Written by Sean Abley
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I've lived in West Hollywood, a.k.a. Boystown, a.k.a. The Gayborhood for 8 years now. By the time I experienced my first Halloween Carnival, this gay olde towne had the recipe down pat: Take one blocked off Santa Monica Boulevard, add heaping tablespoons of gays, music, food and booze, shake vigorously.

My head swam from the amazing costumes, some more productions than outfits. "Dogs Playing Poker." "Salem Witch Burnings" complete with moving flames and charred remains. "Sushi," complete with human scale chopsticks. "Joan Cusack" from SIXTEEN CANDLES, complete with neckbrace and sweatshirt with movable skirt. "Naked Farrah Fawcett" from her Playboy body-painting-and-crying home video. (On second thought, that may have been Farrah Fawcett…) The more obscure and seemingly impossible-to-execute the subject matter, the more admiration from the fellow revelers. (I myself was the "Lindbergh Baby" that year…)

But now, eight years later, the WeHo Halloween Carnival has deteriorated into a half-assed, drunken parking lot. And my reports from the field tell me that this is the case in almost every major city in the U.S. What happened?

First, the straight people found out. Now, I love straight people. Without them, who would sell us used cars or kill insurgents? But, much like Folsom Street Fair, the Pleasure Chest, and Off-Broadway— the Gay Halloween Carnival has become the Straight People Slum Du Jour. Drunk gawkers with cameras, but without costumes descend upon Santa Monica Boulevard like it's some sort of gay wildlife preserve. They steal our souls with their magic boxes, and dilute our fun with their… non-costume wearing antics.

As the years have turned to more years, the Straight Invasion has ignited a chain reaction that began with Halloween malaise, which in turn lead to the most egregious of Halloween crimes—Abuse of Gay Halloween Carnival Costume Rules.

People, people, people! We're gay! We have the dress-up gene! Halloween is our Christmas! Why have we let this happen?

Well, never let it be said I just point out problems without offering solutions. I'm no VH-1 "Best Week Ever" hipster pundit. Taken directly from the pages of the Homosexual Agenda™ (used with permission), I offer you:

Gay Halloween Carnival Costume Rules

ARTICLE OF THE FIRST - Halloween Is Not Mardi Gras. Mardi Gras is about beer bongs, earning strings of beads the good, old fashioned way, and crazy plumage. Halloween is about candy, flaming sacks of dog poo and
costumes
.

(SIDEBAR: Before we go on, you should know by "costume," I—as spokesperson for the Gay Halloween Carnival Costume Committee—mean an outfit that personifies something you aren't on a day-to-day basis. Meaning it has to be something, not just a bunch of crazy clothes. We should be able to look at you in costume and say "Oh, right, he's the title character from MY MOTHER THE CAR" rather than "He fell into a Goodwill donations box." Webster's defines "costume" as "costume [kos'tum], n. 1. Whatever Sean says, we're cool with that." So no back sass.)

Therefore:

Naked Is Not a Costume. And by naked I mean less clothes than you'd normally wear walking down the street. Jockstrap and boots, cowboy hat hanging off your Viagra'd penis, g-string banana hammock, body glitter— all not a costume. That's right, gym rats—your muscles do not qualify as a costume. This goes for Radical Dykes, barebreasted with lipstick on their nipples as well.

Leathermen/women Wearing Leather—chaps, vest, harness, leather jock, horsetail buttplug all not a costume
.

Drag Queens in Drag—not a costume. Exception: If your drag on Halloween is a character, not your drag character. See “Letter of the Law, Not Spirit of the Law”.

Uniform Fetishists in Uniform—fireman’s uniform, police uniform, military uniform, Hot Dog on a Stick uniform— not a costume.

Wearing Your Work Uniform—Sorry, circus clowns, Log Cabin Republicans and the San Diego Chicken. This is the one day a year you are required to venture outside of your closet.
Not a costume
.

Furries Dressed as Animals— Not a costume. See “Wearing Your Work Uniform” if you’re the San Diego Chicken.

Wearing a Crazy Hat—not a costume. I can’t tell you how many straight guys I see on Santa Monica Boulevard each Halloween with proud little smirks on their faces because they decided to join those crazy gays by putting on a Cat In The Hat chapeau. Inevitably, the girlfriend welded to their side for the night is wearing nothing near a costume, or she’s dressed like a complete whore. So again, not a costume.

Wearing a Crazy Wig—not a costume. See “Wearing a Crazy Hat”.

Wearing Crazy, Non-Themed Makeup on Your Face—not a costume. See “Wearing a Crazy Hat”.

Drunk Out of Your Mind—not a costume.

ARTICLE OF THE SECOND—Letter of the Law, Not Spirit of the Law

Something Sticking Out of Your Face—Now, sure, technically having a fake screwdriver or Jart™ sticking out of your face is a costume. You are “Guy Who Was Walking Down the Street When He Got Hit By a Lawn Dart”. But seriously, how much effort was that?

Wearing Just a Mask—This smacks of the high-school freshman who knows he’s too old to be trick or treating, but tries to squeeze in one more year of free candy. Or straight guys.

Drag Queens in Female Icon Drag—Ladies, please. We all know you’re fierce. And yes, technically when Lynn Fluenza dresses as JonBenet Ramsey, it is a costume. But drag queens in drag on Halloween is basically drag Casual Friday. If you really want to impress, untuck and go as something with a penis, like Janet Reno.

IN SUMMATION: Get that shit pretty! Santa’s coming!

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