

Gay films of the 1970s
are lightning caught in a jar...

J. BRIAN DONOHUE

Golden Boys' Golden Daddy
7 In A Barn and 40 In The Stable

Author's Note: In San Francisco, Tuesday, April 29, 1980, I met with my friend, male madam and film director J. Brian, at his Castro district home at 36 Camp Street where we chatted and looked through his three-ring binders filled with his photos of his stable of boys-for-hire whom Brian procured for cautious clients such as Rock Hudson.

Because I was the editor-in-chief of *Drummer* magazine, he had decided I should interview him. He so liked the way, he said, that I “drew him out” that he asked me to collaborate on his screenplay *J. Brian's Flashbacks*, as well as to write a novelization of that film whose six sequences were subsequently published as a Serial Feature with dozens of his photographs in three issues of *Honcho* (April, May, June, 1982) and again in six issues of the *California Action Guide* (June-December 1982).

J. Brian: Let me tell you one thing first about running a gay male whorehouse, the week I made the most money was when the American Psychiatric Association met in San Francisco. For that convention I had to call on extra help. Rich men want big dick on hot men.

Jack Fritscher: You get right to the point.

J. Brian: Nobody ever hired a virgin. In my three years, 1969 to 1972, when I was set up by the cops and busted, nobody, not even

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HOW TO LEGALLY QUOTE FROM THIS BOOK

my clients who were cops, ever asked for a virgin. So I'm not about to pull punches answering questions.

Jack Fritscher: You've shrunk out the shrinks.

J. Brian: The psychological services required of a Male Madam would fry Freud. You have to profile your house-studs. You have to screen the clients. You have to look after the boys' blood tests. You have to keep the kooks away from the kids.

Jack Fritscher: Kids?

J. Brian: Young men. Altogether my stable ranged from thirty to forty guys. Hot. Hung. Horny. And most often very smart. About thirty percent were college grads. The rest had a couple years of college under their belts. A third of them were working their way through college. You know: supplementing their income and veteran's benefits. A couple hours to make a few bucks. Most of them could handle at least one other language. Enough to order from a French menu. Enough to understand an escorted date to the San Francisco Opera.

Jack Fritscher: Smart fuckers.

J. Brian: Smart recruitment. I spent \$200 bucks a week advertising for new models in the *Berkeley Barb*. These boys could read. I averaged five to ten phone inquiries a day. The ones I served as agent for--and that really was my role: I was the agent-intermediary for the models and for the clients--were hung, horny, bright, All-American types.

Jack Fritscher: Agent, huh?

J. Brian: With my agency, nobody ever got stung or hurt. I screened the boys. I screened the men. If you pick up a kid on the street, you don't know what you're getting; and the kid may end up, sooner or later, dead.

Jack Fritscher: So everybody concerned was fairly well adjusted.

J. Brian: Come on. A well-adjusted person doesn't become a male whore...or a male madam!

Jack Fritscher: You laugh easily.

J. Brian: Life is for fun. Actually, most of the boys only stayed about six months. That's a healthy length of time to hustle. I worried about guys who wanted to stay longer. You can't fuck-for-cash seven days a week. I closed the place down every Sunday.

Jack Fritscher: Never on Sunday.

J. Brian: Sundays I'd drive the best of the current bunch out to the beach at San Gregorio or Devil's Slide. You gotta get yourself away from business. When you whore, you put your mind in blank while you do it. It doesn't seem serious. It doesn't seem real, although they don't blank out their interpersonal relationships with each other and with me.

Jack Fritscher: The boys got along okay?

J. Brian: They hung out together like a fraternity. They were all using male hustling as a Rite of Passage in a nation that has lost its sense of definite transition into adulthood.

Jack Fritscher: What makes healthy boys of mid-American parents want to sell their flesh?

J. Brian: In America, money is a way of keeping score. Of how well you're doing. Of how acceptable you are. Five years after my agency closed, one of my boys told me I had turned his life around. All during high school he had been a fat boy. He felt very unattractive, so he dieted, took up weightlifting, and got himself into good shape which, apparently, I verified through hiring him as a model and featuring him in one of my films. Through hustling he gained a self-confidence mommy and daddy never gave him. Through professional sex he became a person.

Jack Fritscher: Just like the Marine Corps builds men.

J. Brian: I agented for 800 young men in three years, so I guess there were at least 800 motives for the boy-next-door to enter the skin-game. They do it for ego and for money.

Jack Fritscher: Your clients. What kind of men pay for sex?

J. Brian: Let me be very clear: nearly all my clients could put on levis and a teeshirt and cruise for anything they wanted. The kind of man who hires his sex is a man who's so into his career that he doesn't have time for hit-and-probably-miss cruising. His

life is on a tight schedule. Why shouldn't his time frame for sex be the same?

Jack Fritscher: Profile, if you will, your average client.

J. Brian: Our typical client was a professional—doctor, lawyer, corporate type—goodlooking, well built, worked, say, out-of-town, sent to San Francisco from the East Coast every six weeks, staying at the Hilton, sexually active; his business day started with 6 AM calls back to New York, meetings all day, late dinner with client and client wife, leaves them after 10 PM. What's he going to do? Go out and cruise? He has to be up at 5 AM. He calls us. We go on his expense account.

Jack Fritscher: Can we ask who got what money?

J. Brian: Average kid earned \$300 a week. One stud was regularly clearing nearly \$1500 a week which he put in stocks and bonds. He's now a very wealthy 35-year-old man. Forty percent of the fee went to the house. Sixty percent, the kids kept. They also got to keep any tips or gifts. But on the subject of gifts, if a young man came back with a diamond ring, the next day I myself would call the client and ask if he really meant to be so generous. If he seemed reluctant, I had the boy return the gift. Nothing worse than a client, generously tipsy the night before, deciding in the cold sober light of dawn that he somehow had been "robbed." That's the kind of stuff I kept close tabs on.

Jack Fritscher: So you never really asked lurid details of what went on?

J. Brian: Very little was lurid. I always considered my agenting a business. I never asked anymore than "Did it all go alright?" I only wanted to know if a client was potentially dangerous to my boys. In three years, out of 1800 calls, we only had one certifiable sicko who wanted a callboy to slash him with razor blades. We didn't do razor blades. Some light spanking from time to time, but no sick stuff. One client liked to shoot Gillette shaving bombs up my kid's ass. When he switched to menthol, I got rid of him.

Jack Fritscher: Where were you located?

J. Brian: San Francisco's Nob Hill across from the Mark Hopkins Hotel. We weren't "elegant," but with that neighborhood and a professional and celebrity clientele we had to look good. Celebrities would stop by, discreetly, and thumb through my photo books to pick out the young men they liked. Most famous people handled themselves very well. They *have* to have a service such as my agency. Can you imagine some of the famous names you know out-on-the-town and trying to have a privately good time?

Jack Fritscher: Discreetly tell us some dirt.

J. Brian: Most celebs were very warm. One TV actor with his own series called me wanting specifically some young stud who would not know who he was not wearing his knit watch cap and riding his motorcycle. So I sent him Carl, who had been studying in India for two years and knew nothing about American pop culture. Carl was hot and well hung. He came back from the appointment and asked, "Who was that guy?" The actor seemed to want to have Carl guess his identity. "We showered and he kept asking, 'Who am I?'" A few minutes later, the phone rang. It was the actor. "Hey," he said, "you know that guy you sent up. He was great sex, but he didn't know who I was." I said, "Isn't that what you wanted?" I guess it wasn't. He wanted someone to adore him.

Jack Fritscher: You were right about having to be a good psychologist.

J. Brian: I always tried to match the boys' private personal preferences with their public advertised specialties. The boys, talking with each other at our Thursday night suppers, compared notes, recommending to each other clients whose tastes best matched another boy's talents.

Jack Fritscher: Do you see any of your "graduates" today?

J. Brian: A lot of my close friends are people I've used. I hate that word used. There's nothing wrong with mutual use. I never abused any of them. A lot of my friends are people I've employed.

Jack Fritscher: Any tragedies? Any successes? I mean, with all the runaways in America today, you probably have the best followup profile of what happens to kids who early on go out on their own working their big cocks, tight holes, and fuckable faces.

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J. Brian: Most of the sex was cocksucking, fucking, rimming, snowballing, filching, shrimping (foot sucking). A whole Barnum and Bailey of sex acts. Lots of kissing and cuddling. Obviously, it felt good to everybody. But to answer your question, yes.

Jack Fritscher: Tragedies?

J. Brian: None directly related to my business. A couple of heroin OD's and a suicide. Terrible. But these boys had problems no one could solve. Hustling didn't cause their problems. I never allowed any drugs. No boy of mine ever went out on a modeling call stoned.

Jack Fritscher: Successes?

J. Brian: Wow! Yes! One owns three men's clothing stores; another a gift shop. One works real estate quite successfully. Another just opened his own computer software shop. One is a recognizable actor on a TV soap opera. Another is now dancing on Broadway in a hit musical. One young shunner has a flourishing landscaping business.

Jack Fritscher: You taught them business sense.

J. Brian: I never sent a boy out unless I had rehearsed him through everything from the proper way to knock on a door to the way to handle himself as a young gentleman for hire.

Jack Fritscher: We're just skimming the top of your experience. You ought to do a book what with your Modeling Agency and filmmaking background.

J. Brian: Maybe. I did make an American First. I wrote and shot the first hardcore talkie film, *Seven in a Barn*, in 1969. Altogether I made ten films.

Jack Fritscher: They're on videotape now, right? I saw an ad recently: Astronics, 90 Golden Gate Avenue, San Francisco, 94102.

J. Brian: I like you.

Jack Fritscher: Where were you when we needed you with your hot-and-cold running boys?

J. Brian: Believe it or not, my business made a lot of men happy.

Jack Fritscher: Very happy.

J. Brian: One of those shrinks from that big convention? Well, he called me from Iowa. He had used my service and liked it. He had a fifty-year-old patient whom he prescribed be fixed up at my agency. This man was an attractive owner of his own trucking company. Very masculine. Had a wife. Six kids. He flew out from Iowa to San Francisco every weekend for six months. We met him every time at the airport. That's how he came out. He left his wife. He found a lover. He wrote me recently that he's happy now.