

# POSITIONS TO BE FILLED!

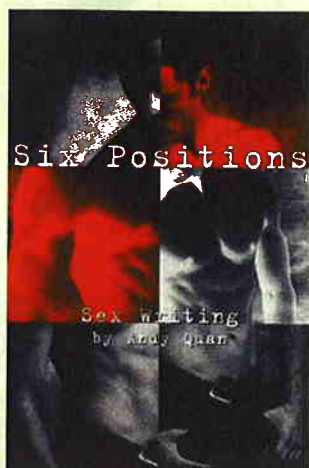
Andy Quan's new "sex writing" book, *Six Positions*, lifts the lid on Sydney's sex parties, sucking off surfies and getting it if you're Asian! Interview by Marc Andrews.

**Born in Vancouver, Canada, writer** Andy Quan has lived in Toronto, Brussels and London but for the last six years has called Australia, specifically Sydney, home.

His current day job is working for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) as International Policy Officer. He calls it "a mix between a day job like everyone else's and once in a while having this incredible feeling of doing something I feel very passionate about that's making a difference in the world."

Quan was one of the instigators behind the Sexual Racism Sucks online campaign a couple of years ago which encouraged gay men to word their ads on websites in a more positive and open way. "There was good visibility and people were discussing it," Quan notes of the campaign. "I've noticed more people being open and friendly in their ads in the last two years."

Besides contributing numerous stories to various anthologies, Quan has also published two books – *Slant*, a book of poetry, and *Calendar Boy*, a book of short fiction. This month sees the release of his latest book, *Six Positions*, a book of "sex writing".



Andy Quan: "When I get aroused and feel sexual from writing, that's a good sign. Some stories are based on sexual situations and are more intellectual."

**DNA:** Your new book is called *Six Positions*. That doesn't seem like many!

**Andy Quan:** Ha! *Six Positions* was the name of the first erotic story I wrote when I was in London in 1998. I wrote it for an anthology where the maximum was 1,000 words, so the most I could fit in was six positions. There are many other positions though – it depends on your repertoire.

**"If people just look into their own sexual histories there's a lot of variation and a lot of stories there to be told!"**

**The book is sub-titled *Sex Writing*. What does that actually mean?**

A lot of the writing in it is erotica, which I define as well-written sex writing. It's writing which aims to arouse but has some kind of literary quality about it. I've also thrown in other stories that are just about sex and may not be intended to arouse at all, but just explore something about sex and sexuality.

**So some of the stories are one-handed reads and some are just head fucks?**

Yes!

**When you're writing erotic stories, is it a prerequisite that you're turned on?**

No. Sometimes I've written stories because I could write a story based on a sexual situation, so it can be more intellectual. When I

get aroused and feel sexual energy from writing, that's a good sign. **There's a lot of Sydney in this book – the gay sex party underground, sex with surfies. Obviously Sydney has been a big inspiration for you.**

I've probably written most of the stories since coming here. Sydney is a sexy place with lots going on, so there's been lots to inspire me.

**Do you have a favourite from the stories?**

I'm very proud of *Positive*. It's an erotic story based around a relationship and the sexual tension between somebody who's HIV-positive and someone who's HIV-negative. I didn't want it to be a polemic political piece. I wanted it to be sexy, but not shy

away from politics or what's happening in gay communities right now.

As for sex stuff, I like the sex scene in *Surf*, with the Australian surfer.

**There's two stories set at gay sex parties – one in Sydney, one in Byron Bay. How much of that is true?**

I've heard there are numerous sex parties in Sydney – some bigger and some smaller – and some in Melbourne and Brisbane now too. A magazine in Toronto asked if I knew of any sex parties in Toronto like the ones that I describe. My answer was "If you do, send me the address!"

**What feedback are you expecting from *Six Positions*?**

No matter which stories are fictional or fantasy, people will assume all the stories are about me. People will be asking questions about whether these things really happened or not.

**And did they?**

## BOOKS

Reviews by Graeme Aitken

I'll leave that to the reader to guess. With any writing, people assume that the author is in there somewhere, but how closely that relates to somebody's life is the question. Some stories are more true than others. Some are fantasies.

I find first-person stories more immediate. They give the impression they are an autobiographical story. They are also powerful because they come from the "I", the confessional tone, which can sometimes express things in a more immediate way, like something is happening now.

I hope people like the stories and find them sexy and they make them think about their own sex lives and about sex in different ways. The book portrays lots of different sexual situations.

### And positions!

And positions. Some of the erotica I've read is fairly formulaic – a fantasy about a younger guy and an older guy, of rough sex, or falling in love for the first time. If people just look into their own sexual histories there's a lot of variation and a lot of stories there to be told.

### Getting It If You're Asian is a story that touches on a number of interesting issues.

Some of the best writing is informed by people's individual experiences – it makes people's words unique, original and interesting. Writing about an issue that I know – the complicated intersection between sexuality and culture – is fun for me to do and challenging for people to read. There has been a lot more discussion about race and sexuality in the last few years in Australia, and that's great.

### What's your experience living as a gay Asian man in Australia?

Racial politics and what our attractions are is something that's always there. I'm always an Asian gay man out on the scene. In a city like Sydney it's not a negative thing, it's an interesting thing. You meet people who have a multi-racial group of friends, or people who sleep with men of all races. In other places in my life it's been more of an issue. In London I often found when I looked around a bar that I would be the only person who wasn't white. That made me feel uncomfortable.

### Would you agree there's much more gay Asian visibility in Australia now?

Sydney is an amazing place for that. There are Asian guys who come from all over the world here. They're in all the scenes, in all bars, and at different dance parties. They are confident and sure of themselves. The old stereotypes of how Asian men and white men have relationships, and how Asian men are perceived, are changing a lot, especially in places like Sydney.

### In your story *Why I* there's the line "I celebrate sex both by doing it and by writing about it". Is that a good summation of you and your book?

People can be a bit coy talking about their sex lives, more so when I lived in London. Talking to my gay friends, they have extraordinary sex lives and experiences and that's a good thing. It's good to get over the idea that sex is a negative thing. For gay men, especially what we've gone through in terms of HIV and AIDS, to celebrate our sexuality, to have sex, and to write about it, is a good thing.

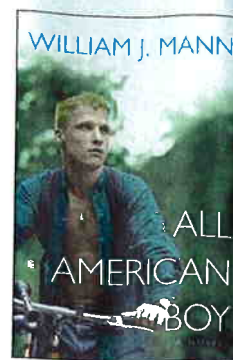
### So what is your favourite position?

For me it would be in the arms of somebody who I'm very attracted to and who is attracted to me. 🍆

Andy Quan's *Six – Positions: Sex Writing* is published by Green Candy Press and is available at The Bookshop Darlinghurst in Sydney, Hares And Hyenas in Melbourne and from book stores that carry gay books. It is also available online. Go to [www.andyquan.com](http://www.andyquan.com)

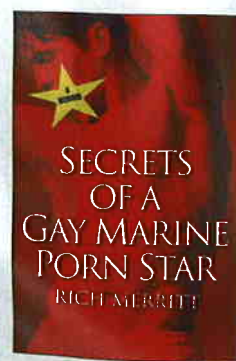
### ALL AMERICAN BOY By William J Mann

This novel is a move towards more serious material for popular author Mann who abandons party-boy frolics (*Where The Boys Are*) to explore the tragic consequences of buried family secrets. Wally Day is a struggling gay actor who for years has made denial his own particular art form – from his stalled career to his emotionless encounters with men. When his mother forces him back to his hometown of Brown's Mill, Wally finds himself overwhelmed by memories: schoolyard taunts and his navy captain father's abuse, and the kindness of his transsexual friend, Miss Aletha and the forbidden relationship he embarked on at 15 with Zandy, a much older man, which ended disastrously with Zandy jailed on child molestation charges. Back in Brown's Mill and in a strange echo of his past, Wally finds himself becoming infatuated with Miss Aletha's latest teenage runaway, 16-year-old Donald.



### SECRETS OF A GAY MARINE PORN STAR By Rich Merritt

Merritt was the perfect son, the teacher's pet, a southern gentleman, a model Christian student and Marine officer. This memoir tells how a boy who never listened to pop music, never cursed, and didn't have his first drink until he was 18 exploded into a life of drugs, alcohol, promiscuity, prostitution and pornography. Merritt reveals what it was like growing up behind the "Fortress Of Fundamentalism" and how he ultimately came to despise those narrow views. He also discusses the harsh realities of military life under the "Don't ask, don't tell" policy and gives a true insider's account of working in the male porn industry.



### NICK OF TIME By Scott And Scott

A few years ago, Scott Pomfret and Scott Whittier, a couple from Boston, perceived a distinct lack of gay romantic fiction in the marketplace. So they changed that by writing their own and founded their own press, Romentics. They attracted impressive international publicity and achieved strong sales. *Nick Of Time* introduces Nick, a handsome stonemason who has given up on gay men and agreed to marry an Irish woman who needs a green card. Then he encounters Brent, a dancer, who is in town for his sister's wedding. Nick dismisses Brent as a bitchy slut who would think nothing of breaking his heart. Brent considers Nick just another closet case. But when opposites attract, who's going to tell the Irishwoman her time is up? The other three Scott And Scott titles – *Razor Burn* and *Spare Parts* – are also available in sexy retro covers and *Hot Sauce* in the new Warner Books edition.



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