

Butcher Queers



Homosexuals

are



Revolting



The term '*Butcher Queers*' was conceived by design guru Niall Sweeney as a sticker for the club night H.A.M in the late nineties. H.A.M-sters Niall, Rory and Karim would go about stickering the city with these on weekends. One evening while they were decorating the streets of Dublin, an American lady challenged them about their activities, not the stickering but how they could justify the 'butchering of gay people'. They kindly explained that *Butcher Queers* was a play on words, meaning of course, 'stronger queers' and all was good.

What I most like about this story is not the misinterpretation of transatlantic linguistics, but that this woman had the balls to reprimand these strangers for what she believed was the spreading of hatred. We need to build a society that doesn't just tolerate or accept us for being gay, but also protects and cherishes us and our relationships, just like that 'butcher' American woman.

Last Spetember after the opening night of The Dublin Gay Film Festival, I got chatting with *GCN* editor, Brian Finnegan over free cocktails. Many drinks and two hours later we drunkenly agreed

that Dublin needed a different kind of gay publication that was edgy, alternative and artistic. To his credit Brian made good with his support and *Butcher Queers* has come kicking a screaming into this world.

Butcher Queers is a collaboration of queer writers, activists, artists, performers, photographers and thinkers. We don't advertise clubs, bars, events, groups or products. We're interested in people. The things they do, things they love, things they make and say.

Butcher Queers is made possible with the support of The National Gay and Lesbian Federation. The articles and visual work are the copyright of their respective creators. Inclusion in *Butcher Queers* does not make you gay or cool. The opinions expressed in *Butcher Queers* are those of their authors and do not nessecarily reflect those of NGLF.

Thank you: Brian, Niall, Rory, Eddie, Tonie, Phillip, Enda, Jamie + Colin, Stephen, Chris, Daniel, Alan, Logan, Martin, Hivenman+, Mark, Eloise, Roisin Séan, Colin, Neil, The Hive, Chris and Danny.

Will



OH NO, THAT LESBIAN LOOKED
AT ME... SHE MUST WANT TO FINGER
MY PUSSY! WHERE'S MY GAY BOY?

Is your 'fag-hag'

just another fuckin'

homophobe?

by Stephen McCabe

When contacted by *Butcher Queens* to write a piece I was asked to expand upon an article I wrote last year criticising 'fag hags' for their attitudes towards lesbians. The question I was asked to explore was: "Is your fag-hag just another fuckin' homophobe". Initially, I delved right into the task and began listing all fag hags irritating homophobic behaviours, preparing to make my case against them. Then – just like Stanford's hag, Carrie Bradshaw – 'I had a thought'

Why should women be held more accountable than the gay guys who tacitly endorse this type of behaviour? Surely any criticism of the hag, and her behaviour, must also factor in the fag and the supporting, approving role he provides to her.

With that in mind I decided to explore the issue within a broader context; as I felt, in some way, had I proceeded from the original starting point, it would be unfairly criticising the women for behaviour that wouldn't occur if the 'fags' weren't so spineless

Just to be clear, I am not criticising or demeaning all gay male/straight girl friendships. I have many of those. The type I object to would be the ones which function in ridiculously narrow contexts and are defined strictly in terms of the 'fags' sexuality. The ones which leave you with the impression that had the 'fag' been born straight, he and his hag would have nothing to talk about except the weather.

On a basic level, my respect for anybody defining themselves as a fag-hag begins at zero. The term itself is anti-woman since it assigns a subordinate role to women; and any woman willing to align themselves to such a reductive tag is not really the type of woman I would readily warm to. I once jokingly referred to a female friend as a 'hag' – she definitely wasn't amused.

On a conceptual level, most of my female friends resent the term because they view it as demonstration that despite the superficial liberal values of 'gay communities', the men within them seem unwilling to abdicate the superior gender role patriarchal society assigns to them. In a broad sense – the struggle for gay equality and the feminist cause are the same. Both groups seek to challenge basic assumptions about gender and sexuality. By replicating the same misogyny that exists in the mainstream in their power-relations with women the 'fags' lose the support of the feminists, and rightly so!

And then there's the 'fags'. Participation in these relationships is pathetic. By allowing themselves to become an 'objet de Divertissement' to these girls they facilitate the perpetuation of stereotypes and demonstrate an overall unwillingness to carve out their own personality, which isn't reliant on their sexuality. By conforming to a pre-existing stereotype and rooting their relations with women within the fag-hag concept, they actually do a disservice not only to themselves but also to the wider aims of the gay rights movement.

But who am I to judge? From an analytical perspective these relationships fascinate me. Which of the participants I find more irritating is, as yet, undecided. My condescension would remain private if these relationships didn't directly impact on other members of the so-called 'Gay community'.

"A basic demand of any non-gay person visiting a gay club would be that they respect everybody there."

These fag-hags make no attempt to mask their contempt for lesbians. Many of my lesbian friends have spoken of incidents inside the ladies toilets of gay and lesbian clubs where they have been made to feel horribly uncomfortable by straight girls who seem to be developing their own version of 'backs against the wall lads'. A basic demand I would make of any non-gay person visiting a gay club would be that they respect everybody there. I don't think that is a shockingly unreasonable request.

The problem, of course, is that much of the lesbian-phobia you hear from the 'hags', you can also hear from their 'fags'. (To a large extent, lesbian-phobia has become normalised within certain sections of the gay scene). This is never properly challenged and it should be. The type of lesbian-phobia that reverberates around the tackier gay establishments needs to be dislodged. It's embarrassing especially, when you see the culprits marching at Pride, talking about gay rights.

My objection to the presence of the 'hags' is their complete disengagement from gay culture and the political and social aims of the gay movement. They see their 'fags' as fun accessories to their perceived glamorous life. The existence of a 'gay friend' in a way

reinforces the mistaken assumption that they are cool. They never actually seem to get beyond the fact that you're gay and this fact predominates their thought processes during their every social interaction with you.

I could just about cope with their presence but they're always so annoying and devoid of charm. I would hazard a guess and say that they have IQs lower than room temperature. They talk to you, without realising, in dreadfully condescending terms, seeking a big 'thank you' when they announce that they have no problem with you being gay. Are we supposed to be grateful that some tacky bimbo has no problem with us? If I had any pluck I would respond, listing my various problems with her, starting with A for my aesthetic objections to her and ending with Z for my zero respect for her.

“My problem with the ‘fags’ is that I cannot fathom how anybody could play a role in a friendship which is so limiting.”

The expectation of gratitude for their non-judgement of you is hilarious. I would actually prefer it if they did have a problem with us and this problem manifested itself as a hatred of gay bars itself which precluded them from ever going into them; at least then I wouldn't have to listen to the banality that makes up their conversational pieces.

What is so interesting about gay spaces that they compel certain straight girls to structure their social lives around them? For a start, gay scenes are not that interesting. They're self-obsessed, preoccupied with perpetuating their own myths and, to a large extent, populated by people with more issues than *GCN*. But for gay men they are a necessary evil in that they provide a meeting place for you to meet other gay men. If it weren't for this fact I would have no reason to go near them (well, I suppose there's always the mad ones).

My problem with the 'fags' is that I cannot fathom how anybody could play a role in a friendship that is so limiting. I suppose, if you got me on one of my more charitable days, I could concede a certain degree of understanding towards them. They revel in the affirmation they



Above: Based on 'In the Car' by Roy Lichtenstein. 1963

receive from their 'hags'. Based on my experience, many of them don't seem to be in possession of a great deal of confidence. They mask their insecurities behind these gay personas. By buying into 'the gay identity' they quickly acquire all the trappings of a successful gay life – including the requisite 'fag hag'.

Embryonically, these relationships develop according to the extraordinarily limited social roles the gay scene assigns to straight women. It's like neither of the participants possess the individuality or, indeed, the intelligence to resist such a ridiculous classification. Conformity, of course, isn't exclusive to the gay scene but there is something especially irksome about these types of relationships.

The gay scene could be viewed from as a microcosm of the wider social divisions which exist in everyday society, i.e. the same class, social and race barriers which exist within the mainstream are continued inside gay spaces. These divisions can't be tackled without first addressing the structural divisions within the wider society – but that's a whole other article. My point is: In order for 'gay communities' to evolve and grow in the coming century, we need to move past the point of defining ourselves and our relationships with people based around our sexuality. True gay liberation will be found when a person's sexual preference is as irrelevant as their hair colour. Of course when this happens we will no longer need gay bars as we will have totally achieved our aims of obliterating the need for ghettoisation and fag-hags. **BQ**

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Shup ya Bollix

Fr. John Harvey

In 2007, the shores of Ireland were graced by Fr. John Harvey, a guest speaker at a conference organised by Human Life International, Ireland. Fr. Harvey is the founder of Courage International, whose mission is to: 'Help the Homosexuality Orientated Person to Live a Life of Chastity'.

Shup ya Bollix! There's nothing wrong with gay people. Here's a better topic; 'Help Kiddy Fiddling Priests to Live a Life of Chastity'.

Ian Paisley Jr.

In 2005, the former Northern Ireland minister made disparaging comments about Stephen King and his partner following news of their gay marriage wedding in Canada. Late last year he told *Hotpress* magazine. "I am pretty repulsed by gay and lesbianism. I think it is wrong" he added: "I think that those people harm themselves and - without caring about it - harm society. That doesn't mean to say that I hate them. I mean, I hate what they do."

Shup ya Bollix! That comes from someone who's as dodgy as buying tandoori prawns at a car boot sale. It's ignorant wankers like you who harm society.

Lech Kaczynski

Speaking at Dublin Castle in 2007 during a three day state visit, Polish President, Lech Kaczynski, was asked during a question and answer session about his attitudes to gay people. To audible gasps, Mr Kaczynski said: "If that kind of approach to sexual life were to be promoted on a grand scale, the human race would disappear." Anti-Gay sentiment is nothing new for Mr Kaczynski. In 2004 he banned a gay march in Warsaw when he was mayor of the Polish capital.

Shup ya Bollix! Where's your fuckin' manners? To come here at the invitation of Irish people and have the cheek to insult them. And what did Bertie have to say about this disgraceful attack on a minority group? Nothin'.



the body of Christ



I know your face



Jak sie masz



Above: 'Machismo' photography by Daniel Holfeld

Every now and then the Internet will throw up a few surprises among the waves of generic images that people put on their social networking profiles. *Butcher Queens* was leaving a message on a friend's bebo page when we spotted a beautiful and unusual profile picture of a fellow Beboer, Chris Sutton (see front cover). We sent Chris a message with loads of questions and he, in turn, introduced me to Daniel Holfeld the creator of the pictures.

A few weeks later, *BQ* met Daniel and Chris in Dublin to find out more about how an actor/director and photographer came together to produce a series of stunning black and white photographs.

BQ: How did these photos come about?

Daniel: I had been working with antlers and investigating my attraction to them for a while, so I suggested bringing Chris into the studio to see what would happen. It developed naturally from there.

Chris: Well... it really seemed like a logical progression for us to work together. The only trouble was getting a spare moment where we both weren't busy. As soon as the opportunity presented itself we spent a day in Daniel's studio, working through our ideas. It all came together quite quickly.

BQ: How did you two become friends? Is this a creative friendship?

Daniel: A random London encounter developed into a great friendship. We talked about art and creativity for so long, it became obvious to unite our skills when the opportunity presents itself. I love working with Chris because he commits entirely to the concept, which can be difficult, especially when I'm asking him to get naked and strap a deer skull on!

Chris: Ha... yes, well how could I say no to that? A dead animal skull and a big German... that's just career gold! But seriously, it was quite interesting because a mutual friend had made a point of saying to me, 'You have to meet this guy, Daniel, you guys would get on so well'. So fast forward to some shit-hole in the middle of nowhere in London, to our first meeting, and we clicked within a second... four years later here we are. Is it a creative friendship? An essence of

our friendship is creative, but it isn't the basis. We have a great connection and that's what it's about. When we work together it's for the fun. There are some driven, personal things that are very hard to make into art. And there are other things you discover, that just work like that. But they don't go out of the studio if they're not art.

BQ: How does Daniel's style of direction differ from other people you work with?

Chris: To be honest there really isn't much difference in the direction I would get on stage or on film, except that he knows me so well. Daniel gets to the point instantly and doesn't fuck about or waste my time, or his. As a performer I'm interested in pushing myself and making myself uncomfortable by trying new things so I know that when I get to work with Daniel it isn't going to be a run of the mill experience.

BQ: Daniel, you use antlers in your work, what's their significance?

Daniel: Antlers interest me because of their iconic status. To me antlers are the most powerful symbol of masculinity. The life cycle of antlers rotates around mating seasons and display a stag's age and strength. As a metaphor for male virility, this connection to primordial man fascinates me. I wonder if traces of him still exist or if the trend for metrosexuality has eradicated him entirely from contemporary masculinity.

BQ: Can you tell us about what you both are influenced/affected by?

Daniel: I am really influenced by not fitting in. Growing up in a German family in Ireland always presented a cultural discourse that confused me at times. I like to explore differences and celebrate them too. Popular trends bother me a little and motivate me to go in search of why we follow a particular way of being.

Chris: I'm influenced by individuals. If only people realized that it's more rewarding to be an individual. I also was never popular at school, but fuck it, I always found myself alone painting or day-dreaming about acting. And to have grown up in that way to now be a performer, well it informs everything I do. In the sense



Left to right: 'Machismo' photography by Daniel Holfeld

that it forces you to find your own way forward, it makes you dare embarrassment and not be afraid of failure. At the end of the day when it comes down to it... I know I'm all I've got.

BQ: What are feelings about current trends in Irish queer culture and creativity?

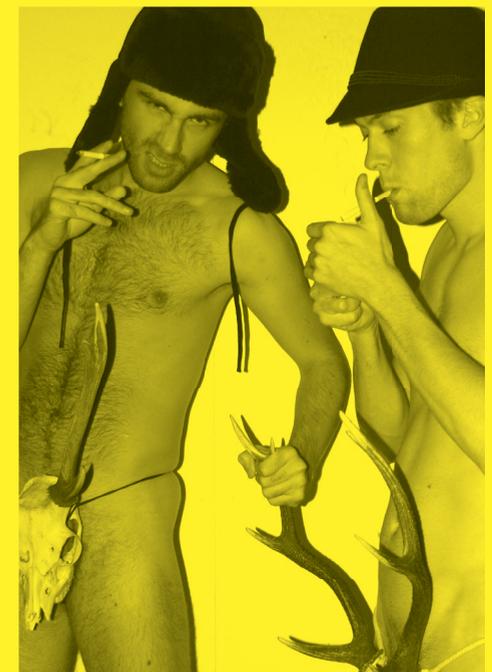
Daniel: In Ireland queer culture is getting stronger and becoming more of a feature, but it still seems a little insecure. Catholic baggage doesn't help and nor do feelings of 'I'm gay but I'm straight acting'. Creatively this hinders expression and sometimes (except for the few pioneers in the country) feelings of insecurity inhibit a totally honest expression. You see a lot of ideas which haven't been exhausted completely out of fear of persecution.

Chris: Queer culture... I think it's amazingly vibrant; it's the source of a lot of inspiration for a lot of people. It can be daring and takes risks... and they don't need to be in your face risks to make an impact. For example, Phillip McMahon's play *All over Town* was something I got off on a lot. To have a one man show that is interesting and funny and for the character to be gay and not make a big deal, it was very cool. It made no apologies, which is the way it should be. Creatively speaking there is a lack out there in Ireland, everyone is just a bit too self conscious. Which is kind of why I'm determined to bring my two cents to the table now more than ever.

BQ: What happens next?

Daniel: I'll be developing this series for a group show in the Gallery of Photography on the 10th of June. Then I'd like to start moving more into video. As a medium it really excites me because sometimes you can do a lot more with it. So expect more performance and crazier animal metaphors!

Chris: Well, with any luck I won't be an out of work actor for too long! I'm performing in Paul O'Brien's play *Origins*, that is running in the Project Arts Centre from 16th – 21st of June. I have plans for a documentary and a short film I would like to direct, but it's early days, so I won't jinx it... Watch this space. **BQ**



HivenMan+

I walk among you. Smiling away, flirtin' along, snoggin' the face off you, touching, fucking, loving you. You haven't a clue about my secret. I may as well not have a clue about yours.



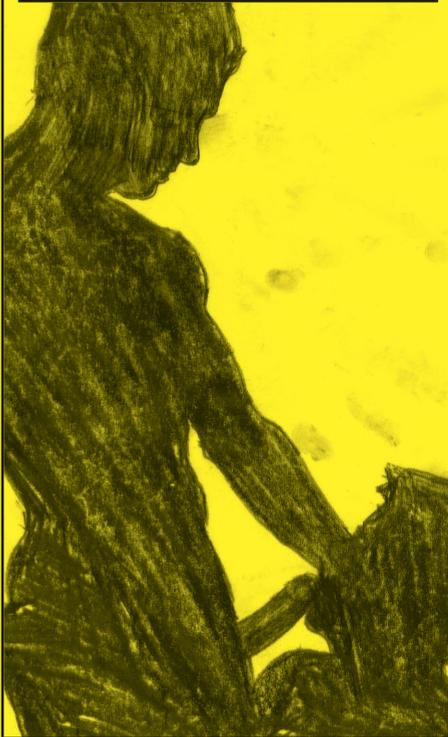
This is what we're up against. I travel the World. Binge-fucking all over the shop. A proper dirt bird. Buzzing in and out of saunas, cruising areas, dirty bars, leather bars, online, anywhere. HIV is the new closet, the new transgression, it's also the new great sexual liberator.

You might know me through a friend at a party. As far as you're concerned... a sound bloke. The girl next door, a ride, not a drug addict. Not an alco. Not rent boy. Not African. Middle class Irishman resembling none of the following:



Your man from Bosco, Michael Stipe, Freddy Mercury, Tom Hanks in *Philadelphia*. I'm not dead or dying, but living. But you needn't know anymore than the magic that sparks. I won't cum in your mouth. But you can cum in mine.

Try not to shag in Dublin if it can be helped. Too small, head done in with the guilt. Consumes after every one night stand. Never open the mouth about it. But, sure listen. I'm HivenMan+. Snap out if it... not dating anyone. Sure meet you the once and that's it. Deadly craic. Deadly fuck. Like a house on fire. Everything that's going to happen will happen now. Random fucking is the superpower. Have to say... an expert at the old random fuck situation. Follow up the epic night of passion with breakfast and phonecalls and emails or whatever you like. You'll get the courtesy reply. Never available again, but will be broke or up to the tits slogging or skid marks behind for your trip to Dublin.



Always looking for the next hit, can't get enough of it, sometimes with drugs. Removing all barriers but two, the secret and the muck-collectors on the cocks. No condoms = no jiggy jiggy. Couldn't look you in the eye, never mind get it up

Couldn't honestly tell you how this ended up riddled or Hiven. As one ignorant cunt spoke it one night in the smoking section of The George. Says he, "see that guy over there, he hot but he's Hiven". In shock. He explains, that he would never try it on with your man cos has the Hivaltia. I was fucking raging. Felt his place was to throw this strangers HIV status about through the smoke. In all fairness the cheeky cunt was a reminder of what it used to be like in the mind before the body got the HIV. Thought was immune to catching the Hivaltia because was better than everyone else. It doesn't matter how many times its heard, but put it out there once again for the dopes. HIV does not be discriminating. THAT MEANS EVERYONE CAN GET IT, especially arrogant sluts. So fuck him and fuck you if you think you're too safe to be a surprise statistic.



Whoever the gift-giver was, kept his status a secret. Sure he mightened even have known that he was a HIVEN person. But if he knew, God forgive him he whipped the johnny off him and wiped my eye. Not the japs eye mind you. The good eye. Whoever he is, he's forgiven. Can't blame gay men for the spread of HIV.



I take my meds around 9.30 every night. Not a bother on me, My sketch on meds is I feel much better on them. I feel like a person again. If I was a black in Africa, I'd be shitting on about Aids and not being Hiven because I might not be able to access meds. In the meds regard, I'm lucky to be living in Dublin. My free once-a-day medication allows me to have more energy. Giving it loads in the gym, I'm a beaut. I can go running, I don't have to sleep 14 hours per night and have a cat nap in the day because my immune system is fucked. I don't suffer with diahorrea anymore. My viral load is almost undetectable and my t-cells are building all the time. The family support me now as well. I'm lucky. I'm not ready to give up my adventures. I had just conquered the shame of being gay when along came my opportunity to play my part in The Hiven community. Protect one another as I have protected you.

Acceptance

is

just

a

matter of

Geography



Hey mt8, ru up 4
sum fun l8ter?
U horny.

Sender:
Cumtree Culchie
+3538774234*
18-Mar-2008
03.05

SPorty top
here. Suck,
fuck, wank.

Sender:
Cumtree Culchie
+3538774234*
18-Mar-2008
03.08

The

Rise

of the

Discrete meet?

Sender:
Cumtree Culchie
+3538774234*
18-Mar-2008
03.12

Bi-Curious

Male

U accom yeah?

Sender:
Cumtree Culchie
+3538774234*
18-Mar-2008
03.15

by Mark O'Halloran



It's interesting to observe how the Internet impacts on our social lives and on the evolution of 'cultural personae' here on the planet. Even now, deep in the dark primordial forests of cyberspace, is happening, the evolution of a new sexual sub species of male, a sort of sexual 'missing-link' between the straight and gay worlds; and this sub-species calls itself The Bi-Curious Male. Not bisexual now, but bi-curious - for as we all know, bisexuals are just gays who haven't finished college yet.

So for the last month I have been trawling the deeper recesses of the interweb in order to get even the smallest glimpse of this elusive creature and perhaps to dispel some common misperception about this new formed sexual outlaw and pioneer.

What could we expect if we were to encounter one of these fabled beasts? Well,

much like the badger or the Osprey sea-hawk, he's a mostly nocturnal, painfully shy critter, but when first encountered can shock with his no nonsense sexual braggadocio. This, however, is merely an example of the classic 'display' mechanism and is designed to frighten off other bi-curious lads, so don't let that fool you. Generally speaking, he's all talk and no trousers. He can come on in a rush of words like 'top', or 'dom' or 'fucking', but away from the anonymity of the chat room he's like a little, frightened lamb and it is entirely likely that if you should be lucky or persistent enough to hime back to your gaffe that:

- A. He'll be drunk.
- B. He'll look terrified.
- C. He'll start off by saying "I've never done anything like this before mate".

Ah bless! Many of these bi-curious gents, it has also been noted, have regional accents, which can be a total turn-on or a real no-no, depending on your bent, so be prepared.

As to where on the www you can track down this elusive creature. Well, there are the usual gay chat rooms or sites such as Gaydar or Gayromeo, where many's the man will masquerade as bi-curious, using profile names like Dubcurious69 or Ladforlad22. But doubt would have to be cast on the authenticity of these bi-curious poseurs, as a true bi-curious male would never be so brazen as to advertise their wears on a 'gay' website. So, where, I hear you holler? Well, you may want to try sites such as Craigslist or Gumtree. These are sites full of classified ads and provide near perfect cover for the terrified bi-curious lad to place his advertisement looking for 'other bi-curious or st8 guys for fun', alongside innumerable classifieds selling cheap furniture or the use of a van

Okay, so you have logged on and you've made contact. What next? What is this bi-curious male really like, or to put it another way, 'how can I be sure that the man I have sexual congress with every second Thursday of the month or on any weekend that has a major sporting event taking place, is actually bi-curious?' Well if you were to ask a truly bi-curious gentleman to describe himself here is how he would reply: "St8 lad, defined, active-total-top, sporty and definitely not into fem guys". Okay, so far so good, but I have done some more digging and through a combination of in-depth analysis and cyberstalking, I can add the following observations.

He may work in any number of fields but will generally be found at the more macho end of the caring professions such as Paramedic, police officer or fireman hemay be equally comfortable in the banking sector. He will also, more than likely, have a fiancée named Gillian who works as a hotel receptionist or in the travel industry. Gillian herself is not bi-curious but she did once kiss her best friend, Lyndsey for a bet. She has absolutely no idea that her man plays away.

As to what the bi-curious male himself is called, well, that is just a total mystery but he may tell you that his name is Luke or Andrew or Brian, but this is, of course, a 'nom de guerre'. A bi-curious man will never, ever, give you his real name, his phone number or his postal address.

Oh yes, folks, to be the lover of a bi-curious male can be a very, very, lonely station indeed. He will never call; he will never write; he will never think of you at all... Unless he is drunk and horny.

And so to the most important information of all: What are his sexual proclivities? This is the confusing bit. On-line he will, as we have discovered, describe himself as 'Active' or as a 'Total Top'. This has led to a sort of objectification or fetishisation of the very notion of the bi-curious gent by the very many bottoms in the gay community. He has achieved an almost mythic status amongst them and is spoken of in hushed tones in many of the city's gay hostelrys. But ladies, I bring you bad news. For once you get your bi-curious male home, rather than the mildly aggressive top you had been promised, it transpires that your gentleman caller has an arse with the size and insatiable capacity of the Dublin Port Tunnel and he likes nothing better of an evening than to be ridden harder than the winner of the Grand National for hours and hours and hours and hours. And afterwards, he will look up at you with his curiously glazed, puppy dog eyes and he'll say: "I've never done anything like this before mate".

"A bi-curious man will never, ever, give you his real name, his phone number or his postal address."

So there you have it, folks. The bi-curious male. A lying, cheating, self-deluded, emotional cripple. So not that much different than your average gay male really, or his straight counterpart for that matter. Except, perhaps for the fact that his secret passions can lead him to ever more extreme behaviours. In fact bi-curious gents are the ones who roll up to casualty departments on Christmas morning with a Jif Lemon Squeeze bottle or an attachment to a Hoover lodged so far up their own arses that minor surgical intervention is required to set them free. And when the surgery is finally over and the doctor eventually comes around to remove the stitches from his mortified patient, the bi-curious male will, of course, look up at the doctor with his puppy dog eyes, full of remorse and self pity and say, "I never done anything like this before mate". Yeah, right! **BQ**



Big

in

Japan

by Alan K

Once upon a time in Japan (17 years ago, if you prefer precision) Yaoi (or 'Boys Love') came into existence with a range including components of manga, anime, and novels. Since then Yaoi (pronounced YOW-ee) has reached Europe and the US, evolving from the small press into tie-in novels, fan fiction, theatre and animated film.

The strange thing about Yaoi, however, is that it was created exclusively for a female readership. Never has female desire taken on so curious a face. Across the world, wank mags weigh down the shelves with glossy, pouting promises of girl on girl action for the erotic enjoyment of straight guys. However, with Yaoi that role is reversed. Transcending stereotype and genre storytelling, Yaoi defies the cultural and erotic straight-jacket, leading it's female reader to celebrate homosexual (or lapsed heterosexual) love.

Because of this, Yaoi is often overlooked in the hugely popular pantheon of manga culture. Many largely view it as just a cartoon and don't recognise Yaoi for what it is - a complex, exhilarating, sharply-written and beautifully-illustrated art that doesn't so much break taboo as bludgeon it with a tire-iron.

It's key appeal is it's strict non-adherence to the guideline specifications of the genre its creators explore. Some believe it's predecessor was Shoen-ai (a genre about prepubescent boys falling in love that is often associated with paedophilia), but Yaoi actually has no affiliation with that.

If you are of a Martha Stewart temperament and not the kind of person easily tempted by cheap novelty, then Yaoi really isn't for you. In Japan there is a contingent of young women who use Boys Love as a means of living vicariously through its characters. There is much speculation about the appeal of Yaoi - maybe it offers them a reveal about their own sexuality? Perhaps girls enjoy pulling on the puppet strings

of patriarchy? Or it could just as easily be that male/male sexual (or other) relationships actually do turn them on?

In Japan Yaoi is equated with dojinshi (self-publishing with weak illustrations, appalling dialogue and no narrative to speak of), yet in America, especially during the last five years, Boys Love has become a fast-selling, far-reaching phenomenon, commercially accessible and glossy. Many US fans have complained that much of the stories' subtexts are lost in translation from home-produced to mass, from Japanese to Amerienglish, and as a result are deeply unhappy with the final products.

"In Japan there is a contingent of young women who use Boy Love as a means of living vicariously through the characters."

Sociopathic adult children, samurai warriors, tough sexually-repressed cops lured into a tryst by slight boys with cold eyes have been replaced by well-adjusted homosexuals. Overpowering hyper-realities have been cast aside in favour of safer, traditionally romantic scenarios. Streamlined images and garish technicolour are the order of the day, where once was cool pale shades and shadowy figures.

So what is the future of Yaoi? Will it continue to function and work for its readership or will its strange mystique and original conception be buried in the interests of the mainstream? With events like Yaoi-con held every year, hundreds of fan forums and Global BL's backing, it seems that Yaoi will only become more and more popular.

But a nagging question hangs in the air: Is that necessarily a good thing? **BQ**



Skinni
Bitches

by Will St Leger



Above: Skinni Twinz. Photography by Will St Leger

In 2007 Veda Beauchamp introduced the regulars at her show Space 'n' Veda in The George to pair of gay glam anarchists. Individually known as 'BirthAD-fect' (Jamie) and 'The Juicy Dangler' (Colin) you might know them better as the Skinni Twinz. A pair of blood-dripping, chicken-flinging, Emo rockers, who raised a few plucked eyebrows at the 13th *Alternative Miss Ireland* pageant.

It's Wednesday and *BQ* arranged to interview these two best pals who share an apartment on the Dublin's south quays. Jamie opens the door, they're already dressed in their 'finery', as Taylor Mac would say. Their style is a kind of DIY, punk, glam, freak chic, drag, clown look all thrown together. While their fashion sense may appear like the result of Fosset's Circus truck crashing into a Versace shop window, their growing popularity is no accident.

BQ: Who the fuck do you think you are?

Colin: Well, when I woke up this morning I was more than sure that I was Lil' Kim, but now I'm not so sure. A couple of months back we were in G.A.Y and I thought I was Beyonce, which was fun until a seven foot Nigerian cab driver stuck his thumb up my back entrance. Actually, you would think it was more fun than it was. Right now I think I'm Rebecca Loos

Jamie: Jesus or Samantha Mumba. I know we all share a love for ice skating.

BQ: What ingredients are needed for a typical Skinni Twinz number?

Jamie: Something fast so I can wear as little as possible. Looking at the numbers we've done they're all so different. We have been Michael and Janet Jackson, demon priests, Japanese people in *Cling* film and too our favourite, Romanian gypsies. If no-one else will do the song we'll probably fall in love with it and make it ours. If you got any numbers give us a shout. (make sure we can involve some raw meat)

BQ: Do you worry about putting on a few pounds?

Colin: No. I can make anything look good. I would however, draw the line at wearing sunglasses at night. That's just fuckin' TOO MUCH!

Jamie: Course I do. We can't be changing our name to *Festively Plump Twinz* or *Big Boned Twinz*.

Stretch marks only look good when they are around my tight hole. Signs of a good night!

BQ: Speaking of Skinni Twinz, have you ever cracked one off while fantasising about The Cheeky Girls?

Colin: Yes surprisingly, well kinda. I had a dream once where both of their heads were glued on Beth Ditto's body and they'd just walk around singing 'take your shoes off' until Beth got angry and said they were crap. I woke up all sticky and ashamed.

Does that count? Well if not, I have a passport-sized picture of Padre Pio that I pull myself raw to.

Jamie: Funny story about The Cheeky Girls... I met them (when I say met, I mean saw them in *Glitz* about five years ago on Paddy's day) and they gave me an inflatable Tricolour hammer. Turns out those things are fucking fantastic for foreplay.

Whacking that off a hard cock is way too much fun. Hearing the squeak from the hammer and the moans from a guy is a match made in heaven. So no, I haven't, but I've got off many a time with something related to them.

BQ: Who are your influences?

Colin: I got this guy called 'peculiar Dave' who follows me around and hides in bushes 'n' stuff. I suppose he's pretty cool. Besides that, whoever invented MapQuest! MapQuest influences me a lot just because there are a lot of maps. My dream is to one day paint pictures of landmasses and have people look at them when they are lost on said landmasses. That'd be awesome. But seriously; Veda, Michael Alig, Mick Jagger...etc.

Jamie: I have fucking so many its unreal. Of course there is Mr. Alig and James St James, without them, people like us would probably be shot in the streets. They showed the world that not everyone is a suit wearing norm! Pete Burns, not only is he a fucking sex god, but he and Dead or Alive spun me right round and I loved every second of it. Debbie Harry, what I would do to that woman? She is amazing - I have her sweat on a towel. The list goes on... Influences closer to home are people like Veda, Panti and Heidi Konnt .

BQ: What age were you when you lost your virginity?

Colin: I was seven, I think. I took it out shopping with me on Grafton Street right before Christmas. It was right there with me one minute and the next second it was gone. We spent days looking for it but alas, it was gone. I don't know why, but I bled like a bitch for a week. It was like I was crying tears of blood out of my mangina

Jamie: To be honest, I can't remember. It was either third year or fourth year. Those two years have just blended into one. It may have been with the guy I was kissing at the time. We took a school trip to some ski place and shared a room. It was his birthday and I'm no good at buying shit for him, so I was like, "I will be your slave for the week," (sex only, I don't do cleaning). It was a fun week, although I ended up in hospital... Oops! School days are the best days of your life.

BQ: If you were to start a domestic terrorist group tomorrow, what would you call it?

Jamie: Are we not one of those already? If I had to start a new one it would have to be against people who fucking blow their nose on public transport! God, I hate that, it makes me feel all gross, like bits of it are gonna get on me or they will rub the tissue on me.

I know there is a market for people who like to blow up buses and stuff, so why not the luas? And the trigger that I would have them trained for would be the sound of nose blowing. We would be called 'The Kleenex Klan' and we could wear man-sized tissues! Watch out for TTK coming to a luas near you (red line).

Colin: I'm not sure what it would be called, but I know what we would be doing. We'd all dress up like the French and I'd be King Henry VIII and I would go around shouting stuff like 'Once more unto the beach dear friends'. We would go to the house wear section of Tesco's and I would light tiny fires under anything enamel. Enamel really annoys me and I'm sure I could get plenty of followers. Hey Enamel! Fuck off back to your own country or something!

BQ: What's the last thing you'll say before you die?

Colin: I'd say to whoever was with me "Oh yeah, before I die I have something really important to tell you," and then just die. How fucking

annoying would that be? That dude would be so paranoid for, like, ever, thinking 'Oh my God! What the fuck did he want to tell me?' But the thing is, I'm not a mean person so I would have to get reincarnated so I could tell him I didn't have anything to tell him and I was only having a laugh.

Jamie: Okay... I'll give cock-docking a try. Shit, is that meant to happen?

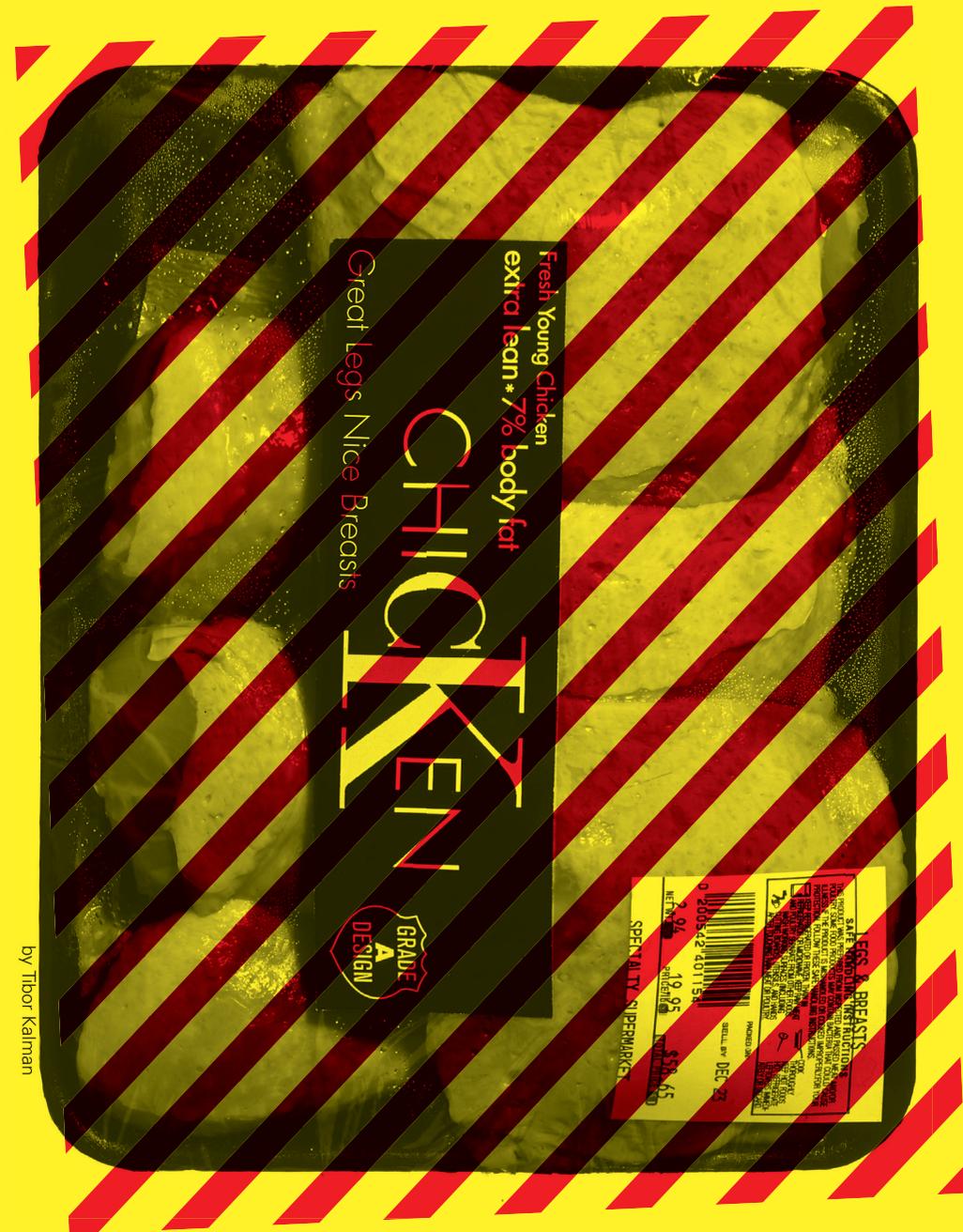
The *Skinni Twinz* throw back their vodka laced drinks, race out of the apartments and hail a cab. Enroute they tell me that during *Alternative Miss Ireland 2007* between the opening number and their interview, they had a rare fight with each other. So they decided to sort it out by, leaving the Olympia in fur coats, downing a naggan of Vodka at Spar, going for a pint at The George, stopping off at Rick's for curry chips and then back on the stage for their infamous interview with Panti, when they got booted.

We arrive at The George, Space 'n' Veda is just about to start. Even before they get to the bar, the pair are plucked out of the audience unplanned and put on stage were they perform *Black Parade* by My Chemical Romance with all the energy of a nuclear reactor. The crowd cheer and BQ couldn't hear a single boo! **BQ**

www.bebo.com/SkinniTwinz



by Tibor Kalman



Above: Sub-vertisement by Adbusters Media Foundation. www.adbusters.org

L Words

Sex Degrees of Separation with Eloise McInerney

1 Try to score women outside the scene. Otherwise a horrible mathematical exponential quickly builds up, whereby you become connected to practically everyone who goes to *KISS*, by virtue of having either (a) Snogged, shagged or gone out with them. (b) Snogged, shagged or gone out with one of their mates. (c) Snogged, shagged or gone out with one of their exes. (d) Done a combination of the above.

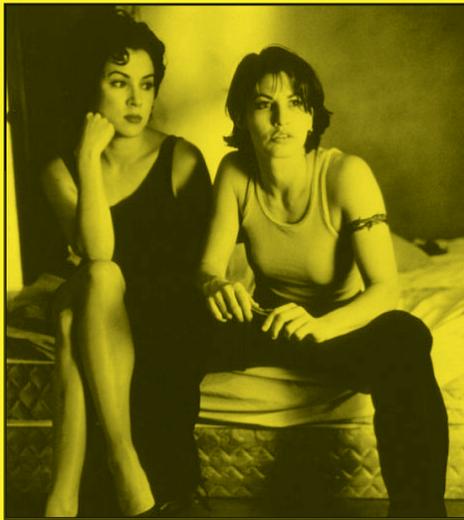
The lesbian degree of separation in Dublin is minus six, and even lower figures are reported elsewhere. We should not be encouraging it.

2 If scoring on the scene, at least try to do it outside the pub/club. Due to the incestuous interconnectedness of scene lesbians, scoring in public can have high risk factors. The well-known strain of lesbian psycho intensity means that two new lovebirds will virtually disappear from public life in the initial months of courtship, but its ugly twin is post-breakup obsession. This can lead to violent scenes that most self-respecting lesbians will want to avoid at all costs.

Even if you haven't offended a psycho ex (whether yours or hers), you may still cause enough hostility to instigate low-level revenge tactics, such as the spreading of vile rumours concerning penchants for pink cuddly bears or picking your nose in the bath.

3 But exes have an even more deadly power - they can make or break your bedroom reputation. It is probably best to guard against this by avoiding laziness as much as possible.

This may have the added advantage of ensuring a higher standard of drunk sex on the scene than the average. On the other hand, in a pond where you know half the fish are only out to get each other, you could also take the attitude of believe nothing til you've tried it out for yourself...



4 Do not assume that just because a girl looks feminine, she is straight. While we all know that there is an over-abundance of straight women in certain clubs, whose only function seems to be to tease and torment those who like their girls girly, it is reverse stereotyping of the highest order to assume that all femmes are fag hags.

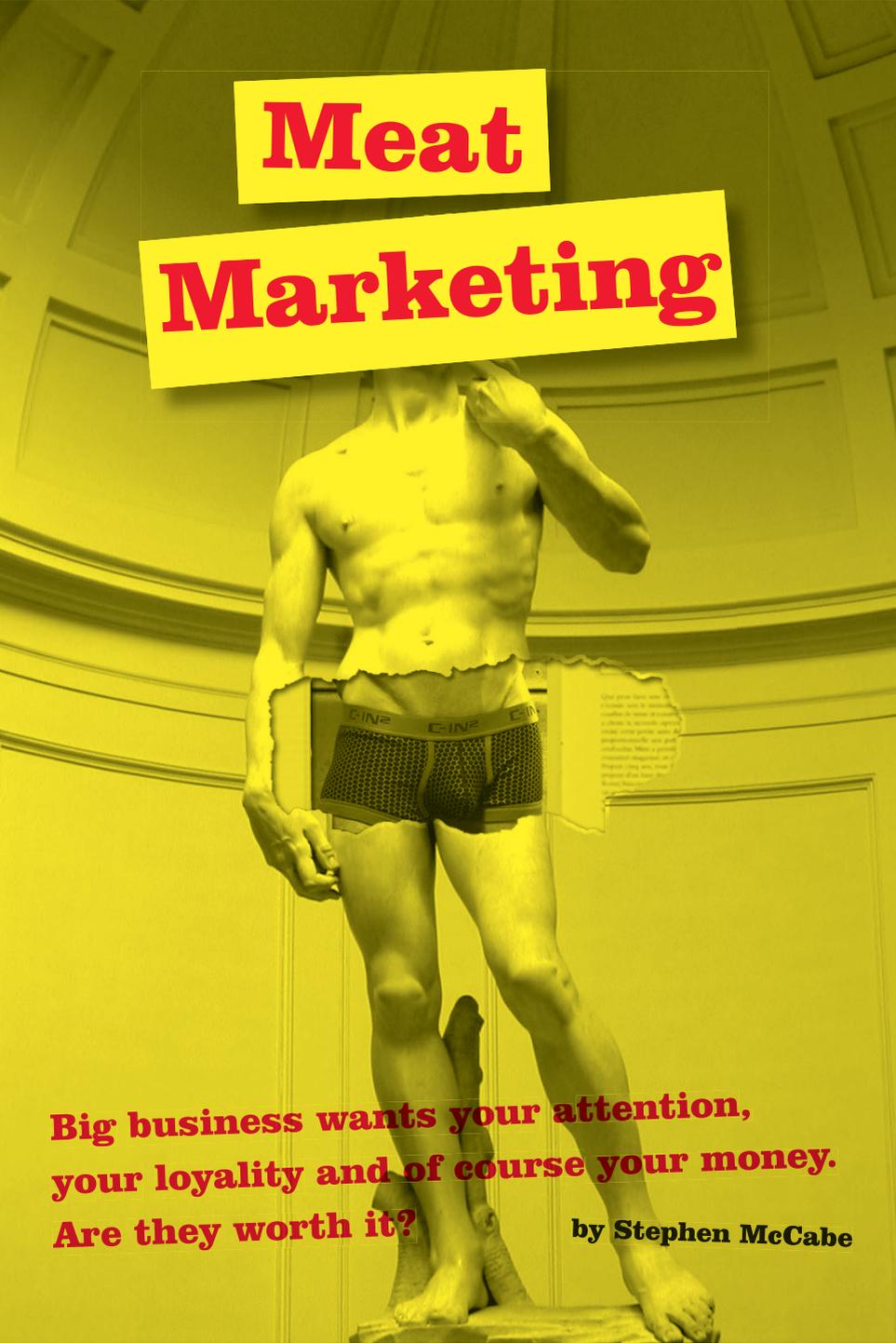
5 In light of the above, you should not be afraid to come on to femmes. But if she does happen to be straight, do not, at any cost, let her get away with screaming disgustedly to other hags about it.

Explain to her that she is in a gay club. If she doesn't like it, she knows where the door is. Most hags are perfectly nice and will even enjoy the attention, so the few shouldn't be allowed ruin it for the rest. And yes, I am espousing we keep letting them in - straight girls can be friends too (and there is also the pint/sexual orientation ratio - see below)

6 One should cultivate straight friends and spend time in straight pubs. They can be fun and it helps protect against ghettoisation. In addition, while we all know that gayness isn't catching (if only), we also know that many straight girls are only a few pints off bisexuality, and some of them can even be converted permanently. But whatever you do, don't introduce them to any of your lesbian mates on the scene, because you know what will happen. **BQ**

OBSESSION

for women



Meat

Marketing

**Big business wants your attention,
your loyalty and of course your money.
Are they worth it?**

by Stephen McCabe

Over the past 15 years the gay community has undergone a profound change in how it is perceived by mainstream society. No longer are we seen as dangerous perverts, morally bankrupt, or slightly unhinged. Instead we are seen as fabulous trendsetters with bucket-loads of cash and all the purchasing power that goes with it. This is quite a stunning perceptual change in a relatively short period of time and one which the gay community is happy to embrace – despite its manifest idiocy. In some ways you can't really blame us – fag or fab, which would you prefer?

'Fabulousness' is a very gay term and the pursuit of it is what seems to drive the habitués of Dublin's gay scene. The problem is that nobody seems to have a definitive idea of what is fab so they rely on the gay media to point them in the right direction. Who needs critical faculties when you've got the 'what's hot and what's not' columns and the vast array of advertising that has all but eclipsed editorial content. This brings us to the great monolithic structure that we call **the gay market**.

Everybody, it would appear, wants a piece of the gay market. In Ireland the gay market is estimated to be in excess of €8billion, in the US the figure stands at closer to \$600billion and in the UK it's worth £70billion. With all of this money floating around it's hardly surprising that marketers want a piece of the pie.

The idea that marketers happened to passively stumble upon the existence of a 'gay market' is ludicrous; the gay market was shaped and nurtured by people who (once it had been constituted) had a vested interest in exploiting it.

The gay press has played an active role in facilitating the modern construction of the gay man. The obvious aim of restructuring the gay man into its present frivolous form is to present him as a desirable audience for advertisers.

It seems quite clear that much of the gay press has entered into a Faustian bargain with advertisers. This dystopian union has depoliticised the gay movement effectuating a ridiculous idea of what it means to be gay. The people who seek to offload their superfluous products on us have no connection to the wider political struggles taking place globally – their (tenuous) support of gay people and their rights is merely cosmetic and not really reflective of an identification with gay political causes

– it's purely a business decision based on the staggering figures provided to them by the gay press – via their reader surveys. Global brands sponsor gay events like Pride etc. not because they care; they do so in order to promote their brands.

Framing their readers as vacant consumers whose sole preoccupation is the pursuit of the latest fad might make sound commercial sense but the political implications, in terms of the image the gay community projects of itself, are harder to quantify

Framing the gay man within this context is like a self-fulfilling prophecy. Young gay men enter the scene, read the gay media and absorb the subliminal messages contained within the gay press. They buy into the identity without examining the political or ideological underpinnings of it.

“Global brands sponsor gay events like Pride, not because they care; they do so in order to promote their brands.”

The gay press celebrates the fact that we, apparently, spend vast amounts of money on products which, quite frankly, we don't really need. Such frivolity, it would seem, is all part of being gay. The morality of our rampant consumerism is never questioned, or indeed examined.

Of course gay people shouldn't be held to a higher standard than anybody else. Consumerism and all its associated moral and political issues exist across society and its central role within the gay identity is just one part of its overall dominance across society

The discontent arises when you witness the role the gay press have played in entrenching this system within gay people's collective consciousness and how they have situated it at the forefront of what it means to be gay – leading to nauseating aspirational tendencies amongst gay men. With all this consumption and all this money, has nobody ever asked if (less well-off) gays are being priced out of being gay?

If we look at gay identity and the representations of homosexual people, we see the same cosmopolitan images over and over again. *Will & Grace*, *Queer As Folk*, *The L Word* and *Queer Eye For The Straight Guy* all present

gay people as being rich, successful, trendy and in possession of huge amounts of cash. These representations are very class-specific and tend to elide the working class, or the downright poor from the overall picture.

We are being constantly told that gay representation within the media is the key to gaining wider acceptance from the mainstream – but the images of gay people are incredibly exclusionary because they represent only a partial –portrait of gay people in general.

Thus it would seem, the only way to be a 'successful gay' is to pack up all your belongings, relocate to the nearest metropolis, find your equally fabulous peeps, start shopping for over-priced crap that you don't need and then acquire yourself the requisite fag-hag. This is the identity we are being sold; unfortunately, many people are buying into it.

“Being gay is not as cool as it once was. The word gay is a byword for naff in schools.”

Living up to today's 'fab' gay standard (characterised by conspicuous consumption and trendy living) requires money. According to the gay press, we all have it bucket-loads. Therefore we're all fab! A delightful syllogism, certainly; but when held up to scrutiny it is exposed as a sham. The gay press's insight into the lives of gay people is limited at best. In that its core constituency is made up of people who already participate in the so-called 'gay life'.

It does seem rather intellectually retarded to put forward the notion that gay men, by virtue of their sexual orientation, are somehow infinitely more stylish, wealthier and culturally attuned than most.

Gay men are socialised into these roles – they're not congenital predispositions – to a large extent everybody is socialised into various different roles. Men, women, children – society has roles for us all and we're all expected to neatly conform to them. Gay men's buying into the gay identity isn't harmful or dangerous – it's just that the identity caters to those who can afford it. People who can't are then marginalised, left on the fringes or left in the closet.

If you're from a really poor background and you happen to be gay – the gay lifestyle is totally beyond your reach. So not only

do you feel a sense of isolation from 'The straight world' but the gay world is equally as exclusionary, in that you couldn't possibly live the lifestyle.

When I look at the gay media in all its many forms I am struck by the synergy between it and its advertisers. The symbiosis now pervades every aspect of gay culture. We have been branded!

I don't want to sound like a grumpy old fart, but I'm so incredibly over it. It's all so passé. (The commodification of the gayness has made it totally bland and boring). Everybody is trying to 'live the dream' and in doing so they are participating in a lifestyle that is just a bit gauche, shallow and meaningless.

Maybe it's just me. Maybe I was born in the wrong era – but there is something about the culturally projected image of gayness that just makes me want to vomit. It's completely devoid of depth and encompasses the most odious 21st century traits. The absence of originality is startling. Being a cliché is not really cool. But gay people are so invested in the idea that they are cool – and are constantly having this idea reinforced by the gay press – that they have failed to notice how homogenised we've all become.

I think a backlash is starting to begin, though. Being gay is not as cool as it once was. The word gay is a byword for naff in schools and, rather than fab young hipsters, being portrayed on TV, we have Daffyd and Derek 'how-very-dare-you' Faye.

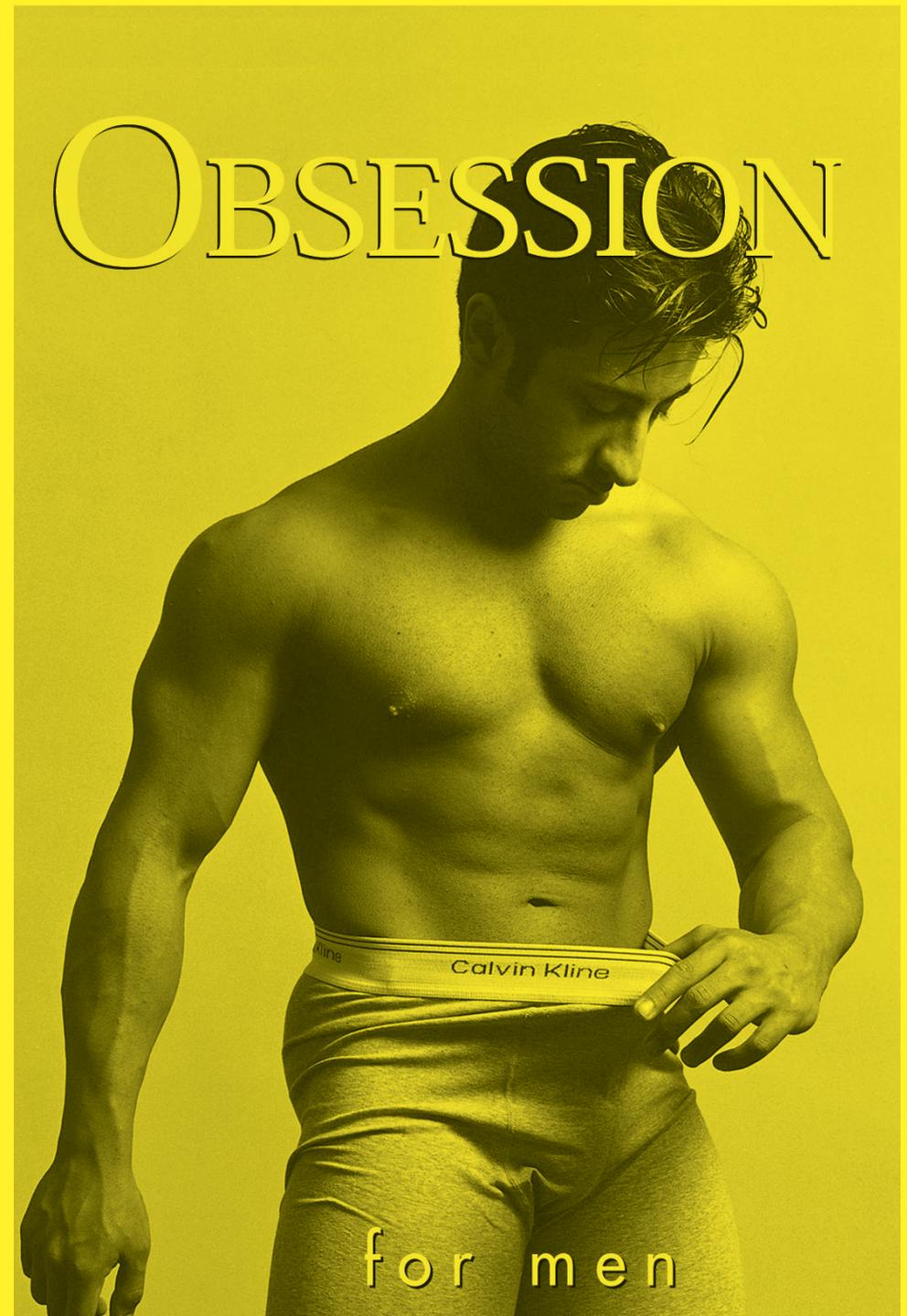
Maybe a backlash is necessary. Our confidence as a community seems to have its roots in the fact that we are perceived as being cool. Maybe if that kudos was withdrawn and people began to see us as a bit caught up in our own myth we might actually take a moment to examine how we see ourselves. **BQ**

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