

ALL THAT GLITTERS

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By Swati Rayasam

“I’m a boy DAMNIT!”

I still vividly remember my friend from first year declaring this as he was denied access to the men’s bathroom at Qdoba.

I know you’re going to ask, so: 1. Yes, it was Halloween and 2. Yes, he was dressed as ‘The Fame Monster’ of Lady Gaga fame. However, he was still a boy and he, more than anyone else, should know which bathroom he wants to use.

The point that I’m trying to make isn’t about bathrooms though; it’s about gender expression and a general fear of seeming to be effeminate as a man.

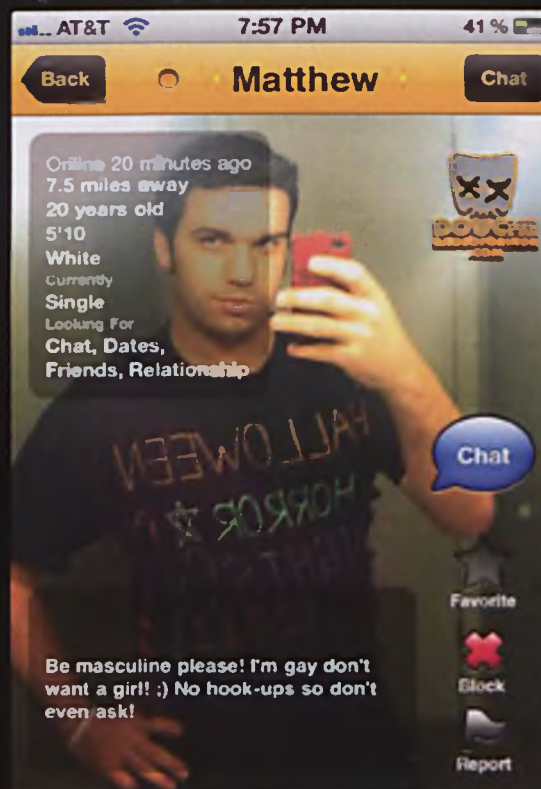
This isn’t specifically a gay issue; it applies to the entire male population. I’m sure everyone knows some age-old hyper-masculine colloquialism like: “Real Men (read: Straight Men) don’t drink with straws,” (because it looks like you’re blowing someone, apparently). My question is simple: what effect does your drink transport-of-choice have on your sexual orientation? Can’t a guy get a purple Droid without catching hell?

With gay men, however, this issue becomes a complicated juggling act of expression. Say a guy wants to identify as male, but he also wants to toe the gender-norm line and wear extremely

vibrant clothing or Softe shorts? Is it possible for him to successfully do both things in the eyes of our society?

It seems that gay men are constantly stereotyped by the non-LGBTQ community for not seeming gay enough in their everyday behavior and at the same time discriminated against by people within their community for fitting the stereotypical mold of a gay man. Think Jack from Will and Grace, theatrical in both professional and personal life and dressed in designer clothes, loud and probably a little glittery. Frankly, I have no idea how anyone can strike a perfect balance, because it seems absolutely exhausting. But for some people this seems to be the show of their lives.

It’s especially disheartening when people in the gay male community (potential partners for these effeminate men) declare that they’re only looking for “Straight Acting” gay men or make statements like:



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(Where does he get off saying “Be Masculine please! I’m gay, [and I] don’t want a girl”? Seriously? As if please makes it okay.)

Okay, so he is on Douchebags Of Grindr (a parody of a gay male networking/dating site), but he’s not