



American Hunks: The Muscular Male Body in Popular Culture, 1860-1970

David L. Chapman, Brett Josef Grubisic

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The "American hunk" is a cultural icon: the image of the chiseled, well-built male body has been promoted and exploited for commercial use for over 125 years, whether in movies, magazines, advertisements, or on consumer products, not only in America but throughout the world.

American Hunks is a fascinating collection of images (many in full color) depicting the muscular American male as documented in popular culture from 1860 to 1970. The book, divided into specific historic eras, includes such personalities as bodybuilder Charles Atlas; pioneer weightlifter Eugene Sandow; movie stars like Steve "Hercules" Reeves and Johnny "Tarzan" Weismuller; and publications such as the 1920s-era magazine *Physical Culture* and the 1950s-era comic book *Mr. Muscles*. It also touches on the use of masculine, homoerotic imagery to sell political and military might (including American recruitment posters and Nazi propaganda from the 1936 Olympics), and how companies have used buff, near-naked men to sell products from laundry detergent to sacks of flour since the 1920s. The introduction by David L. Chapman offers insightful information on individual images, while the essay by Brett Josef Grubisic places the work in its proper historical context.

David L. Chapman has written many books on male photography and bodybuilding, including *Comin' at Ya!: The Homoerotic 3-D Photographs of Denny Denfield*.

Brett Josef Grubisic is author of the novel *The Age of Cities* and editor of *Contra/Diction: New Queer Fiction*.

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