

HUMOR

Car talk

Queers at the wheel

Is your car gay?

This question has been posed recently by both Gay.com and Car.com, which means it's only a matter of time before some enterprising soul creates GayCar.com.

But just what is a gay car? A car that's attracted to other cars? A car that goes to the body shop a lot? A car that pulls to the left? And are cars manufactured gay, or do they get that way after you stick a Madonna CD in the disc player?

Of course, looking at your car as an expression of your sexual identity is not only ridiculous, it's narcissistic and self-absorbed, which I guess explains why I've given the matter so much thought.

Usually I don't think about cars at all. Cars are Boy Stuff, and the only Boy Stuff I care about is below the waist, not under the hood. To me, rack-and-pinion steering sounds like something a Master does in his dungeon.

Nonetheless, a few forward-thinking car companies are actively targeting gay customers. Ford Motor Co. recently funded a huge market research project to discover the car needs of gay men and lesbians, and it came to the stunning conclusion that our car needs are pretty much the same as straight people's—four wheels, brakes, that kind of thing.

But it did discover enough new information to try an ad campaign for Jaguar targeted at gay men. Perhaps you've seen it. It reads: "Life is full of twists and turns. Care for a partner?" Which I guess means if you buy a luxury car, you'll get a boyfriend. Or at least a lot of debt.

They wasted their money. If Jaguar wants to reach gay men, it should put a porn star in a convertible with his hard-on resting on the steering wheel and a caption reading, "Steer this."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARC
by Marc Acito



Jaguars don't even rank among the top 10 gay favorites in the Car.com survey, but Volkswagens take up four of the slots. (Which of course begs the question, "How many slots can you fit in a Volkswagen?") Interestingly, straight women voted for the same cars (Jetta, Beetle, Golf and Cabrio), while lesbians overwhelmingly chose station wagons and trucks. (Does serial monogamy have anything to do with this apparent need to haul stuff around?)

Meanwhile, some lesbians will be appalled to discover they share a fondness for the Ford F150 with (ick, pooh, blech) straight men. And apparently lesbians and gay men have more in common than our mutual societal oppression—a shared admiration for the Jeep Wrangler!

Something you won't find in any survey, however, is whether your car is a top or a bottom. This subject recently generated some very contentious dinner party debate at my house, which tells you just how shallow my friends and I can be.

You see, my friend BoBo insists the Jeep

Wrangler is a top because Brian Kinney drove one on *Queer as Folk*. But then again, so did Mindy on *Mork & Mindy*.

Here's a test: If you can imagine a perky sitcom heroine driving your car, then your car takes it up the tailpipe. The VW Beetle, for instance, with its adorable built-in bud vase—that car is so nelly, its air bags probably come with matching pillow shams. I bet the new convertible version even has rearview vanity mirrors.

OK, I admit it. I'd buy one tomorrow if I could afford it.

You see, my car is hopelessly heterosexual.

Floyd and I bought our champagne-colored (OK, I guess it's a little queer) Infinity sedan when we owned a business and our main social activity was networking with the buttoned-down brains of the Chamber of Commerce. And because we needed to make deliveries, we also drove that lesbian/straight guy favorite, the Ford F150, which I couldn't

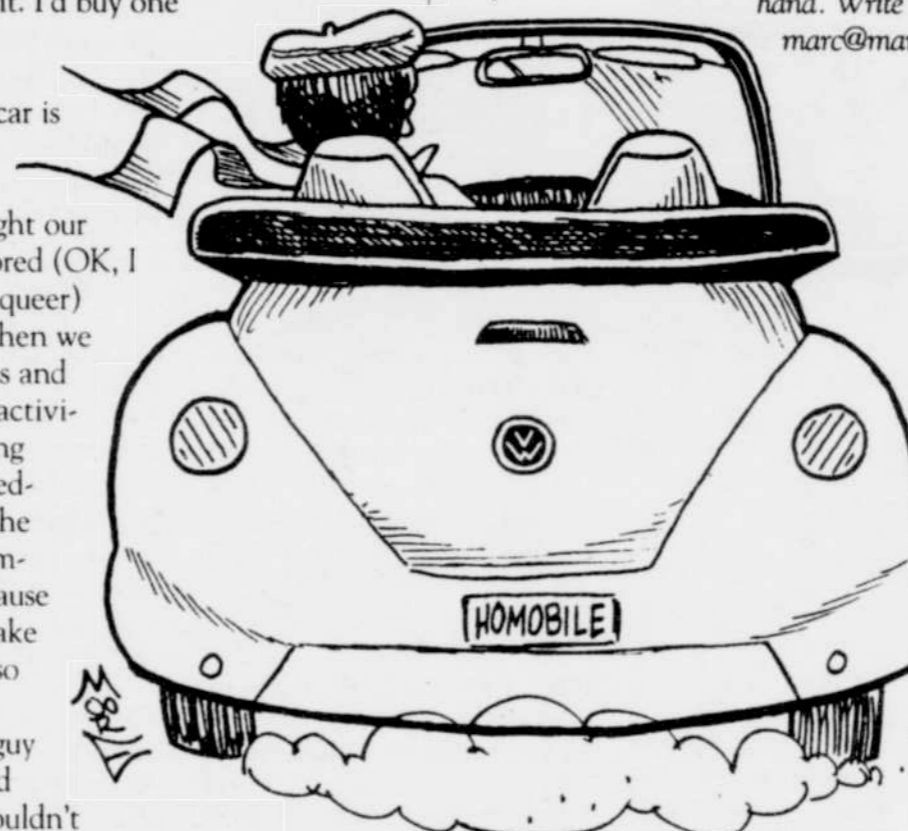
wait to get rid of. (No offense to you lesbians, straight guys or Ford 150s.)

But now that Floyd and I free-lance from home, we'd like a car that better reflects our lifestyle—y'know, something that says, "We're middle-aged and denying it every mile of the way." So even though our car can't help being straight, I don't feel any need to accept it the way it is.

You see, unlike sexual orientations, you can always change your car by trading it in for a new one.

And that, my friends, is The Gospel According to Marc. ☐

MARC ACITO loves the feel of a gear shift in his hand. Write him at marc@marcacito.com.



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