

# Inaccurate Stereotyping of Gay Consumers Towards Aesthetic Products

**Ignazio Ziano**  
University of Geneva

Cite as:

Ziano Ignazio (2025), Inaccurate Stereotyping of Gay Consumers Towards Aesthetic Products. *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 54th, (125840)

Paper from the 54th Annual EMAC Conference, Madrid, Spain, May 25-30, 2025



# **Inaccurate Stereotyping of Gay Consumers Towards Aesthetic Products**

## **Abstract**

Six studies show that people think that gay men prefer aesthetic products more than straight men, while there is a small to no such difference between gay and straight women. Surveying gay consumers shows that laypeople and professionals overestimate gay consumers' preferences for aesthetic products. We find that this is driven by perceptions of femininity (higher for gay men) and masculinity (higher for straight men). The effect is moderated in opposite directions if gay men are described as engaging in stereotypically masculine activities (e.g., watching sports), and straight men are described as engaging in stereotypically feminine activities (e.g., being interested in fashion). We discuss theoretical implications for the study of consumer stereotypes and for the consumer psychology of sexuality and gender, and practical implications for marketing, targeting and designing products to and for the gay community, and for choices for others (e.g., gift-giving).

**Keywords:** *stereotypes; gay consumers; aesthetic products; functional products; masculinity*

*Track: consumer behavior*