mundane. Tellingly, the public sphere is no longer reserved for white middle-aged male politicians and experts, typical for the traditional mass-media era. Instead, participatory media has changed the public sphere and influenced our notions of what should be kept private.

One aspect that particularly has blurred the boundaries of the public and the private sphere is the extensive and intensive mediated obsession of a sexy body. As a part of the postmodern aesthetic centered mediated image, the body has come to represent the most ubiquitous signifier of accomplishment and success. Interesting, to an increasingly degree, being concerned about fitness, beauty and the body, the discursive 'intimacy-sation' and 'femininisation' of the public sphere overly encompasses and reflects a trend towards men's lives and bodily relations.

This paper examines the aesthetics of young men's self-performances on the Norwegian contact site *deiligst.no*. By undertaking a postmodern and queer theoretical approach, the article suggests that the arrangements of men's bodies on *deiligst.no* do not follow the hierarchical and polarized structure of active/masculine/male versus passive/feminine/female. Instead, by surpassing stereotypical polarized divisions of activity and passivity, masculinity and femininity, young men's performances contribute in the redistribution of- and allowance for gaze and desire to be re-defined, not in terms of difference, but instead by overlapping notions and significances. For this matter, I argue that new media genres afford intimate and sexual performances that move beyond the logics of polarities. The young men's self-performances not only stresses mobile intimacies and subjectivities produced by and within these visual texts, it also recognizes all spectator- and desiring positions as actively producing and always temporary and in transit.

¹The paper is a part of a larger project on autobiographical digital genres based upon interviews with eight Norwegian women and men, aged between 17 and 37, coupled with observations of online practices. For a theoretical discussion of new emerging personal genres, see Lüders, Prøitz and Rasmussen 2010, 'Emerging Personal Genres' [forthcoming in *New Media and Societies*].