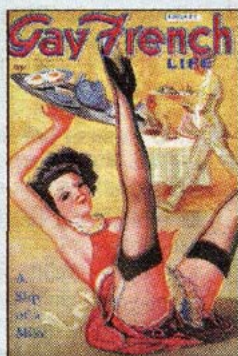


THE BIG PICTURE**Dian Hanson's History of Men's Magazines Vols 1 & 2**

Taschen, £29.99 each

★★★★☆



Did you know that American detective magazines were once deemed the 'preferred pornography for sexual sadists and were in fact training manuals for them'? This and many other nuggets of trivia from the first era of print permissiveness are the subjects of Dian Hanson's epic history of the lad mag. From

the quaint Exposing The Divorce Racket! to the somewhat scarier White Slaves In Black Harlem, it's easy to have a giggle at the mores of the age (1900 to World War II in Vol 1; postwar to 1959 in Vol 2). It's also amusing to ponder how Sunshine & Health's reporter must have chuckled when they wrote about the nudist camp of Beaver Forest. But it's the images you're interested in and, as usual, Taschen does not disappoint, with full-colour reproductions of magazine covers (such as Gay French Life, pictured) from decades past and across the globe. The only problem is clearing space on your bookshelf for the impending next four volumes.

Ben Sloan