

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON  
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT  
RAPPORT

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Our File/N/Réf.           03-07-00-0127  
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE                        2 February 2000

TO/DEST.                 Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP.                Committee Co-ordinator

SUBJECT/OBJET          **THE EXOTIC DANCERS' ALLIANCE (EDA)**

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### **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Health Department contact the Region of Peel Health Department to determine how the department assisted with the establishment of the Exotic Dancers' Alliance and how they provide health services to this population, with a view to providing similar services to this population in Ottawa-Carleton.**

### **BACKGROUND**

Attached is a copy of "The Naked Truth", An Information Resource for the Exotic Dancers' Community, a newsletter published by the Exotic Dancers' Alliance of Toronto. This material was submitted by Councillor D. Holmes.

Councillor Holmes has requested approval of the above-cited recommendation.

*Approved by*  
*M. J. Beauregard*

Attach: (1)

# THE NAKED TRUTH

AN INFORMATION RESOURCE FOR THE EXOTIC DANCERS' COMMUNITY

Volume II, Issue II

November 1993

## WHAT IS THE EXOTIC DANCERS' ALLIANCE?

**INSIDE:**  
**Know Your Rights**

**Busted**  
**Beware of Pimps**

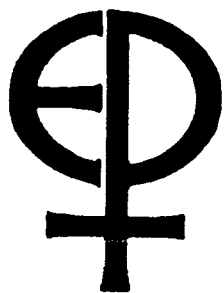
**Self Esteem, Don't Leave**  
**Home Without It**

**Needles that Work**

**Dancing with the Pole**

**Fun and Games at Work**  
**World's Lamest Pick Up**  
**Lines**

**Recovery**  
**HotLines**



No doubt you have at some time sat in the change room griped about conditions at your work: are they ever going to that stage, why do all these men think I make so much money when I'm broke all the time, what is up with all these bar fees could I catch something from the pole?

In 1993 the partner of a dancer in Brampton became sick with hearing her complaints he suggested they do something about it. The two contacted their local councilperson,

representatives from Peel Health and other local agencies, and the Exotic Dancers' Alliance was born.

Over the years, the EDA has met with representatives from Immigration Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress, regional police forces, and other agencies that impact jobs. We have initiated hepatitis B immunizations within clubs, maintained a website, provided a hotline, published a quarterly newsletter, engaged in community outreach projects, and increased media presence for dancers.

This September the EDA staged a Burlesque Show to a packed club in Toronto, became incorporated, and submitted a proposal to the United Way for further funding. Other current projects include a partnership with the University of Windsor on a study of exotic dancers, applying for not for profit status, and continued outreach in the clubs. A small group of dedicated women have been

instrumental in accomplishing these goals.

This group has big plans for the future. The EDA is growing and needs your help. Involvement with the EDA is an excellent opportunity to effect change in the industry that affects you. It is also a great way to obtain the practical training and experience you may need for your next career. Our volunteers are developing skills in networking, strategic planning, program development, social work, public speaking, administration, event planning, bookkeeping, fundraising, graphic design, desktop publishing, media relations and more.



If you want a change for the better, to get involved, to ask a question, or to give us your input the EDA wants to hear from you.

Call us at 416-410-2958 or outside of Toronto toll free 1-877-228-8666.  
Mail us at Suite 708, 2343 Brimley Road, Toronto Ontario, M1S 3L6 or visit our website at [www.bramguard.com/eda.htm](http://www.bramguard.com/eda.htm).

The EDA meets the first Tuesday of every month, call for times and location.



### KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Just about every strip club has a NO TOUCHING sign posted somewhere but what does it really mean?

All exotic dancers, strip club owners and managers in Toronto (including Scarborough, Etobicoke, and North York) are regulated by Section 36 of Bylaw No. 20-85. This section refers to exotic dancers as attendants and has only been amended twice since it was originally written twenty years ago.

The first of these amendments is the "lap dancing law" enacted on August 17, 1995.

This law states:

*No owner or operator shall, in respect of any adult entertainment parlour owned or operated by him, knowingly permit any attendant, while providing services as an attendant to touch, or be touched by, or have physical contact with, any other person in any manner whatsoever involving any part of that person body.*

*No attendant shall, while providing services as an attendant, touch or have physical contact with any other person in any manner whatsoever involving any part of that person's body.*

The second amendment was initiated to prevent private rooms where lap dancing might occur. It states:

*No attendant shall provide or perform any services as an attendant in an adult entertainment parlour except while within the plain and unobstructed view of the main stage.*

*Every owner or operator shall ensure that no attendant provides or performs any services as an attendant in an adult entertainment parlour except in accordance with subsection 1 of this section (above).*

*Where an adult entertainment parlour is equipped with more than one stage, the owner or operator of such adult entertainment parlour shall, by filing a notice with the Commission in the approved form, designate one of the stages as the main stage.*

More information, background and the original by-laws, are available at the Urban Affairs Library at Metro Hall, 55 John Street, Toronto.

### NEED TO VENT?

**Share your experiences with thousands of other dancers across Ontario. Contribute to the Naked Truth!**

**Contact the EDA. Anonymity assured if requested.**





## Busted!

Project Almonzo had a busy summer.

Between April and August 162 people were charged with bawdy house offences in seven strip clubs in Southern Ontario. The charges include 59 people with keeping a common bawdy house and 82 women with being inmates of a common bawdy house.

Project Alonzo was initiated to investigate agents luring foreign women to Canada under false pretences. The women believed they would be working as models, hairdressers, and

chorus-line dancers. Once in Canada they were forced by threat and physical intimidation to work as exotic dancers a prostitutes, paying their agents up to \$1300 a week on top of airfare and living costs. Of the women charged, more than half have been placed in shelters.

On July 15 Dorivoj Vranich and Erika Vranich of Solid Gold II were arrested at their home in Oakville. Charges laid include keeping a common bawdy house, forcible confinement, and living on the avails of prostitution. John Vranich, Denis Vranich, and club manager Ivan Tolev face immigration charges. The club has since shut down.

Additional raids this summer resulted in arrests at Features the House of Lancaster II, and Diamond's Cabaret.

## Beware of Pimps!

By Mary Taylor

The EDA is working to educate dancers on taking control of their lives. One of the ways dancers can start to do this is by realizing that you don't need an agent any more! Especially if you are working in the GTA! Any club will hire you by a simple phone call or a visit to the club. Auditions are obsolete and clubs don't really care what you look like anymore. Because... very few dancers get paid a salary! Gone are the days when you needed promo pictures and fancy costumes. The more free dancers a club gets, the better for them. Although some clubs still pay dancers shift pay. That works in pretty much the same way. Just drop around and see the manager. And... you can usually stay as long as you like, unless you burn your bridges!

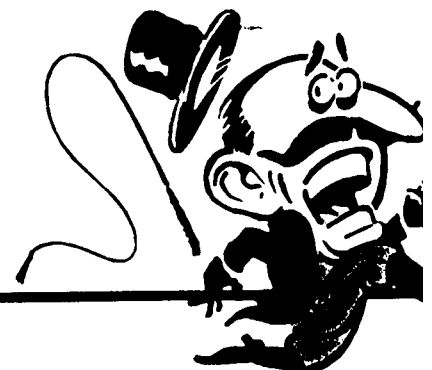
If you want to work out of town, there are still a few agents that can book you into out-of-town clubs for a percentage of your now ridiculous salary. Or...you can get off the couch, splurge on a long distance phone call and book yourself. All it requires is a little motivation.

### Beware of slimey agents and pimps!

There is a pimp in the Brampton area that for quite some time now, has been posing as an agent enticing new dancers in the business into signing an exclusive contract to work for him. This contract ties you into an agreement allowing him to take a portion of your money for a minimum of one year. He takes large percentages of your paychecks and in return says that he will provide you with PROTECTION. He

supplies you with a driver that you have to pay and once he gets to know you better, he will have you turning tricks. This of course gets him yet another cut of the pie. His wife is an ex-dancer and she goes to the clubs to scout out the new girls. Together they have quite the scam going on as they hide behind their car wash business and teach the new girls how to dance on a plywood stage that he had built. **DON'T GET SUCKED IN TO THIS SCAM!!!** If you are new dancer in the business talk to the other girls in the club you are working at. Call someone you know and ask for support, call the EDA, Don't keep this bottled up inside you. You deserve to be treated like a human being. Don't let the looser get you!!! It's easier to get sucked in by him than it to break away. If you already have been sucked in by him, it's not too late! Ladies, if you want to turn tricks, you don't need a pimp to do it. It's funny how they offer you protection. The only protection you need is from keeping **PIMPS AWAY FROM YOU!**

The EDA is working on a club-rating list that will assist dancers all over Ontario to find the better clubs to work in. We would love to hear from you about the worst and best places you have worked in. All comments are welcome and will be kept anonymous. You would be helping your fellow dancers in making this world a better place to dance in.



AN OLDE IRISH VERSE

I hailed me a woman from the streets  
 Shameless but oh so fair,  
 I bade her sit in the painter's seat,  
 And painted her sitting there.

I hid all trace of her heart unclean,  
 And painted a babe at her breast.  
 I painted her as she may have been,  
 If the worst had been the best.

She laughed at my painting and went away.  
 Then came with a knowing nod,  
 A connoisseur I heard him say,  
 "Tis Mary the Mother of God."  
 So I painted a halo about her head.  
 Sold her and took my fee.  
 Now she hangs in the church of St. Aliar,  
 Where you and all may see.



**SELF-ESTEEM, DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT!**

How many times has your self-esteem been shot down in one shift? How many times in your whole career will your opinion of yourself be put in question? How much of your self-esteem depends on what other people think? How often do you withhold self-approval until approval from other sources tell us it's okay?

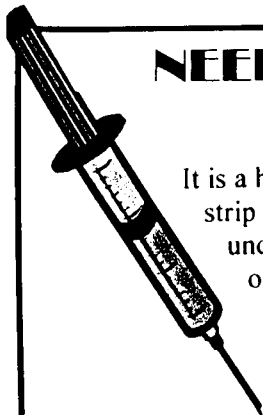
Self-esteem can be a very fragile thing. Whether we are coming out of modesty or fear, we make a mistake when we assume outside evaluations are more accurate than any inner reading we may have. Be careful you're not allowing other people to form your opinions of yourself for you. Try and keep a clear positive attitude at all times when working or not and remember to take the things people say with a grain of salt. We all like to take the good thing and believe them to be true, but if that were the case then all the bad things people tell us would also be true. **Remember, no one knows us better than ourselves.**

Other people's indifferent or negative reactions to us may have nothing to do with us and everything to do with them. Maybe the person we are trying to please can't be pleased. Perhaps there is no positive feedback from that negative source. **Some people are so full of fear, resentment, and hurt, their major effect on life is to make everyone miserable as they are.** Obviously, when we look to such people for validation, we look in vain.

**As we learn to be more honest with ourselves, we can more comfortably trust in our own judgement.** I would give a bank robber my savings to hold. Why should I let negative people take charge of my self-esteem? **Don't leave home without your self-esteem and definitely don't GO home without it.**

## **NEEDLES THAT WORK**

by June Morrow



It is a hot Tuesday night in early August. At a strip club in Mississauga the woman on stage undresses. Except for the small bandage on her arm there is no indication of the injection she received just five minutes earlier. The woman isn't high, she won't feel the effects of the drug, but she does feel a little safer. She has just received her final shot, making it far less likely for her to ever contract Hepatitis B.

For the past three years, the Exotic Dancers Alliance and Peel Health have provided free hepatitis B immunizations in four Mississauga and Brampton clubs. Leigh Miller, a nurse with Peel Health, says the program was initiated at the request of a dancer. It continues to help dancers reduce their risks of contracting the disease.

The hepatitis B virus is 100 times more infectious than the AIDS virus and is the leading cause of liver cancer. According to the Hepatitis B Foundation web site, this year 10 to 30 million people worldwide will become infected. One third of those will not know it. One percent will die from it. Hepatitis B, however, is preventable with a vaccine.

Like AIDS, having unprotected sex and sharing needles are ways of contracting Hepatitis B. Miller says this has caused some resistance from dancers who do not lap dance or use intravenous drugs yet, these women are still in danger. Although the virus is passed through blood, semen, and vaginal secretions, it can survive on dry nonporous surfaces for up to seven days. Technically, this could include poles, mirrors, walls, and furniture an infected person has had contact with. Exotic dancers are also at risk if they share personal hygiene products such as tweezers, nail files, hairbrushes, razors, and toothbrushes, or have been pierced or tattooed with unsterile needles.

Thirty-five percent of those who become infected will have no idea what the source was or even that they are infected. Hepatitis B can be a silent disease. In 50% of cases there are no symptoms at all. When symptoms are present they usually feel like the flu (fatigue, aching muscles, fever, and nausea). According to the Hepatitis B Foundation, 90% of people will develop antibodies and clear the disease from their bodies. 10% will not and will become chronic carriers with an increased risk of cirrhosis or liver cancer. Some carriers may also develop varicose

veins in the stomach and esophagus. Carriers can also have no symptoms but still pass on the disease. Children born to mothers who are chronic carriers have a 90% chance of being chronic carriers themselves.

The only way to know with certainty if a person is carrying the disease is by a blood test. Fortunately, Hepatitis B can be prevented with a series of three shots. The first injection is at any time, the second is given one month later, and the third five months after the first. For the general public, the injection requires a doctor's prescription and can cost \$25 to \$55 each time. For exotic dancers, there are other options.

At present Peel's Exotic Dancers' Outreach Project has finished immunizations in two clubs and is part way through two others. According to Miller between 100 and 150 women have been tested and vaccinated free of charge so far. The Exotic Dancers Alliance plans on expanding this program to other regions. Until then take the precautions listed below. If you are working in Mississauga or Brampton call the EDA at 416-410-2958 or 1-877-228-8666 for club locations and times. Otherwise, talk to your doctor or call the Hepatitis B hotline at 1-800-363-3422, code 2121 to find out where you can get tested and immunized in your area.

### **TO REDUCE YOUR RISK OF HEPATITIS B**

- Wash your hands regularly
- Use a towel as a barrier between yourself and furniture (and customers if you lap dance)
- Wipe down the pole with a 1:10 bleach:water solution
- Do not share personal hygiene products (razors, hairbrushes, tweezers, nail files and toothbrushes)
- Have tattoos and body piercing done by professionals in sterile environments
- Never share needles
- Use a condom when having sex
- Get tested and have your partner tested
- Get vaccinated

## DANCING WITH THE POLE

I'll never forget my first time on stage. In preparation of my big debut I'd taught myself to dance in high heels, bump and grind, and wiggle out of my clothes with seductive ease in the basement of my parent's house. I was ready, scared as Hell sure, but I was ready.

After what seemed like an eternity and a split second later the DJ was booming, "Making her debut tonight at the Silver Dollar, let's hear it for Sandra." I hit the stage with knocking knees and a pounding heart but within minutes I relaxed into it. By my second song I was two stepping and spinning my way around the stage with abandon.

Being half-naked in front of a group of strangers, I felt like I could do anything. I was on fire, making eye contact and smiling flirtatiously with the guys in the audience. Average me! Here I was - every man's fantasy, and then SMACK - with all the grace of a belly flop, it ended. *I danced right into the pole.* I hadn't considered this big rod on stage the night before. My parents certainly didn't have one in their basement. Who does? I did all I knew how to - I avoided it at all costs. The pole was the enemy.

In the weeks that followed I watched in amazement as more experienced dancers performed moves that would be the envy of circus acts - climbing the pole, hanging from it with one knee, swinging around it, and sliding back down. How did they do it I wondered. Meanwhile the pole and I developed an uneasy truce. As my heels got higher I realized it made a great spotter for keeping my balance and I would reach out for it when I felt myself falling. I even tried flipping my body around it resulting in massive bruises on my hips. My new acquaintance, I learned, could be brutal on my body. Still, I kept trying.

It wasn't until I'd been dancing for almost four months that I realized the significance of this bizarre apparatus. I was sitting with a customer at Charlie T's watching Cat, one of those wild athletic dancers with a sexual energy so raw it permeated the room whenever she took the stage. During her performance Cat's eyes focused on the pole, she straddled it, climbed to the ceiling, hung upside down and let her body drop. With a loud squeal

she slid down it with her head stopping just inches above the stage.

My customer turned to me, "In my next life I want to be reincarnated as that pole." Suddenly I got it. To the men in the audience Cat wasn't just demonstrating her strength or prowess, she was fucking the pole! That giant shaft, the one constant in every club, wasn't just a piece of metal, it was a phallic symbol - a metaphoric penis designed to tease the hell out of the audience's minds.

From that day forward I looked at the pole differently I imagined it was my lover, the perfect permanent woody. I became my partner. I would caress it with my hands, back away, return and embrace it between my thighs. And just as every lover is different so too was every pole. Some were giving easy to grasp and climb up on. Others were slippery and more demanding. And of course there were some I wouldn't touch without a ten-foot pole of my own (not unless I gave them a good rubdown with some antiseptic cleanser before my show).

Although being between a woman's legs is most heterosexual male's dream, for women sharing the pole can be likened to sharing a vibrator. Fears of yeast infections and worse abound.

Consequently, I learned that common courtesy demanded I wipe down the pole after getting personal with it, which of course is a suggestive move in itself (hand job anybody?).

Today, after four years of stripping and countless stage shows, my relationship with the pole has changed dramatically from that first set. Now I am so dependent on the pole it borders on addiction. So much of my act literally revolves around it, when I am at one of those few clubs whose stage is bare I panic. What will I do? Who can I tease if I can't tease myself? I've come to love my constant partner on stage. After all even if I have been rejected by every person in the bar, without fail, without conditions, without demanding I give more than I want to, the pole will always want a dance.



## Fun and Games at Work

By June Morrow



Bored at work? When the going gets tough turn it into a game:

### DANCING NOT DATING

For this game you need two players, a patron and a dancer. The objective of the patron is to get the dancer's home phone number without having a dance. The objective of the dancer is to get the patron's cash without promising a date. Both must pretend they are interested in the other's objective while trying to persuade the other towards their goal. Who ever reacts first wins.

### REJECTION!

If the bar is packed and no one wants a dance, winning this game is a piece of cake. Compete against the clock with a friend. Ask every patron for a dance, and allocate points for each objection accordingly:

No with no excuse - 1 point, Later - 2 points, I'm only here for the beer - 3 points, I'm leaving soon - 3 points (double to 6 every half-hour they stay in the bar) I don't get dances - 4 points (8 if they have a dance with someone else).

Who ever gets the most points fastest yells "I am a reject!" and proceeds to the change-room where they get to hang out half an hour.

### NAME THAT TUNE

Beat the clock in this game of skill. To play wait until it is your turn to go on stage. Three minutes before show time go to DJ booth and try to find three songs in the Top 10 R&B charts that no one has danced to in the past week. If any complains "that's my set" you lose.

### HONESTLY!

This game of imagination can be an invigorating way to pass the time with those ever-curious customers. When a patron starts asking you about yourself LIE! Not just little lies, big hairy outrageous lies. For example, when they ask for your name, tell them it is Chlamydia or Ronald or Woman with Big Toe. If you are blond tell them you come from an Inuit town from up north, if you are coloured tell them you grew up in Norway. When they ask how you got into stripping launch in a long story about how you were kidnapped or involved in undercover sting operation or how your dad won the club in a pool game but lost your sister to a church group in the process. The longer you keep them believing you the closer you are winning.

### WHERE'S MY STUFF?

This game of chance is always a riot and you can even play it alone. Simply go to the locker room, change into your favourite outfit and proceed into the bar, leaving all your clothes and personal possessions in the change-room unlocked and in view. Simply check back every few hours and watch as like magic your things disappear. At the end of your shift, if you find the fucking bitch that took your stuff you win!

## World's Lamest Pick Up Lines

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. My face is leaving in ten minutes. I'd like you on it.          | 4. I was about to masturbate but I needed a name to go with the face.        | chicken farm 'cuz you're awful good at raising cocks. |
| 2. If you were a scab I would not pick you for fear of losing you. | 5. Call me but if another chick answers hang up.                             | 9. Baby, you are the shit and I am fly all over you.  |
| 3. I'm Irish. Do you have any Irish in you? Would you like some?   | 6. Is your name Beverly? You've got some nice expensive hills.               | 10. Nice legs. What time do they open?                |
|  | 7. I think I've had too much to drink. You are starting to look pretty good. |   |
|  | 8. You must have grown up on a   |   |





**RECOVERY**

By Jesse

*Definition: to get back; to revive; to reclaim; to rescue; to regain former state*

**R**ecovering can mean many things to many people. Some people may not even call it by this name. Whatever name or status it may take, the bottom line is the same; it is a desire to return to a more ordinary position from a place of extraordinary circumstances, lifestyles, experiences, and very often pain and sorrow. Unfortunately, this requires thought about all these situations and may open wounds we'd rather leave forgotten. Only when we acknowledge some damage has occurred to us, only then can we heal, build strength, educate, and nurture ourselves to provide us with the stability for growth and not only to dream big dreams, but to make them come true.

The healing process is a complicated one; a lot of grief is involved on any path of change and many people won't even begin it. For those who clearly understand their need for personal growth, they will have to travel through some personal hell to finally reach their paradise. A time will come when we begin to hear questions in our minds and hearts: *Do I need a change? Do I want a change? Can I do it? When is the right time? Who are my friends? Will they stand by me no matter what?* All these questions have no general answers, only ones we can answer by ourselves, for ourselves. No one can determine our destinies for us; we must find the vision and strength within ourselves to not just think about the answers, but really, to begin by hearing the questions.

My own questions began many years ago. I did not listen to them at first. Something terrible had to happen before I really wanted to hear their words. Even after I began physical healing from this situation, I still did not have any answers until I made up a song in my head about an Angel's voice singing to me. This song told me how beautiful my life should be, and when believing that, I could always find "Land from Sea." As I began to believe these words, I allowed some acknowledgement of the difficulties in my life; and gradually, more questions (and answers) came. Even though I didn't have all the answers I felt myself growing strong and determined to work hard toward discovering them. I also knew I couldn't rush myself.

Dancing and travelling really consumed my life for ten years. Even though I did take other jobs throughout these years, I knew dancing best. It was a very wild ride. That roller coaster took me across this country, into the States again and again, and into countries further south that military troopers might give a second thought to. Gradually, I learned other languages, had apartments and closets of clothes in many different cities, lots of friends, parties, plane tickets, and of course, alcohol and drugs. I had the life I'd always thought I wanted: the free one. I had no responsibilities, no ties, no one to answer to, but also no consistency, no one to really love, not even a real place to call home. If anyone had asked me (especially my parents) life was perfect. I had the dream existence: glamour, money, parties, sex, exotic locations. I even had myself convinced. Until I heard the questions. *What were my values? Was I really happy? What were my goals? Did I even have any? Did I really have any friends I could trust? Did my family still love me?* I felt anger and sadness at these questions and the lack of answers. It took me a long time to realize I could not rush myself.

**FOCUS**

ANONOMOUS HIV TESTING -  
905-840-1406

THE NETWORK -  
1-800-263-1638

HEPATITIS B -  
1-800-363-3422 code 2121

SEX AND BIRTH CONTROL  
INFO -  
1-800-infosex

MAINLINE - INJECTED DRUGS -  
1-800-686-7544

COCAINE HOTLINE -  
1-800-cocaine

NAT. INST. ON DRUG ABUSE -  
1-800-662-help

NEEDLE EXCHANGE -  
416-392-0520

DRUG AND ALCOHOL  
QUESTIONS - 1-800-387-2916

ASSAULTED WOMEN'S  
HELPLINE - 416-364-8762

RAPE CRISIS CENTER -  
416-597-8808

GAY & LESBIAN SUPPORT AND  
INFO -  
416-925-9872, ext. 2142

SAME SEX ABUSIVE  
RELATIONSHIP -416-595-0307

CHILDRENS AID SOCIETY  
-416-638-7800

THE DISTRESS CENTER  
-416-598-1121/ 416-486-1456/  
in Scarborough 416-751-4888

TORONTO POLICE  
(non-emergency) -416-808-8222

EMERGENCY - 911

**EXOTIC DANCERS  
ALLIANCE**

416-410-2958 /  
toll free 1-877-228-8666

I even had myself convinced. *Continued in the next Naked Truth*

# sex for sale

Continued from page A1

John Martineau, the general manager of Fanny's in the Byward Market, said his club has allowed lap dancing since December.

"I increased my business, for sure," Mr. Martineau said. Lap dances are performed in private cubicles called "champane rooms." The dancer strips naked, then sits on the patron's lap and writes to music piped in through speakers. The patron, who pays \$20 for the dance, has free rein to touch the woman practically anywhere except on the genitals.

Since the clubs started allowing lap dancing, dancers who are against the practice have argued that it is unsafe, unhygienic, and tantamount to prostitution. "It's prostitution, that's what it is," says Sylvie Lauzon, a 20-year-old exotic dancer. They would prefer to return to the old "look, but don't touch" rule between dancers and clients.

"In some bars, a girl will be naked on top of a man's lap and she's riding him until he gets an erection and ejaculates into his pants," said Steve Campbell, an agent who books exotic dancers into clubs and who opposes lap dancing. "They can sugar coat it all they want, but that's sex for sale."

After the Supreme Court ruling, Ottawa-Carleton police stopped enforcing the bylaw that prohibits touching between exotic dancers and their partners, Const. Scott Fitzgerald of the Community Response Unit said Tuesday. He said that one undercover sting operation against an Ottawa club had been broken off because of the ruling.

"The bylaw probably isn't enforceable at this time," Const. Fitzgerald said. "Would I as an investigator lay a charge under a bylaw if the big guys on Wellington decided this doesn't cut the mustard? No I wouldn't."

But Quebec Crown Prosecutor Robert Rouleau, who was involved in the Supreme Court case, said the ruling doesn't annul any municipal law. "That bylaw is still in force and there's no reason it shouldn't be followed," Mr. Rouleau said. After discussions with Mr. Chiarelli, police vowed yesterday they would enforce the no-touching bylaw. "The community standards have not decreased and we still consider these acts demeaning towards women," said Staff-Sgt. Flanagan. "We will be ag-

# It's war on lap dancing

## Chiarelli vows to stamp out 'demeaning' practice

BY KATE JAIMET

The \$20 grope is over. Police will stamp out lap dancing in Ottawa's strip clubs, Regional Chair Bob Chiarelli vowed yesterday. Mr. Chiarelli was supported in his statement by Staff Sgt. Mike Flanagan, head of the Community Response Unit, which deals with prostitution crimes.

"This act is demeaning to women. It's absolutely unacceptable. It verges on prostitution," Mr. Chiarelli said. "We need to pull together and ensure the level of enforcement we've had continues."

Mr. Chiarelli made the comments after he learned that some Ottawa strip clubs are allowing full-contact lap dancing, in contravention of a 1966 city of Ottawa bylaw that prohibits any physical contact between dancers and customers. The law had been enforced until December, when a Supreme Court of Canada ruling apparently opened the gates to lap dancing.

On Dec. 14, the court ruled that a bar



PAT MCGRATH, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

**Sylvie Lauzon and many other dancers would welcome a return to the 'look, don't touch' rule.**

in Montreal that permitted lap dancing did not violate community standards of tolerance, and that lap dancing was not an indecent act under the Criminal Code. Following that ruling, some clubs in Ottawa began to introduce lap dancing.

See LAP on page A8

**Dancer's lament:** 'It's prostitution, that's what it is,' C9

Sylvie Lauzon: '(Lap dancing) is prostitution.'

Some exotic dancers say they are being treated more like prostitutes than entertainers now that clubs allow lap dancing

# Dancing with wolves

BY KATE JAIMET

Sylvie Lauzon feels as if her job description just changed — from exotic dancer to prostitute. She sits in the kitchen of Steve Campbell's house griping to her girlfriends and eating key lime sherbet straight out of the plastic tub. Mr. Campbell's her agent. He's been hearing an awful lot of griping from these women since Ottawa clubs started allowing lap dancing last month.

"It's prostitution, that's what it is," says Ms. Lauzon, a pretty 20-year-old with dark curls and a spray of freckles across her fine-boned face.

"It provokes men to touch any girl. They think they can grab any girl wherever they want. They'll just grab you. I used to like going to work. Now I hate it. I just feel disrespected the whole time I'm there."

Ms. Lauzon and her girlfriends Liliana and Mercedes (who don't want their last names used because their families don't know they're dancing) all work at the Nu Den in the Industrial Road and St. Laurent Boulevard area. Ms. Lauzon is saving money to take a college course in hair dressing. When she started dancing last spring, the club, like almost all clubs in Ottawa-Carleton, had a strict no-touching policy.

Like all dancers, Ms. Lauzon stripped on the club's main stage as part of her job requirement, but she made her real money in the "champagne rooms." In these small booths, set apart from the rest of the club, she performed private strip-tease shows for \$10 a dance — no touching allowed.

"If someone used to touch you, you screamed, the bouncers were there within seconds, and he was gone," says A. J. L'Ecuyer, a 20-year-old University of Ottawa student who dances at Nu Den to pay her tuition. "It felt really safe, all the time."

For a young woman without post-secondary education, dancing was good money. It wasn't hard to make \$200 or \$250 a night.

"Most of us are students," says Ms. L'Ecuyer. "We have a nurse who dances because she doesn't make enough money. Some girls are doing research; some are paying off student loans. They do it because it's entertainment, and it's clean. There's no touching."

Then on Dec. 14, a three-paragraph Supreme Court of Canada ruling changed the world of



A.J. L'Ecuyer, a 20-year-old University of Ottawa student, works as an exotic dancer to pay her tuition. She and other dancers are angry that some clubs allow lap dancing.

exotic dance. The judgment concerned a Montreal strip bar owner who was charged with keeping a common bawdy house after an undercover police operation caught the strippers lap dancing.

The owner of the bar argued in court that lap dancing was not an indecent act because it did not fall below the community's standards of tolerance. The trial judge accepted the owner's argument, and the Supreme Court agreed by a margin of three to two that lap dancing was not an indecent act in the case of the Montreal club.

Soon after that, Ottawa clubs started to change.

**'We're all scared. We don't know if a guy's going to grab us and, if he does, if anyone's going to be there to protect us.'**

Exotic dancer A.J. L'Ecuyer

Ms. L'Ecuyer — who dances under the stage name Dusty — remembers going to work at Fanny's, a strip bar in the Byward Market, after returning from her Christmas holidays.

"I went into Fanny's and the DJ said: 'Dusty, honey, you don't want to be here. There's lap dancing now.'"

Ms. L'Ecuyer turned around and walked out. A lap dance, complete with permission to touch a naked woman anywhere except on her genitals, costs \$20 in any of the area's clubs, compared with \$10 for a non-touching dance.

But for Ms. L'Ecuyer, Ms. Lauzon and other dancers, the difference between looking and groping is bigger than \$10. Much bigger.

"In some bars, a girl will be naked on top of the man's lap and she's riding him until he gets an erection and ejaculates in his pants. They can sugar coat it all they want, but that's sex for sale," says Ms. Lauzon's agent, Mr. Campbell.

"It's hard for anyone to live with themselves knowing 200 different men have touched you in a month. Yet we've allowed 18-year-old girls to go into bars and do this."

Liliana, a cherub-faced dancer with long blonde hair and china-white skin, says caustically: "I tell customers who ask me for a \$20 dance: 'If I could use that extra money to buy back my self respect, I might consider it.'"

Ms. L'Ecuyer, Ms. Lauzon and other dancers — with the support of Mr. Campbell — refuse to perform lap dancing or allow customers to touch them. But now when they go to work, they find the atmosphere of the clubs has changed. The women who won't allow touching can't compete for customers against those who do. And even customers who agree to a \$10 dance will try to grab a dancer's body when they can.

Suddenly, a relatively easy way to make good money has become a lot harder and a lot more dangerous.

"We used to have so much fun, we used to laugh together on stage. Now no one's happy anymore. Everyone has bills to pay, mortgages coming down, children to feed, just like the rest of the world, and now it's gone," Ms. L'Ecuyer says. "We're all scared. We don't know if a guy's going to grab us and, if he does, if anyone's going to be there to protect us."

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tion, and I worry a woman will lose her job if they ever had talk of

My 11-year-old had been hired as a babysitter. We had no house before hand to meet in a state that my daughter was relatively normal.

The woman could handle a

with a woman who had a baby after her divorce.

A teenager with green hair through her nose certainly was me pause. So would a teenage

I stopped using sitters who my kids, who refused to play with my kids. Now my children and I've stopped hiring. I had to find a way to supply the money.

I was making off money in a matter of a few hours. It was of love, and I was fortunate. The actor was a crime magazine. The time of their mouths was 10.

"We haven't really had a job before," the father confided to me. They run their business, and he never really have to leave their

"We haven't been to a movie years," admitted the mother.

**'We haven't really a babysitter before.' It confided in me. We have to a movie in two years, admitted the moth**

"Thinking back, I could remember days when everyone I loved at my house — so I saw no reason I also could remember how grateful I found. I found reason. So another part of me thought ple were a tad too cautious.

The woman showed my dau everything — diapers and daint of food, the special spoon, the cups, the favourite toys.

They rehearsed their scheduled birthday dinner. The reservation many minutes they would be Emergency numbers.

"We'll be back long before I'd go to sleep," the mother reassured daughter. I shook my head and

"When I used to hire a babysitter object was to come home only kids were asleep. Otherwise it worth going out," I said.

The woman smiled, but I do she got it. I remember when it on to see a matinee, eat an eat and then arrive home just after had gone to bed. I didn't want someone to watch my kids after gone to sleep.

While this couple reassured selves that my daughter was reassured them that everything be all right.

"It's healthy to have time as a advised them. They said they a. I know they didn't mean it. As a warned my daughter: "You'd be exactly where the phone is. The to call a million times while the

The next evening my daughter and the couple enjoyed their life out. They were gone for barely hours.

Knight Ridder

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