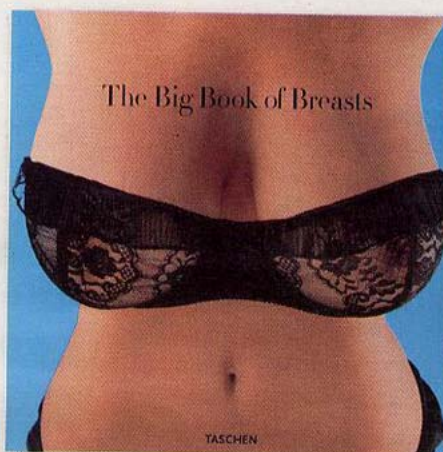


**The Big Book Of Breasts**

Ed. Dian Hanson  
(Taschen, £29.99)

This latest release from Taschen, those purveyors of arty coffee table books, is a pictorial history of US magazines dedicated to boobs and more than lives up to their loving and expensively produced standards. While this reviewer could be said to have a fondness for the book's subject matter — although his acquaintance with them is nowhere as frequent as he would like — he claims no expert knowledge of the bosom's place within American cultural history. Consequently he and the similarly unenlightened reader must trust that the extensive



introductory essay by editor Dian Hanson hits its mark.

Providing the context for the pictures and detailing just how breasts pushed their way into American pop culture, this begins with the development of the Forties pin-up which, it was hoped, would distract overseas GIs from getting together with girls who might send them back to Uncle Sam with a souvenir from old Europe you can only shake off with a penicillin shot. This, for Hanson, is where the US male had first gained his appetite for breast flesh (and plenty of it): her survey then graduates to the first dedicated magazines of the post-war period; the rise of *Playboy*; the entire oeuvre of Russ Meyer, where the bosom attains a grandstanding prominence, and into the Nineties where that decade's craze for augmentation meant that an exotic dancer was guaranteed to jack up her takings as long as she jacked up her bra size. In-depth interviews

with glamour girls such as the legendary Candy Barr, Uschi Digard and Tempest Storm, lover of Elvis and JFK, are all lavishly illustrated with highlights from their careers which well compliment the scores of beautifully reproduced photographs and combine to make *The Big Book of Breasts* a highly arousing — not to mention hefty — smorgasbord for the eye.

J.L.