

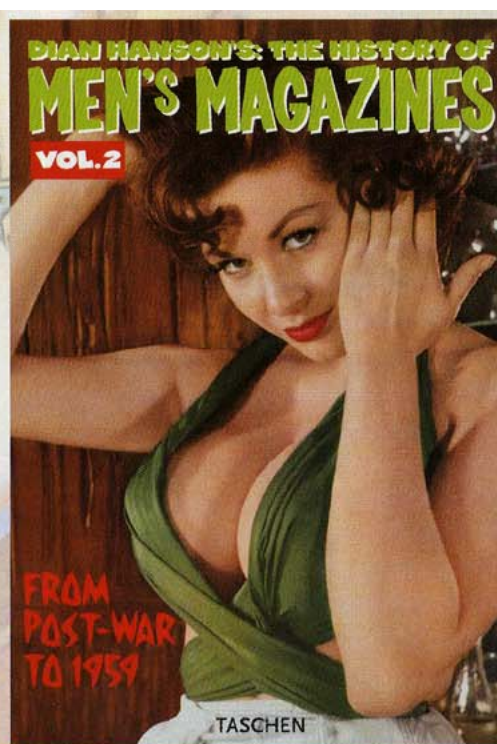
THE HISTORY OF MEN'S MAGAZINES VOL 1

(Taschen £29.99)

In 1984, Mark Gabor compiled *The Illustrated History Of Girlie Magazines* but Dian Hanson's editing approach is a lot more comprehensive. She is certainly putting her encyclopaedic knowledge to good use in the first of six volumes which covers the years 1900-1945 and tackles every aspect of the trade from distribution to pornographic strip cartoons, detective and naturist magazines as well as French publications like *Folies De Paris Et De Hollywood* with their airbrushed pudenda.

As is often the case in sexual mores, France was ahead of the nudge-nudge wink-wink wankgame with *Paris Sex-Appeal* – check out the brunette with hairy armpits! – and judging by the covers of magazines like *French Stories* published in the US, everyone else was aping the frogs. Soon, other countries got in on the act too, from Germany to Britain and even Turkey. If you like classy, colourful drawings of belles in garter belts and stockings and burlesque fashions, you'll love this. The Battling Lassies certainly get our vote!

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THE HISTORY OF MEN'S MAGAZINES VOL 2

(Taschen £29.99)

Stronger in content, the second volume ranges from *Bizarre* legend John Willie and *Escape Into Bondage* drawn by Eric Stanton – who both loved dominant women – to scandal magazines such as *Hollywood Confidential* mixing celebrity gossip, racy stories and naughty pics.

Good to see South America joining in the fun – *Dinamita* indeed! – as content became more *Exotique* and *Fantastique* (two US titles still in thrall to the French in the fifties). Niche titles began appearing – check out *Guys In Gowns!* – while the UK still beat about the bush with *London Life*, *London Opinion* – go figure! – and the much better titled *Can-Can*, *Bamboo* and *Mam'selle* – what did I tell you about the French obsession? – moving from under the counter to the top shelves still prevalent today. The Top 5 American Cover-Girls is great fun, as it includes the obvious Marilyn Monroe, Jayne Mansfield and Bettie Page but also the less-celebrated June Wilkinson and Diane Webber. We can hardly wait for the next volumes due later this year. Better clear some shelf-space!