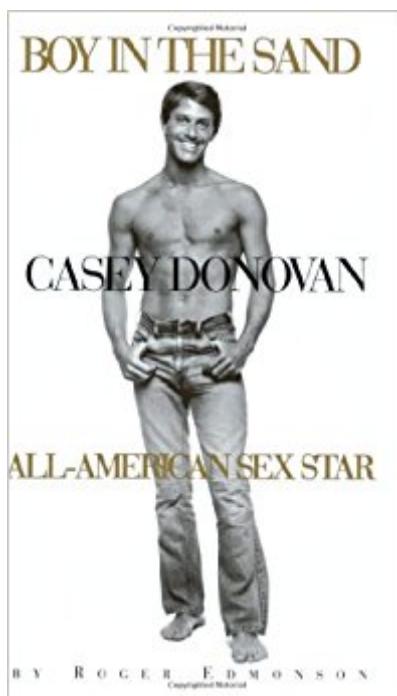


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Boy In The Sand: Casey Donovan, All-American Sex Star



Synopsis

This candid look at the first gay porn superstar tells the story of a young man with dreams of fame who began as a stage actor and always dreamed of making mainstream films. Instead, he found himself trapped as an icon of gay sexuality.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Roger Edmonson details the life of one of the most famous and beloved American gay porn stars. In 1971, gay model and actor Cal Culver went from being relatively unknown to superstardom when he appeared in the acclaimed high-brow porn movie *Boys in the Sand*. Rechristened Casey Donovan, he became a stage star, a world-renowned celebrity, and an idol for gay men. In 1987 Culver died of AIDS-related complications. *Boys in the Sand* is remarkably free from moralizing, simply presenting the reader with the everyday realities of Donovan's life, from his careers as advice columnist for *Stallion* magazine and hustler to his romantic pursuits. Like Charles Isherwood's critically acclaimed *Wonder Bread and Ecstasy: The Life and Death of Joey Stefano*, Edmonson's book is more than simply a portrait of the artist as a young stud--it's an examination of how gay-male sexuality and identity are constructed and marketed for both homosexual and mainstream audiences. --Michael Bronski

Confession: I started reading this book wanting to like it. Really. After all the inaccuracies that have been written and said about gay men and their (supposedly? occasionally?) promiscuous sexuality (which depends, I suppose, on who's doing the talking; to use a literary analogy, you say

"bookworm", I say "well-read"), I was looking forward to an in-depth look at the development, creation and iconization of a gay porn star. What would lead an otherwise "normal" young man, in the era of the overwhelming closet, to enter, and ultimately maintain a career, in this industry? Long before it was considered somewhat fashionable to have a little bit of scandal in your past, long before the days of straight bodybuilders making a few quick bucks, most hardcore gay film performers were doing it out of desperation for the money, to avoid homelessness, or under some form of duress (e.g. runaway teens, drug users, etc.). Then along comes this boy next door, who seems to want nothing but to be a performer, and there he is, making adult films? What created this man? What created our urge to watch him, honor him, and make him an icon of liberated gay sexuality? How did all these factors come together, and ultimately help create the mega-billion dollar industry that is gay porn today? Unfortunately, we're left hanging, unsatisfied, on most of these fronts. While the author does occasionally delve into the psyche of his subject, his family, and the public that seemed (and still seems) to adore him, these are brief glimpses. In most cases, the curtain is pulled back rather quickly, as if the author is somehow more shy about revealing the interior of this person than he is about revealing the external body he dwelt in. Not that those looking for a quick bit of titillation will get much here, either. Better to purchase an anthology of male erotica, if what you're looking for is a bit of arousal. Here again, the author experiences a surprising chastity about his subject. Where the author does exult, however, is in his descriptions of Cal/Casey's natural beauty, and its effect on those around him (not to mention the author himself). There is a certain degree of goddess-worship in his tone and constant, repetitious descriptions of our hero's boy-next-door looks, unwavering smile, honest eyes, tight body (and so on, over and over again). True, you can hardly blame the guy: Cal/Casey WAS good looking, seems to be awfully charming, and might not be a bad person to spend an evening with. But, like the end of an ultimately boring date, where you don't get much beyond the surface of your partner, this book, too, leaves the reader wanting more substance.

An interesting account of a period in gay mens history. A must read for anyone interested in those flamboyant years.

Excellent retrospect of a gay porn star. From his beginning into porn and his experiences during. His attempt into legitimate stage. Personal pictures enhanced this story.

Good story of someone I didn't know much about.

Really enjoyed this frank look at Casey Donovan. I was in LA and San Fran during this time period and remember the events discussed, but lacked details about Casey earlier in his life and toward the end of his life. Excellent reading for anyone wanting to understand the 70s gay porn life.

I read this book and it reads like a Tabloid article, no I was not expecting a well written biography since it's about a guy in porn but the author did very little if any research about Cal before he went into porn or when he was not doing porn. You can learn more about Cal simply by searching google than you will from this book. The book is about a guy who did porn but the author tells very little if anything about Cal's life when he was not doing porn, or being a male prostitute. The sources for the biography were all 2nd, 3rd, or 4th hand and did not seem factual. I am not sure why this guy got into porn thinking it would make him famous or that he'd be able to branch out into Broadway plays, acting in actual movies, or modeling? Had he not gotten into porn I could see him being in off-broadway productions, continuing to act in plays like he did before he got into porn, or even being an early model for Calvin Klein. Unfortunately he got swept up into the seedy world of porn, drugs, and sex for pay all which go hand in hand and died of AIDS.

Biography of gay porn star Casey Donovan. He was tall, handsome and became famous by the the 1971 gay hardcore feature "Boys in the Sand". It chronicles his life and what he was like (he was clearly a sex addict), his other movies, stage work and his tragic death by AIDS in 1987. Supposedly he was the first gay sex superstar. He looked like the boy next door and "Boys in the Sand" opened at NY cinema art houses, got HUGE audiences and good reviews by critics! A lot of gay men back then got courage from seeing the film. If a hot guy like that can have sex with no guilt or shame why couldn't they? So Cal Culver (Casey Donovan's real name) wanted to be a star...but "Boys" prevented that. He was stuck doing gay porn, became a hustler and eventually all that killed him. Still the book is NOT depressing. The author talks to many men who slept with him (there seem to be quite a lot) and they all give fun, loving memories they have of him. At times the book goes overboard and make him seem like some god. Also I DO question how the author found guys had had been an escort for...or had just had sex with him. Also I saw him in "Boys in the Sand" and "Score". Now he WAS handsome and had a great body but he was a terrible actor and personally I'm not attracted to blondes. So it is a fascinating book about gay life before and after Stonewall but I question about making Donovan into some sort of positive role model and how the author found these guys. Still, I couldn't stop reading.

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