



Chasing Adonis: Gay Men and the Pursuit of Perfection

Tim Bergling

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What is it about some men that makes them an object of our deepest desires? And how far are we willing to go in pursuit of those desires?

Chasing Adonis: Gay Men & the Pursuit of Perfection delves into one of the most central mysteries of gay life: What is it gay men find attractive in other men, and why? How much is nature, how much is nurture . . . or maybe just clever marketing? This unique book examines steroid use, body image disorders, gym culture, Internet hook-ups, obsession, stalking, porn, erotic Web sites, strip clubs . . . and everything else that makes gay men act “a little bit nutty” when they meet someone who drives them “crazy!” Frank, sexy, and controversial, it uses a light touch to examine a serious subject: how gay society objectifies the male body.

Tim Bergling, author of *Sissophobia: Gay Men and Effeminate Behavior* and *Reeling in the Years: Gay Men's Perspectives on Age and Ageism*, surveys gay men about their individual concepts of beauty and desire and about the almost unattainable “Adonis” standard many of them set for themselves. Teenagers, senior citizens, and the guys “stuck in the middle” discuss the idea of perfection, how much it changes or evolves over time, and whether the exterior “package” outweighs what’s inside.

From the author:

It never ceases to amaze me just how powerful the 'd-word' (desire) can be, how it can take control of our lives and shut everything out, sometimes for just a few moments, sometimes for days or weeks at a time, depending on how badly we're smitten. Ask just about anybody, and they can likely pull up a story from their past—or their present—when they've done something incredibly stupid or ill-advised, or maybe just something completely out of character, in pursuit of their heart's desire.

Chasing Adonis examines:

- obsession and rejection
- self-esteem issues
- the allure of youth
- preferences in body shapes, types, and sizes
- “designer genes” vs. first impressions
- assessing body parts
- narcissism or comfort level—why men chase after guys who look like them
- AIDS and HIV
- gay porn
- adult book stores and the Internet
- the Calvin Klein ad campaign featuring “Marky” Mark Wahlberg
- the Abercrombie & Fitch ads
- “Tom of Finland”
- gay icons
- weight training and fitness clubs
- steroids and plastic surgery
- “circuit parties”
- body dysmorphia

- and much more!

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