



UNIVERSAL HUNKS

A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF MUSCULAR MEN AROUND THE WORLD, 1895-1975

David L. Chapman with Douglas Brown

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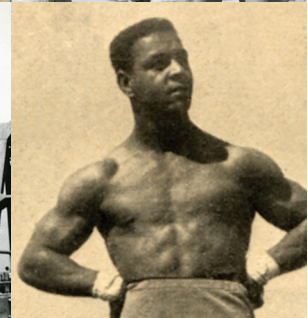
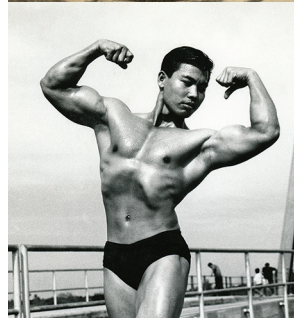
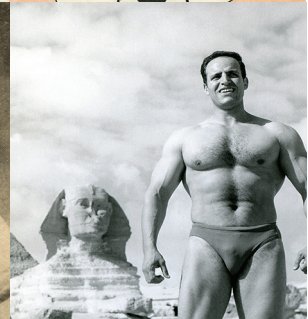
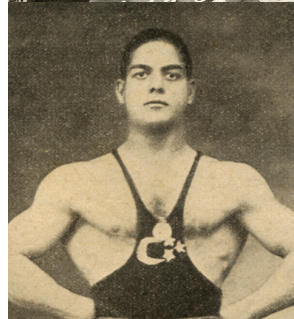
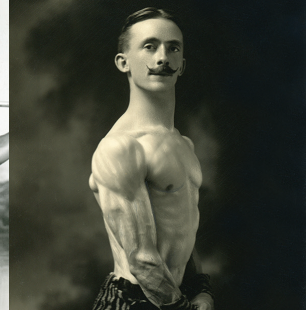
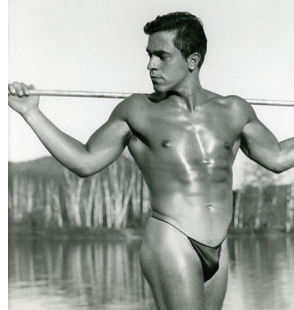
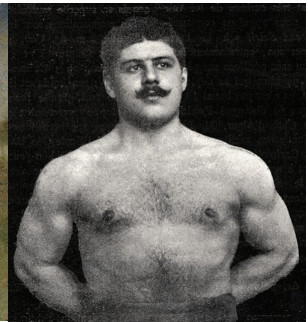
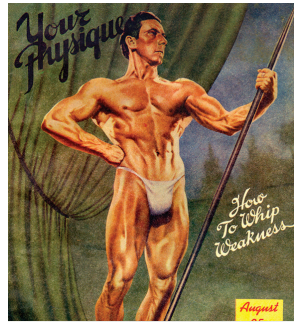
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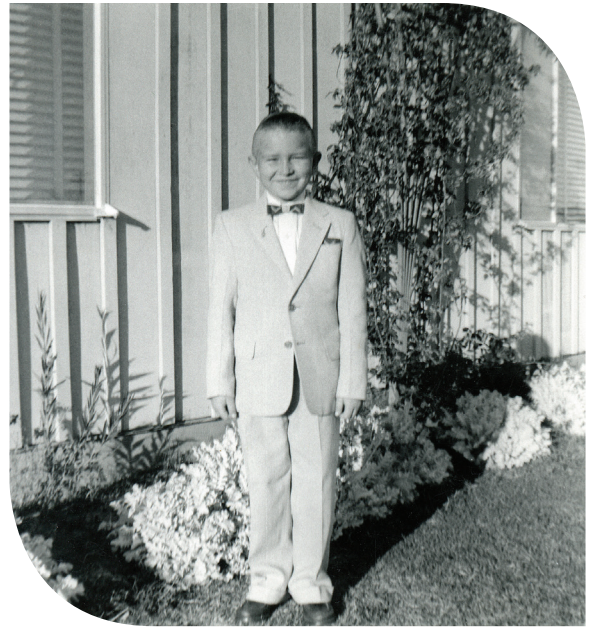


FOREWORD

A hunk is generally defined as a muscular and sexually attractive man. For four decades, I have collected pictures of them, concentrating on historical images from all parts of the globe, many of which appear in this book.

Hunks can be found in every inhabited continent of the world. They exist at the intersection of athletics and sensuality; therefore, the question of who is a hunk rests in the eye of the beholder. This book is not about male beauty as such, but about the way that the classic Greco-Roman canons of muscularity have been developed, dispersed, and reinterpreted all over the world. This process of “universalization” originated in Europe but soon spread to all corners of the globe.

Universal Hunks is the third in a series on the muscular human form that I’ve written. The first book, *American Hunks*, dealt exclusively with images from the United States. The second, *Venus with Biceps*, was about the muscular female. The present book focuses on muscular men from North America and beyond, organized by nation or region. By assembling these diverse and fascinating images in one volume, it’s my hope that I can share with others what I have been privileged to know for some time: the muscular male has been the subject of many representations whose beauty and diversity match the subjects themselves. Long live the hunk!

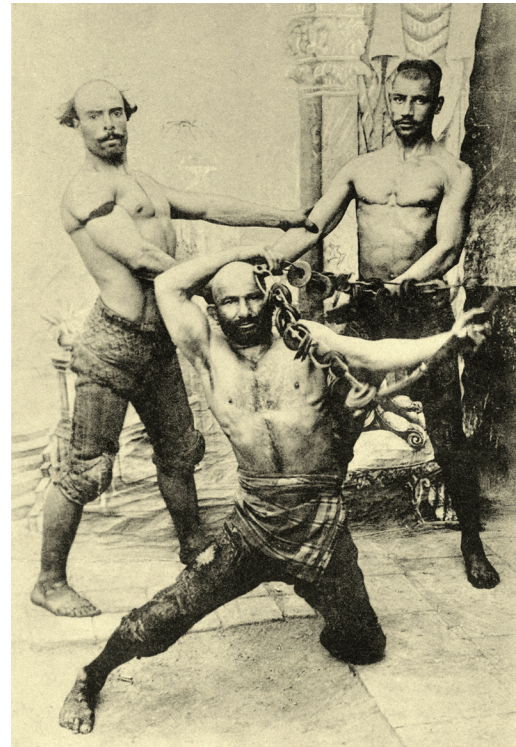


The author (shown here in 1955) still believes that one is never really dressed until he is overdressed.

ASIA



At approximately the same time that jujitsu was sweeping Britain, Japanese athletes were becoming all the rage on the continent of Europe. The cover of this French magazine, *La Culture Physique* from April 1905, demonstrates the fascination by showing a group of Japanese acrobats performing in their *fundoshi* (loincloths) and little more. That same year, the editor of the magazine, Edmond Desbonnet, would found the first school of Japanese martial arts in France.



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In this view of Zoorkhaneh exercises, the man in the foreground is pulling on a *kabbadeh*, an iron bow with a heavy, weighted chain attached to it. This is a postcard from 1908.



The Jingwu Tiyu Hui or Pure Martial Athletic Association, was a group of Chinese athletes who sought to combine the self-control of Confucianism, the equality of Buddhism, and the brotherhood of Christianity into an organization that would make the Chinese people stronger and more resistant to foreign domination. In this photo from the 1920s, this Chinese athlete wears the costumes of Western stage athletes (leopard skins, Roman sandals) while posing or performing acrobatic feats.

AFRICA

Pieter De Beer of Pretoria was voted “South Africa’s most muscular man” in 1960. Here he poses in the bush near his hometown.



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The first black man to grace the cover of a physical culture magazine was “Othello, the Zulu Athlete” in 1901. Othello appeared on the London music hall stage with a strength act that capitalized on Britain’s involvement in the Boer War (1899-1902), then raging in South Africa. By 1911, the barrel-chested athlete had taken a white wife, and the happy couple appeared together in a French magazine, but after that he disappeared from the public eye.

Like other North Africans, the Egyptians took to the imported sport of weight lifting and bodybuilding with alacrity. Here is a group of amateur Cairene athletes photographed in 1904. Several future stars are visible here; Philippe Nassif stands in front of the door, and another Egyptian star, Mohammed S. Bey, kneels and flexes in the center of the group.



EUROPE

In around 1900, the Biscuits Germain Company of Lyon, France, produced a series of cards featuring various sportsmen using boxes of their products in absurd ways. In this card, a professional strongman “muscles out” two boxes of the biscuits while the man’s dog balances a third on his nose. Music-hall strongmen were popular entertainers at this time, so advertisers often used images like this to imply that their products would make one strong.



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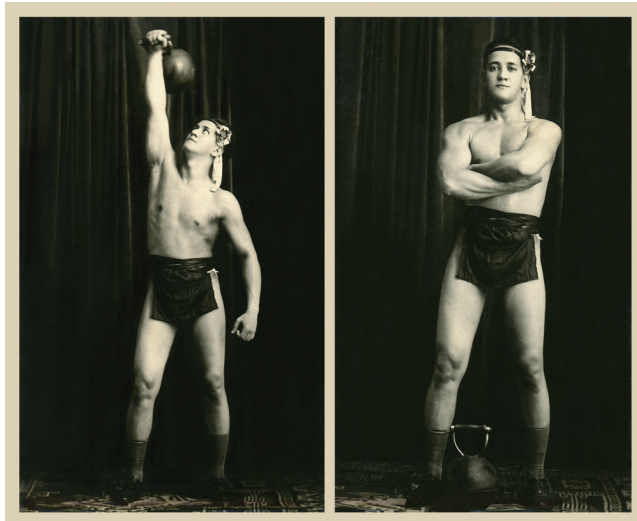
Gustav Fristensky was born in the Moravian town of Freibek in 1879 and went on to become one of Czechoslovakia’s finest and most famous athletes. He became known as the “Bohemian Hercules” and won tournaments all over Europe. This poster emphasizes his massive upper body and his chest full of medals.



Wearing nerdy horn rims and a weightlifting jersey for the 1962 Commonwealth Games, David Prowse (1935–) does not look like a super-villain, but with a black cape and helmet, he became the body of Darth Vader, evil genius of the *Star Wars* films. (Darth’s voice was James Earl Jones.)

AUSTRALASIA

The movie *Spartacus* was released in 1960, and when it opened in Melbourne, someone came up with the idea of having a couple of chesty bodybuilders and an even chestier showgirl at the premiere. Photographer Ian Amiet immortalized this exceedingly silly publicity ploy.



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In the summer of 1925, Earnest J. Seva was in his last year of undergraduate law at the University of the Philippines. He had just begun to work out with weights and wanted to show off his progress, as shown in these two views. However, Seva chose a very odd costume: young men often do foolish things when they are in their salad days, though few decide to wear that salad around their heads!

This unusual five-view exposure of M.G. Antonio's growing physique is from November 1936, by the portrait studio of Boreal, R. Marcelino.



UNIVERSAL HUNKS

**A Pictorial History of Muscular Men
around the World, 1895-1975**

David L. Chapman

with Douglas Brown

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Over the last 100 years, the image of the muscular man has known no boundaries; it has been the object of envy, admiration, and desire, and used to convey optimal health and fitness, product appeal, political power, and military might. *Universal Hunks*, David L. Chapman's follow-up to *American Hunks*, is a captivating collection of historical images of muscular men from around the world beginning in the 19th century up until the 1970s, including photographs, posters, advertisements, magazine and comic book covers, and product packaging. The book considers the eroticized, politicized, and commercialized male image through history, and evaluates its fascinating cultural context by country and continent. The book also includes a foreword by cultural and sports historian Douglas Brown. Full-color throughout, *Universal Hunks* is a thought-provoking and sexy visual tour of musclemen from all parts of the globe.

David L. Chapman is the author of twelve books on male photography and bodybuilding, including *American Hunks*; he is also author of *Venus with Biceps: A Pictorial History of Muscular Women*. He lives in Seattle, WA.

