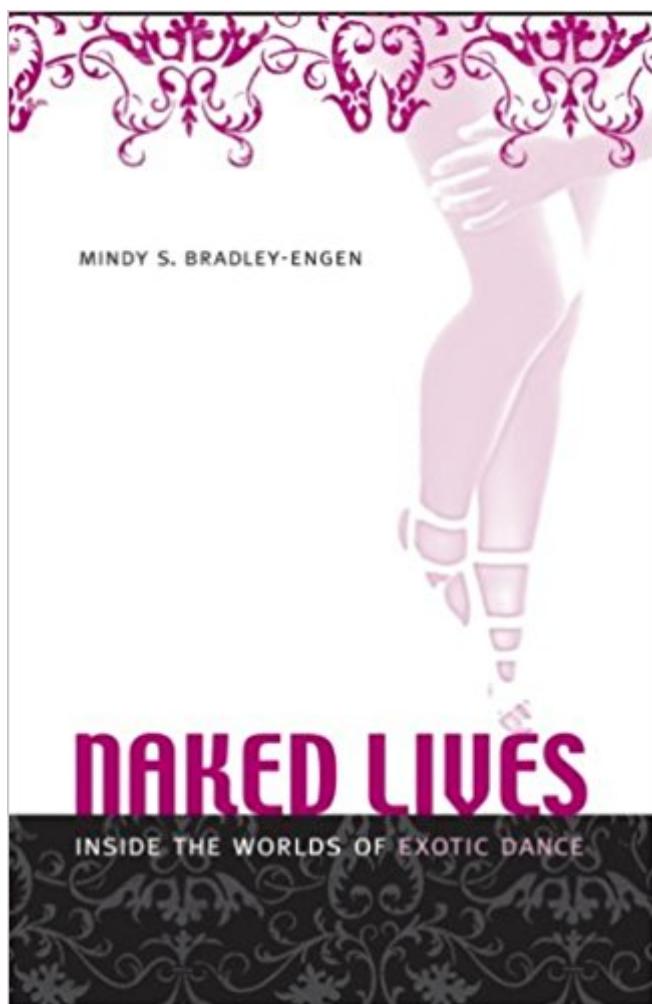


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# Naked Lives: Inside The Worlds Of Exotic Dance



## Synopsis

Looks at the experience of being an exotic dancer in different kinds of strip clubs. Is stripping good or bad for the women who do it? According to sociologist Mindy S. Bradley-Engen, there is no simple answer. An exotic dancer's experiences can be both empowering and degrading: at times a dancer can feel like a goddess, at times ashamed and dirty. Drawing on extensive interviews as well as her own experiences as an exotic dancer, Bradley-Engen shows that strippers' work experiences are shaped by the types of establishments—the different worlds—in which they work. A typology of strip clubs emerges: the hustle club, the show club, and the social club, each with its own distinct culture, expectations, and challenges, each creating circumstances in which stripping can be good, bad, or indifferent. Going beyond the warring rhetorics of exploitation and empowerment, this book provides a rich and complex account of the realities of exotic dance and offers a fascinating, thought-provoking consideration for both academics and general readers.

Most studies of the sex industry focus on the feminists' debates resulting from the 1980 sex wars, which question if the nature of sex work is good or bad for women. However, Bradley-Engen in her ethnographic study moves the discourse beyond this debate, and argues that the level of exploitation, or empowerment, women experience working in the exotic dance industry depends in which types of clubs they work. Bradley-Engen's study adds to the field of the sociology of women, labor stratification, and future directions of sex industry research.

• Contemporary Sociology

*Naked Lives* offers highly readable shifts between Bradley-Engen's reflections on her own experiences as a dancer and the experiences of other business-insiders. First-person narratives convincingly convey exotic dancers' feelings of anger, frustration, and affirmation, while the author's application of a social template is original and innovative.

• Canadian Journal of Sociology

Unlike other studies of exotic dancers that rely on interviews with dancers or ethnographies of strip clubs, this book combines the author's own personal narratives with formal interviewing and observations. She utilizes great quotes and offers powerful imagery of an industry that otherwise can easily be misunderstood or sensationalized. She quickly brings the reader into the club world by opening the chapters with her personal experiences.

• Lisa Pasko, coauthor of *The Female Offender: Girls, Women, and Crime*, Second Edition

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--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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