

Ethnography assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

With this observation project, the goal is to get out of your comfort zone and go into places we have never been before. We should come to an understanding of a particular ritual which is being done rather we agree with it or not. The ritual I have chosen is attending a strip club. In a strip club there are performers who take off their clothing while dancing to music. The performers get paid through tips they get from their customers. For the performers it is an occupation and for the customers it is enjoyment.

This ritual does interest me but only by a small amount. Over the years strip clubs have become extremely popular and recently straight females are attending these clubs to watch female strippers. This information spikes my interest because a lot of my female friends attend women strip clubs and absolutely loves it. They say it is better than males. I would like to know why. Strip clubs are world wide and accepted by multiple cultures. Depending on the area and which strip club you attend there are different rules.

Other forms of this ritual are burlesque dancing and go go dancers. In order to complete this ethnography of this ritual I had to research its history as well as its current standing. Once I attended the club first hand and interviewed and observed the interactions and scenery, I had to analyze the significance of a strip club. The first North American style strip club came about after World War II, Asia in the late 1940s, and Europe in 1950. Though the word "strip tease" was created in 1938, the act of striping can be traced back over 400 years ago.

The possible influences of this style of dancing may have possibly first come from the Pharaohs' vault in Northern Africa and Egypt. While there they

watched a woman search for an imaginary bee in her clothing. While she was searching for this e in an afraid manner, she was removing her clothing piece by piece. The French then took this style of dancing back to their native land. In America, stripes started by traveling carnivals and burlesque theatres. It wasn't until the sass the revival of strip tease in the form of go go dancing.

A dancer by the name of Carol Dodd was the first person to go topless in San Franciscans Condor Night Club in 1964. In 1964 this club decided to go bottomless as well and started the full nudity trend. San Francisco Is also known for the starting of lap dances through the strip club Mitchell Brothers Farrell Theatre in 1980. Strip clubs cater to men and women, having male and female strippers. Female strippers are more popular seeing that male strippers only make up one third of the dancing population. Since the sass pole dancing and Implicit Imagery connected with strippers was accepted.

Many movies have been created based on or stripped related. Some of these movies are Flash Dance, Blaze, Exotica, Stripes, and The Players Club. In 2002, it was recorded the United States had over 2500 strip clubs which industry was estimated to be \$3. 1 billion (https://en. Walked. Org/walkouts_club#Bibliography).

On March 18, 2013 room 11 : pm until 1: AM I went to Mints, a strip club In Niagara Falls, Ontario. At the door there was cover charge that I had to pay of \$7. 00. The drinks at the bar were 1 OFF rules, there may or may not be nudity allowed.

At this particular club nudity was allowed. Walking in the club it was dark and the music was loud. At the center of the club against the back wall there was a main stage which was where the dancers took their turn solo dancing. On

the floor were booth and tables with men and women occupying them. All around there were topless and naked women either dancing or conversing with the customers. Walking from the bar to my table I observed a woman dancer seductively moving her body in front of a man. In her neon yellow g string was where the man put the dancers' tip.

Straight ahead I saw a group of women yelling and cheering while a stripper gave one of their friends a lap dance. Once I sat down at my table, to my right I noticed a dancer talking to a male customer. It looked as if they were having a friendly conversation. The carpet is dark and the room is not crowded, a comfortable amount of people. I am unable to place the aroma in this club but it's a smell that I do recognize. Being very polite I began to ask others about their opinions related to strip club and strippers. Coming to strip clubs can be a release to a stressful week.

Some men use strip clubs as an escape from their relationships with women and would like to see them naked or close too. But the women responses were different. They said they love to come to strip clubs but only when they are under the influence of alcohol. They would rather watch a female strip than a male. The people who attend these clubs are very open-minded and are not judgmental of the women that have chosen this as their occupation. From my observations I have learned to loosen up. Looking around I see people enjoying themselves, being carefree.

Yes there is nudity but it's a strip club of course it would be. This ritual can tell others about the culture in which it is being performed. Being in this club and the people as well I see an accepting culture. A culture where there is no

Judgment and freedom. I would not say this ritual is “ needed” but it does serve a purpose. As we all know life is hard, and at times we all need an escape. A strip club for some can be that escape, that moment where the outside world does not exist and your living in the moment. If speaking to someone in another culture I would describe this ritual for someone that is open-minded.

If nudity is a problem for them then they should not attend. Going to strip clubs are something like a guilty pleasure, a place where you come for entertainment. A ritual can help an anthropologist understand life in another culture because similar to how a society cannot survive without language the same is true for rituals. Rituals are what link a group together; it is an inevitable component of culture. Through rituals anthropologists are able to learn a person’s or group’s values and beliefs. Before attending the strip club I had preconceived notions about it.

I have never been to one nor have I possessed a true interest to go. I did not look down on the people that attended or the dancers but I was just not into... Open nudity. My opinion on this ritual was different from the people I observed. They seem to look forward to going to the strip club and truly enjoyed themselves. I am able to interpret what is happening through culture relativism, observing, and participating in this ritual. From this project I have learned the importance of having an open mind. Many times we are afraid to go out of comfort zones because it is an area, which we are afraid to enter.

In some situations, in order to gain a better understanding it is necessary to go not be so... Uptight. A study like this can contribute to general or nuanced understandings because it forces the observer to involve him or herself in the ritual. Many times people have misconceptions about certain rituals without experiencing them first hand. For all they know, they might enjoy it or receive a better understanding of why the group of people partakes in this ritual.