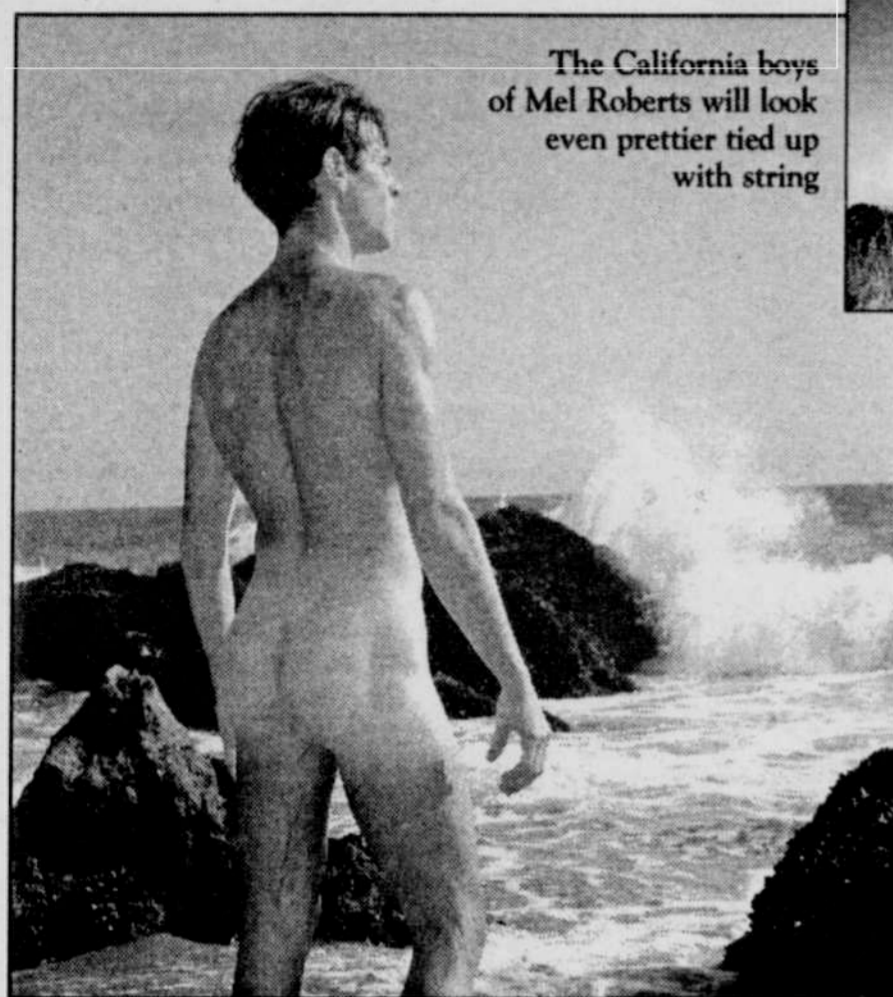
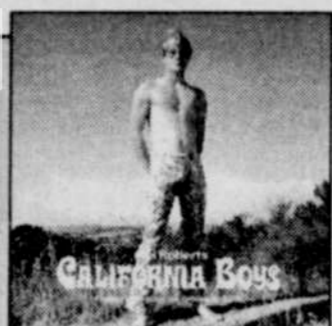


Read

Holiday Gift Guide



The California boys of Mel Roberts will look even prettier tied up with string



about the freedom these young models expressed simply by donning their birthday suits at a time when the queer movement barely was getting off the ground. The guys are cute in that Leif Garrett sorta way—feathered hair, tube socks, peek-a-boo surprises poking out of their cutoff jeans. Most of the photos were snapped outdoors, some in front of sweeping landscapes, others in more intimate settings such as a backyard swimming pool.

The books are rich in color and clean in layout. They'd make worthy additions to any library, certain to satisfy both the perv and the historian in you.

—Jim Radosta

CALIFORNIA BOYS: PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE 1960S AND 1970S by Mel Roberts. FotoFactory Press, 2000; \$50 hardcover.

CALIFORNIA BOYS: THE WILD ONES by Mel Roberts. FotoFactory Press, 2001; \$65 hardcover.

At 78, gay photographer Mel Roberts has witnessed plenty: In the 1950s he co-founded the Mattachine Society's Southern California branch, in the 1960s he was forced to learn how to develop color pics himself (male erotica was outlawed in those days), and between 1977 and 1992 he was the target of three police raids on his home. Today his fans include Elton John, who just bought 50 original prints for his personal collection.

California Boys and its more racy sequel, *The Wild Ones* (the latter available exclusively from FotoFactory.com), contain Roberts' best images of his friends and lovers proudly posing nude for the camera. There's something titillating

THE HOT GIRLS OF WEIMAR BERLIN by Barbara Ulrich. Feral House, 2002; \$19.95 softcover.

Barbara Ulrich reminds the world that lesbians, bisexuals, consensually kinky and otherwise "other" females thrived during pre-World War II Berlin in *The Hot Girls of Weimar Berlin*.



A chapter titled "The Scorpion's Kiss" focuses exclusively on Sapphic love, while the rest includes an abundance of girl/girl imagery. Period illustrations, paintings and photographs depict comely Berlin lasses snuggling, tying corsets, passing out, gossiping, whipping one another, licking buttoned boots, quarreling and making love.

Quotes from period fiction, memoirs, magazines and more accompany the drawings and photographs to create a truly impressive and highly readable/viewable book containing precious pieces of queer social history.

—Darklady

MISS VERA'S CROSS-DRESS FOR SUCCESS by Veronica Vera. Villard Books, 2002; \$12.95 softcover.



Miss Vera is a beautiful blessing (with fairy wings, if the cover illustration is to be trusted) for anyone—boy, girl or other—who wants to be just a little prettier, just a little more femme, just a little more...well, successful.

Back to share a second dip in the font of feminization, the author of 1998's *Miss Vera's Finishing School for Boys Who Want to Be Girls* provides readers with photos, real-life examples from finishing school students and tons of tips on how to be the woman you've always wanted to be (or better understand).

Confounded by makeup, hair, accessories and how these things all fit into the big picture? Wondering what to do about unwanted facial hair? Perplexed by how much of your femmeself to follow? Who hasn't wrestled with these ponderables? Fortunately, it's Miss Vera (and her wonderful resource section) to the rescue.

—Darklady

FILTHY: THE WEIRD WORLD OF JOHN WATERS by Robt L. Pela. Alyson Publications, 2002; \$15.95 softcover.



As the mainstream has eventually caught up to the once unthinkable shocking humor and kitsch-punk aesthetics of queer filmmaker John Waters, the number of books about him and/or the colorful (to put it mildly) people who surround him has begun to proliferate rapidly.

His own books about himself, *Shock Value* and *Crackpot*, are still the most essential Waters reading. However, since any true devotee surely already has at least one dog-eared copy of each, *Filthy* makes a perfectly swell gift idea for those who don't mind celebrating this reverent season of sharing by feeding the sick obsession of Waters-obsessed peers.

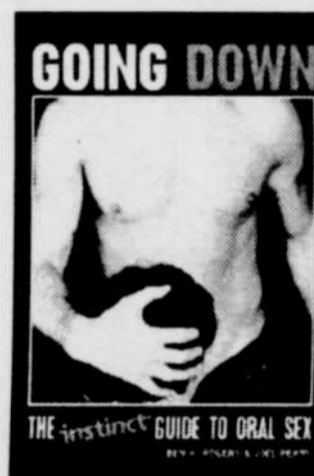
The usual biographical details and filmographies are present and faithfully accurate, but the book's real value is the author's hysterical, Trekkie-like glimpses into the cult madness of Waters fans. During the course of his research, Robt Pela apparently sought out the craziest followers and recorded in detail his amusing-verging-on-frightening experiences. Get out your highlighters, kids, because you're going to want to make note of the priceless pearls that fall from the mouths of these fanatics.

Give *Filthy* freely, and don't worry about the author's slightly satirical tone. The exposure here gains his subjects that much more notoriety, and trash celebrity is the biggest present you can give to someone who worships John Waters.

—Christopher McQuain

GOING DOWN: THE INSTINCT GUIDE TO ORAL SEX

by Ben R. Rogers and Joel Perry. Alyson Publications, 2002; \$13.95 softcover.



Going Down should, more appropriately, be titled *Everything You've Ever Wanted to Know About Blow Jobs But Were Afraid to Ask*.

This thin, breezy book is filled with fun facts, technique tips and first-person testimonials that are aimed at turning every man and woman into an expert cocksucker. Could there be a more valuable holiday gift? I don't think so.

With chapters such as "You Don't Know Dick" (which deals with anatomy) and "Pole Positions" (use your imagination), authors Ben R. Rogers and Joel Perry provide all of the necessary information to perfect our skills and turn oral sex into a mind-blowing experience for both parties.

Perry says he wrote the book because he and Rogers were "sick and tired of getting lousy blow jobs from people who thought they were good at it" (calling these "Ho-Hum Hummers"). But after closing *Going Down*, readers will have the information and attitude necessary to zip to the head of the class.

—Floyd Sklover

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