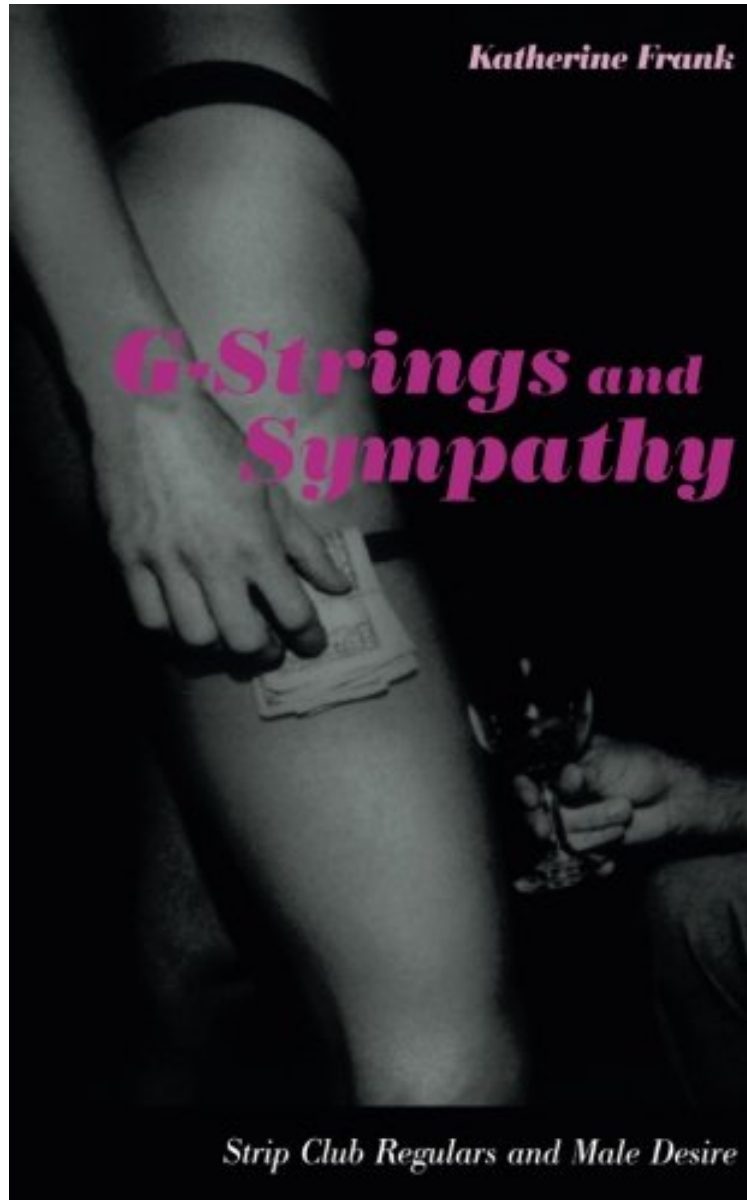


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G-Strings and Sympathy: Strip Club Regulars and Male Desire

Katherine Frank

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Katherine Frank : G-Strings and Sympathy: Strip Club Regulars and Male Desire before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised G-Strings and Sympathy: Strip Club Regulars and Male Desire:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is NOT an erotic novelBy RaptorduckIf you are buying this

book to be aroused, you will be disappointed. If you are buying it like a novel, you will be disappointed. What this book really is, is a repackaging of a doctoral dissertation for the curious masses. What are you curious about? Well, how the "customer" of the gentlemen's club thinks, why he thinks it, and what it means. This book is not about the dancers or what they think, it is about the customers. It is a very well researched, fully annotated and footnoted and referenced. This is a research paper, a long one. The author took the subject matter seriously and spent a few years working the clubs she wrote about. Mind you, this was not homoerotic fantasy she was living. This was serious research. She did not hide the fact she was doing scientific research, taking notes, doing structured and semistructured interviews etc. This is a dense piece, full of interesting information and written more like a research dissertation than a book. So expect rather monotone, dense, bland reading, but expect lots of interesting intelligence on the world of its subject matter, with solid reference support. Final words. Now that I have warned you that this is not novel or erotic book (so look elsewhere if that is what you are looking for, it was NOT what I was looking for), you may then put on your PhD psychologist/sociologist hat and find some fault with the research methods employed. And well you should. There is bias and quasi-experimental method design and variant sample selection including straight up convenience sampling (which is just fine when used properly). But the thing is that is, it is still a book and not dissertation so I can't really get carried away can I? This book is notable most for the perspective it takes. It asks about the customer not the performer. That makes it more of an anthropological exploration, a social psychology expose as well as a sociology experiment. It is an interesting read, informative, and investigative. The cover picture is unfortunate for many potential readers I am afraid, cuz this aint a marital aid. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Who knew? By Mike Wagner Dr. Kate Frank sheds light on a much mis-understood subculture and economy. More college text book than exciting prose, it should be (and probably is) required reading for anyone studying sexology or sex workers. Very interesting. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Strip for me, Get a Ph.D... By Michael Hemmingson With the popularity of the exotic dancer/sex worker as Ph.D. candidate in anthropology and sociology, many dissertations have been published the past few years. Frank's is among the best -- while academic, it is also accessible to the lay reader, taking into its lens discussions of emotional labor, post-tourism, the male gaze, the psychology of the male customer and the inner motivations of dancers. Highly recommended for enjoyable ethnographic reading.

Based on her experiences as a stripper in a city she calls Laureltona southeastern city renowned for its strip clubs anthropologist Katherine Frank provides a fascinating insiders account of the personal and cultural fantasies motivating male heterosexual strip club "regulars." Given that all of the clubs where she worked prohibited physical contact between the exotic dancers and their customers, in *G-Strings and Sympathy* Frank asks what if not sex or even touching the repeat customers were purchasing from the clubs and from the dancers. She finds that the clubs provide an intermediate space not work, not homewhere men can enjoyably experience their bodies and selves through conversation, fantasy, and ritualized voyeurism. At the same time, she shows how the dynamics of male pleasure and privilege in strip clubs are intertwined with ideas about what it means to be a man in contemporary America. Frank's ethnography draws on her work as an exotic dancer in five clubs, as well as on her interviews with over thirty regular customers middle-class men in their late-twenties to mid-fifties. Reflecting on the customers dual desires for intimacy and visibility, she explores their paradoxical longings for "authentic" interactions with the dancers, the ways these aspirations are expressed within the highly controlled and regulated strip clubs, and how they relate to beliefs and fantasies about social class and gender. She considers how regular visits to strip clubs are not necessarily antithetical to marriage or long-term heterosexual relationships, but are based on particular beliefs about marriage and monogamy that make these clubs desirable venues. Looking at the relative "classiness" of the clubs where she worked ranging from the city's most prestigious clubs to some of its dive bars she reveals how the clubs are differentiated by reputations, dress codes, cover charges, locations, and clientele, and describes how these distinctions become meaningful and erotic for the customers. Interspersed throughout the book are three fictional interludes that provide an intimate look at Frank's experiences as a stripper from the outfits to the gestures, conversations, management, coworkers, and, of course, the customers. Focusing on the experiences of the male clients, rather than those of the female sex workers, *G-Strings and Sympathy* provides a nuanced, lively, and tantalizing account of the stigmatized world of strip clubs.

From Library Journal Among the recent plethora of books by and about strippers (e.g., Toni Bentley's *Sisters of Salome*, Lily Burana's *Strip City*, and Elisabeth Eaves's *Bare*), Frank's work, an obvious doctoral dissertation, stands out in that she uses anthropological tools to analyze the male customers' experience while working as a stripper herself. Her research is sound—she works in a variety of clubs to get a full picture of the experience—and she documents her research exhaustively, with 25 pages of footnotes and a 14-page bibliography, in addition to extensive verbatim quotes from her subjects. Unfortunately, this rigorous approach has robbed her thesis of its inherent bathos and humanity, resulting in a tedious, laborious read weighed down with academic jargon. She also includes some of her own fiction, which does not enhance the reading pleasure. Her conclusions are not enlightening: although it upsets

their wives and girlfriends, men continue to frequent strip clubs. One question she does not address is economics: how do middle- and working-class men justify spending hundreds and even thousands of dollars a night at these clubs? Of appeal exclusively to a handful of academics, this work is not recommended. Ina Rimpau, Newark P.L., NJ Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. *G-Strings and Sympathy* effortlessly merges the personal with the polemical, the scholarly with the serendipitous, and the earthy with the esoteric. Informed, intelligent, yet always accessible, Katherine Franks writing sheds a piercing beam of light on the shadowy realm of exotic dance. Lily Burana, author of *Strip City: A Stripper's Farewell Journey Across America*