

When reading the submission guidelines, I saw the section on “actors in the ‘bro canon’ that are due for a re-appraisal” and I was startled by seeing Al Pacino. Pacino, tumblr’s fav Babygirl? Maybe it’s a sign that I’ve been on tumblr too long, but it never occurred to me that he was a part of the bro canon when I keep seeing posts about his limp wrists, about how 70’s Pacino is less a guy and more a kind of lesbian, about how he robbed a bank to pay for his lover’s bottom surgery. Al Pacino? That faggy lil guy?

Perhaps in the present day, Al Pacino bros are rare? Maybe his golden bro culture era was in the 90’s (I’m sure Heat drove those kinds of guys feral)? Or perhaps I’m just out of the loop. Either way, Al Pacino has never been a bro canon actor to me, to the point where I struggle to even think of him as one. To me, it’s hard to imagine Al Pacino getting the bro treatment, he’s always been so good at showing you the sensitive side of his characters, at least in the films of his I’ve seen. You see Pacino in Dog Day Afternoon, and you can’t imagine a bro ever glomming onto this guy. Pacino has certainly been in films that film bros would love (The Godfather series, a Tarantino film, a Scorsese film), but it’s never felt like *he* was the reason film bros go crazy over those films, rather that he was a very good actor who happened to be in them. Hell, if film bros can appreciate Pacino as an actor instead of a figure to idolize, then that love for his acting talent is probably something that would bond a film bro and I together, if I ever ended up in a conversation with one.

I am struck by how many queer-adjacent roles Pacino took in the 70’s; Dog Day Afternoon is the obvious one, where he’s robbing a bank to pay for his partners bottom surgery, but Cruising also comes to mind, as well as ...And Justice For All, where one of his subplots is trying to get dignified for an incarcerated trans woman of colour. Cruising is an obvious queer film to mention. Even Pacino’s more bro-coded films can have a queer flavour to them; tell me that he and Robert De Niro in Heat don’t want each other so bad they can taste it. If anything, I feel a bit... betrayed by the thought of Pacino being a part of bro culture? Like why should they get him, let us have our iconic 70’s male actor. I don’t see film bros putting peak-twink Pacino on birthday cakes, or actually admiring his talent as an actor? Lesbians can do both, can film bros? I suspect not.

Al Pacino should be reclaimed from the film bros, we deserve one iconic 70’s male actor, don’t we? They don’t appreciate him the way we do. We deserve to live in a world where Al Pacino and “film bro fav” don’t compute, where Al Pacino is the property of lesbians and classic film gurlies and everyone else who appreciates him as the talented actor he is.