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Emily Moran Barwick
University of Iowa

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LAYERS OF THE LAPDANCE SCHOLARSHIP:
CONCEPTION & FOUNDATIONAL THOUGHT PROCESSES, HISTORY,
DEVELOPMENT, & ISSUES INHERENT THEREIN & ARISING THEREFROM

by

Emily Moran Barwick

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
Master of Fine Arts Degree in Art
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

December 2012

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Isabel Barbuzza

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Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Master's thesis of

Emily Moran Barwick

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the Master of Fine Arts degree in Art at the December, 2012 graduation.

Thesis Committee:

Isabel Barbuzza, Thesis Supervisor

David Dunlap

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Sarah Kanouse

For Lucky

On October 13, 2012, New York's highest court ruled that lap dancing is not art, and thus not exempt from tax under New York tax code.

The vote was 4-3.

Assenting judges wrote that "to conclude that a club presenting performances by women gyrating on a pole to music, however artistic or athletic their practiced moves are, was also not a qualifying performance entitled to exempt status."

Dissenting judges wrote that there's no distinction in state law between "highbrow dance and lowbrow dance," so the case raises "significant constitutional problems."

The writer of the dissenting viewpoint, Judge Robert Smith, added that while he finds this sort of dancing "unedifying – indeed, I am stuffy enough to find it distasteful," discriminating on the basis of content such as imposing a tax on Hustler magazine and giving The New Yorker an exemption "would surely be unconstitutional. It is not clear to me why the discrimination that the majority approves in this case stands on any firmer constitutional footing."

The state of Iowa has no such exemption clause. As it stands, lap dancing is considered an art in Iowa, but is taxable as a small business.

Thus, the following project may legally be viewed as an artistic endeavor.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to Dr. Annie Sprinkle, Eleanor Antin (in all her incarnations), Ana Mendieta, Carolee Schneeman, Hannah Wilke, Marina Abramovic, and all the female artists who have utilized their bodies as their most effective materials. Your work has irrevocably informed and influenced my art and myself.

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To my fellow dancers, for being some of the most kick-ass women I’ve ever met. Keep hustling.

To my customers, for providing the funding stream.

To the applicants and recipients of The LapDance Scholarship, for making this project real.

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PREFACE

The LapDance Scholarship was conceived in November of 2009, opened for applications in December 2010, and awarded its final scholarship in October 2012. The Scholarship has been awarded to ten recipients for the funding of their art projects. The overall monies awarded totals \$2,886. The Scholarship was created by Hailey Jude Minder and administered by Emily Moran Barwick. Part of its inspiration was the idea of funding something as decidedly “highbrow” as fine art with something as decidedly “lowbrow” as lap dancing (to borrow from the chosen vernacular of the high court justices of New York in their recent ruling).¹ The LapDance Scholarship was open to any Iowa City resident, and was awarded on a monthly basis. All applications were submitted through the blog lapdancescholarship.blogspot.com. Below are the original Mission Statement and How it Works from the official blog:

Mission Statement: The LapDance Scholarship was founded in December 2010 by Hailey Jude Minder, a self-proclaimed vaginally-funded experience artist. As an artist, Hailey has always been interested in, and often troubled by, the sources of fine arts funding.

Having become somewhat disenchanted with the whole search for funding and the sources of such funds, Hailey set out to make her own. Moonlighting as a stripper twice a week, Hailey is bringing funding for the arts into the trenches. She has funded her own art in this manner and now wishes to help her fellow artists achieve their goals.

Though she is launching this scholarship in the very thick of the slow season for stripping, Hailey is excited about creating a new, possibly controversial, yet undeniably interesting, channel of fine art funding

How it Works: Artists can apply on a monthly basis to receive funding from the following month's earnings (i.e. recipient applies in April to receive May's earnings). The recipient will be announced at the beginning of the "funding month." (i.e. May) At the end of the "funding month," the recipient will be awarded a set percentage of Hailey's earnings.

¹ See Epigraph on page iii

In order to derive this set percentage, Emily Moran Barwick, the Executive Administrator of The LapDance Scholarship, compared the average annual income of the sex industry to the average annual federal budget for the fine arts. Emily calculated what percentage the total annual budget for the arts was of the total annual income for the sex industry. LapDance Scholarship recipients receive this percentage of Hailey's income for their designated month.

A Note on Woody's Show Club

The funding for The LapDance Scholarship was acquired at Woody's Show Club in Cedar Rapids, IA. The owners of this club, particularly Justin Brown, have been incredibly kind in supporting my artistic endeavors in all their manifestations. They have graciously allowed me to use the name of their business in my thesis, and for that privilege, I want to make a few points clear.

First and foremost, what I have written in my thesis regarding the club are my experiences and thoughts and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of Woody's Show Club. Second, I want to clearly state that the management and staff at Woody's have never been anything but professional and courteous towards me; I have always felt respected and protected. Third, this project is not a judgment of the sex industry or strip-club world; you will not find any verdicts one way or another. Fourth, the owners of Woody's earn their livelihood from the club, take their work seriously, and are damn good at it. Fifth, Woody's is, in my humble stripper opinion, the best strip club in all of Iowa. I am forever grateful to have been allowed to practice my art there along with my pole tricks.

INTRODUCTION

The LapDance Scholarship is a multi-faceted project that has spanned three years, involved thousands of hours of labor, and funded ten artistic endeavors with both local and international applications. While the Scholarship itself is simple in its premise (artist applies, artist is chosen, Hailey performs lap dances, Hailey gets money, money is given to artist), the history, development, and inherent implications and issues of the Scholarship are anything but.

In the following pages, I attempt to offer some of the layers of this project. I will delve into the history and development of the Scholarship as well some of the foundational thought processes underlying its conception and issues sparked by its existence. I do not claim to have produced an exhaustive analysis on all of the various elements arising from and inherent within the Scholarship, but rather an intimate view of certain aspects, moments, and thoughts.

I have intentionally left out any hard and fast conclusions. I find that approach neither productive nor realistically possible. Nothing here is black and white, including my own identity and position.

I am so personally entwined with this project, as it has come, literally, from my body and mind, that I cannot successfully separate myself as an objective viewer and analyst. Nor can I fully separate Emily and Hailey.

So I offer you instances, layers, windows in. I offer you select parts, allow you to look, touch, consider. I offer you some of what I have to give. I offer you some, but not all.

CHAPTER I
FUNDING FRUSTRATION:
A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF EXASPERATION
LEADING TO THE THEORETICAL CONCEPTION
OF THE LAPDANCE SCHOLARSHIP

Students of arts, humanities, and the social sciences are walking circles around precarity and the future in a liminal space that can not last. Possible futures and the ability to imagine them differently seem to be depreciating in value.

Jody Berland, *The Politics of the Exasperated*

**Circumstances Leading Up to Conception:
Living in Precarity**

The LapDance Scholarship was conceived, more or less, out of desperation and exhaustion. In the Fall of 2009, I was in my first semester of the MFA program in Sculpture at the University of Iowa and was struggling to support my education, my art, and my own basic needs with four part-time jobs. Now, I was no stranger to the precarious balancing act of education, employment, and home life; I had worked since the age of twelve, including throughout my college career. The issue I faced is one very familiar to most Americans: I didn't have enough time to make the money I needed to survive.

This could begin an entire discourse into the misnomer of a "living wage" in this country. In my mind, this issue never fails to draw up Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*¹. In this exposé of sorts, Ehrenreich set out to experience first-hand the impact of the 1996 welfare reform act on the "working poor" in the United States. She got a job as a waitress to investigate the state of the minimum-wage worker. Ehrenreich's account illustrates the cyclical, self-perpetuating struggle of

¹ Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. Metropolitan Books, 2001. Print.

the poor (i.e. lacking the capital for a deposit on an apartment and first month's rent, one will instead spend more overall on daily hotel costs). The overall picture is dire.

Within this particular chapter, however, I am striving to limit the over-development of related and intersecting issues and focus on my personal experience leading up to the conception of The LapDance Scholarship. This does not mean in any sense that these issues are unimportant nor that they should be dismissed. The issue of money and the distribution, reception, and source of it, is inextricably intertwined with issues of gender, politics, social status, class, race, government, private vs. public, et cetera. The list is inexhaustible.

In the two years preceding my entrance into graduate school and directly following my hopeful graduation from college, I had searched for a higher paying job than the one I'd worked throughout my undergraduate studies. I had figured that I had a BA now, a 4.0 GPA, graduated Suma Cum Laude with Honors in Arts, and had a consistent work history; I'd collected all the merit badges I was instructed for gainful employment.

Somewhere around my thirtieth rejection or non-response, this one for a secretary position because I didn't have three years of "phone experience," my enthusiastic drive to rise above low hourly pay, as a benefit of my degree, lost what small amount of enthusiasm it had left. It's not that I wasn't grateful to *be* employed- I was, and had never taken for granted my ability to thus far support myself through hard work. It was more the absurdity of it all. Of being told in high school to go to college so you can get a good job. Of working to get the best grades because that sets you apart. Of securing internships, creating original research, founding clubs and participating in extra-

curricular activities because it makes you seem more “well-rounded.” And then here I was, at the same job I worked in college, working 12-hour shifts, sometimes 72-hour shifts, reaching emotional exhaustion. And my consolation for the years of education, the hundreds of thousands of dollars invested (and not all yet repaid), was a 25¢/hour raise given to all employees with a Bachelors.

Here I’d like to clarify that I did not, nor do not believe my situation was unique. I heard stories of similar frustration from friends and other college graduates. We were members of the ever-growing precariat: unsure of our future, stuck in an in-between existence without clear direction or a sense of security. We weren’t on the street, but we did have an expensive piece of paper now backing our coffee-serving, or table-waiting, or baby-sitting, with no evident favorable alternative. So many of us followed the same, somewhat counter-intuitive, eventuality: we went back to school.

Preliminary Investigations: Laying the Groundwork

Back to the Fall of 2009: full-time graduate school and four part-time jobs. I was exhausted and over-extended. While it wasn’t the first time that “I should just strip!” had rebelliously intruded into my thoughts, this time my hurried dismissal of it wasn’t so hurried. So I took some time to seriously consider stripping as a viable option, listing out my reservations, as well as the position’s perceived benefits.

My main concerns were not centered in nudity or shyness; I’d always lacked, to my mother’s chagrin, an innate sense of modesty or discomfort with the human form, inside and out. What I was worried about was my personal inadequacy and lack of experience within the specialized field I was considering. So I did what any trained student would: I researched. I conducted multi-hour Google searches, often ending up far

down a rabbit hole I never intended to enter. I read Diablo Cody's *Candy Girl: A Year in the Life of an Unlikely Stripper*. I called the three strip clubs in my area repeatedly, drilling whoever answered about hiring policies and procedure, specifics of the jobs, pay scales and rates, anything I could get out of them before my inquiry was subtly or not-so-subtly brought to an end by the other party.

After I felt I'd laid substantial groundwork, I coordinated a trip into the field to observe each of the clubs and speak with their staff. I needed to *see* this world of stripping myself, have the words of my research come to life. So I set off for Cedar Rapids, directions to each joint printed out on my lap, their numbers already saved in my phone, a notebook and pen selected especially for this endeavor to catalogue my findings resting on my passenger seat.

Encounters in the Field: First Introduction to the Funding Source

My first club was Woody's Show Club, located down the street from the Eastern Iowa Airport. I'd passed its sign countless times, looming over Highway 380, sporting the club's name in a stylized curvy font. Finding the club itself, however, was more of a challenge. I was not yet aware that typically, the outside of strip clubs are as nondescript and subtle as their signs are bold and gaudy.

It was just after 5pm when I entered Woody's, right at opening time. The girl behind the counter welcomed me and I explained that I was "just here to look into possibly working here, maybe." She said I could go inside and she would notify the manager. My first impression was: blue. The room was dark, the lighting, at the moment, primarily a wash of blue. It was mostly empty, save one man sitting at a small,

round stage to my right, his face a foot or so away from the genitalia of the woman onstage.

To my left were two other women, scantily clad, chatting with the door girl through her open side door. I asked one, a tall blonde, if she liked working there. She shrugged, rolled her eyes under her heavily glittered lids, and returned to her conversation. A door directly behind my unenthusiastic new associate opened and a man emerged, well-dressed, hair slicked back, subtle glasses resting on the bridge of his nose. When he was close enough I saw he had a birthmark or scar on his forehead that, though I'd been dragged to the film unwillingly, immediately conjured thoughts of Harry Potter.

He introduced himself as Justin, co-owner and manager of Woody's Show Club. I informed him I wanted to inquire about possibly working there and saw his eyes immediately give me a once-over and return with some doubt and overwhelming indifference to meet mine. Justin explained the basics: you do a two-song audition onstage and he decides if you stay. If so, you can work the rest of the night, free of house fee.

I ran through what was now my customary list of questions and he answered each, as seemingly inexhaustible as I in regards to inquiry into his chosen field. Justin was well-versed in the workings of his club and the most advantageous strategies a dancer should employ. I was rather quickly overwhelmed with advice on proper hustling, the importance of working hard and being aggressive, cautions against laziness, and the incredible opportunity dancing afforded to a girl with her faculties about her and her intentions in the right place. Justin was not just a strip club owner. He was a moldier of entrepreneurs.

I left Woody's informed and daunted and decided to suspend any final decisions until I'd seen the two other clubs and spoken with their management. My trips to the remaining establishments are not as memorable as my seminal entrance to the stripping world at Woody's. After getting considerably lost, I found my way to The Lumberyard II and was immediately struck by the difference in size. Woody's had basically consisted of one room with low ceilings, two stages, and offshoots for private dances. The Lumberyard II looked like a large box store, perhaps the Best Buy of stripping.

The inside proved no less impressive. The small reception room housed another female door girl behind a L-shaped counter. She was chatting with customers just coming in, placing armbands around their right wrists, flirting and giggling. They finally made their way, six-packs in hand, into the club proper, and she turned to me, smile immediately receding. She instructed me to go ahead and enter after I'd explained my purpose.

In stark contrast to the intimate environment of Woody's, the Lumberyard II was nothing short of a stripper factory: multiple stages, multiple poles, multiple girls, all inside a seemingly endless open-expanse of space under two-story ceilings. This visual overload is what I most distinctly remember from my visit. I can't even recall who I talked to, just the overwhelming sense that this place was *too much*.

My final stop after my quick retreat from the daunting expanse of Lumberyard II was an establishment called Dancer's Ranch. While both Woody's and the Lumberyard II embodied the typical humble outer appearance I spoke of earlier and, as such, were not aesthetically pleasing from the outside, the Ranch looked simply run-down.

Resolved to be non-biased until I had all the facts, I pulled into the sparse dirt parking lot. I parked by a stand-up sign, one of those with the removable black plastic letters that often fall off, resulting in comical remaining combinations. As soon as I opened the door, the difference was evident. I was greeted by a large bar, backed by the expected array of liquor and beer selections. Though I didn't know it at the time, this had further implications in business of a strip club.

I was instructed by the female bartender to consult with the DJ in "the booth." I turned to follow where she was pointing and saw a small, shoddily-constructed platform with what looked like painted plastic tubing holding up a "roof" of sorts. I mounted the two small steps leading into this structure and waited to be noticed by the long-haired male occupant.

My conversation with said occupant was brief and to the point. At the Ranch, dancers had a set schedule and worked either day or night shift. Since they served alcohol, they were topless only and touching was restricted. As he went over the basics, I looked out onto the two stages, abandoned and lit with unflatteringly glaring yellow lights. I dutifully ran through my battery of questions, notating his answers in my designated notebook, then took my leave.

Outside the club were dancers, sitting in lawn chairs, dressing gowns wrapped loosely around their sparse outfits, smoking and chatting. I approached them, explaining my purpose once again and asked what they thought about the other two clubs. One dancer, a beautiful woman of Asian decent, said she'd never work at Woody's or Lumberyard because they are full nude and allow touching. "I'm not gonna do any of that gross shit," she said on a smoky exhale.

Satisfied with my field research, I thanked the women and got back in my car, glad to have taken my first concrete step towards the possibility of stripping, and even more glad it was over.

**Practical Application:
Birth of The LapDance Scholarship Funding Stream**

My first night started with a two-song stage audition; easily the most awkward two-song period of my life. I arrived at Woody's at 7:30pm to a decently-occupied parking lot. The club opened at five. Having come directly at opening the previous week and observed the barren club, I didn't like the idea of me awkwardly gyrating onstage with one or no customers to even interact with. Also, if I was going to be a stripper, I figured I needed to loosen up my death-grip on punctuality. At Woody's there was no time clock, no expectation of punctuality, no schedule on which to even base punctuality.

Still, it had taken conscious effort to show up "late" and I'd even called to assure Justin, the strip-club Harry Potter from my investigatory outing, that I was coming up to audition. He had sounded indifferent. To me this was a dramatic stepping-out, a nerve-rattling plunge into the unknown. To Justin, I was just another girl of thousands, coming to his club to get naked for pay.

Earlier that evening, I'd slathered on some eyeliner, mascara, and glittery eye shadow, my only experience with makeup being from my high-school theatre days. Later, sitting in a strip-club parking lot in November, in Iowa, I was a long way from playing Puck in the black box theatre at Episcopal High School in Jacksonville, Florida. I pulled down my visor mirror, checking to see if I looked appropriately stripper-ish.

After ten-or-so minutes of sitting with my heart in my throat and my mind spinning, I exited my car, my cloth grocery bag containing the 'outfit' I'd pieced together

from the back of my closet and my newly-purchased stripper shoes, firmly on my shoulder. I was not yet savvy to the best methods of stripper-accouterment transportation and storage.

Approaching the front door, with its vinyl posting of Woody's hours and strict no gun policy, I tried to look unphased and confident. I was greeted by the door girl, a different one this time, nonetheless experiencing from her the same slight cooling once I'd established I was not a customer. She asked for my ID, saying they copied the IDs of "all the girls." This would be the only record of my "real" identity; no one within these walls would know me as Emily.

The door girl instructed me to "go inside, to the right, and through the doorway with a black curtain hanging in it." Entering the club's interior, I was no longer privileged with the buffer of being there "just to look." No longer simply a viewer, I was there (presumably) to *be* viewed. Walking the carpeted floor towards the curtained doorway, fully clothed and jacketed and in dim lighting, I felt exposed.

The club was busier this time around and I was immediately grateful for my self-enforced tardiness. There was a dancer onstage with two or three customers pulled up to the edge, and a handful of additional customers interspersed throughout the main floor, each complete with an attentive stripper. Finding the curtained doorway, I separated the black velvet and emerged in a room full of overstuffed black couches.

On the far right of the couch room was a small nook with access to stairs leading into the DJ booth, where Justin was running the music. The booth, basically a raised, glorified walk-in closet with soundboards and computers, was open at the far wall

overlooking the club's interior. I stopped at the foot of the steps, unsure of the proper action, and decided to knock on the doorframe.

Justin turned from the computer and again demonstrated his skill at executing a brisk and detached full-body once-over. I greeted him, explaining that I was “the girl that came by last week to see about maybe dancing and called earlier tonight to let you know I was coming?” He gave me a cursory nod and gestured for me to join him in the booth.

Entering the elevated space, I was afforded a comprehensive view of the club at a removed distance. I studied the girl on stage, trying to commit some “moves” to memory for my upcoming audition. Her movements were fluid and organic, as alluring as they were unchoreographed, and I was at a loss for any formula to the composition. Justin pulled me from my meditation, suggesting that I go into “the back” and change. He pointed to the doors on either side of a larger stage on the far wall of the club, saying “that’s where you can get ready.”

After verifying that I was *definitely* supposed to go put on my stripper outfit and heels before re-emerging, I retreated back down the stairs, through the curtain and across the main floor to “the back.” The dressing area consisted of a narrow room with a wall of lockers on the right, a plain yellow-white wall on the left, and a wooden bench, the locker-room-style kind with two posts grounded directly into the foundation, running down the center. A toilet and shower, each in separate little closet-rooms, sat along one of the short walls.

Within this inherently cramped space were around ten dancers in various stages of clothing and makeup, all navigating through a complex floor topography of stuff-mountains. Upon closer inspection, I would later find that most of these mountains found

their source in a suitcase of one form or another; dancers entered the club with these bulging packages in tow, looking like they were about to board a plane to Vegas, or maybe move in for a month or so.

I said hello to the few girls that seemed to have even noticed my presence and offered that it was my first time. I don't remember any lasting words of welcome or encouragement. I searched out a recess in the stuff-mountains to claim as my own and disrobed in a decidedly and purposefully unceremonious manner. I mean, we were all here to get naked, right?

Standing naked in a room full of other women, regarding the contents of my tattered cloth grocery bag with indecision, I battled with the crucial choice of whether or not to wear my red bra under the lacy top I brought, or forgo the mystery all together. I decided to build up the suspense to my formal naked debut and strapped on the red bra I'd bought years before and never worn. Part of me was happy just to finally have an occasion to wear the few intendedly sexual items of clothing I had acquired over the years.

Earlier that week, I'd visited the two adult stores in Iowa City and, finding them to be lacking in the dancer-wear department, had turned to Google to find resources. The closest store providing everything a stripper needs was in Davenport, an hour's drive away. I had made the trip specifically to purchase a G-String, a garter, and shoes.

I was successful in my first two endeavors, but my feet, as usual, were far too small for them to keep my size in stock. I'd again relied on the internet and placed an order for stripper shoes, selecting a clear plastic pair so they'd go with everything, and a "shorter" heel length of only 6-inches, with a wider heel base, "wider" meaning roughly

the size of a fun-size Tootsie Roll. Having never regularly worn heels, let alone the 9-inch stilettos I now saw some dancers tottering around on, I wanted to be cautious.

Nothing quite as attractive as face-planting, after all.

Since I was still waiting for my shoes to come in the mail, I brought some old clunky heels purchased in high school for Winter Formal or some other god-awful event. With my garter, G-string, bra, and red lace top and bottom all in place, I sat on the locker-room bench to secure my makeshift footwear. That accomplished, I re-checked my stripper glitter eye-coverage and strapped on my little black collar with plastic diamonds, another throw-back from my awkward youth. Hair in pigtails, lip gloss applied, I teetered cautiously towards the door, clutching a little black purse I'd gotten at Claire's expressly for the purpose of holding my phone and my (hopefully) bountiful earnings during my shift.

I opened the door, entering the club proper in stripper-getup for the first time. I made my way back to the DJ booth and carefully, and rather loudly, mounted the stairs. Justin gave me another once-over, only this time slightly more animated. "Oh" he said, as if meeting me for the first time, "you'll do just fine." Unfortunately, I was lacking his sense of casual assurance. I told him I didn't know what to do onstage, didn't have any "moves." In what was apparently his natural state of semi-apathy, Justin smirked, "just wiggle around and take your clothes off." And that is precisely what I did.

Just before mounting the stage for my inaugural performance, Justin asked me two more questions: what did I "go" by and what kind of music did I like. Seeing my blank expression, he elaborated that he needed my "dancer name" and two songs to play for my audition. I honestly can't remember what songs I had played, but I do recall the

first time I uttered the name “Hailey” in reference to myself; it felt foreign and forced, a bold lie. Now if I hear “Hailey” called, even outside of work, I respond.

So, back to my command performance, the image with which I opened this section. Not to be a literary tease, but I don’t have a play-by-play of that 7ish minute endeavor. My theory is that I was in a mental state of survival-mode: don’t think, just wiggle and take your clothes off.

My recollection of the experience, which seemed to both stretch on for an untold amount of time and also last a matter of seconds, is nested in my memory in little bites of sensations and thoughts; bright lights in my eyes and being partly grateful that they made it hard to see and partly terrified that I’d step off the stage; navigating a see-through Plexiglas floor on shoes with no rubber grip; my knees against the hard stage and my arms wrenched behind me in an absolute full-body panic when I couldn’t unlatch my bra from behind; the roughness of facial hair on my sternum, a man’s head between my breasts and the uncertainty of just what precisely I was to do with it; an all-encompassing sense of awkwardness overridden solely by the intense focus on not falling.

Apparently I wasn’t overall abhorrent, as when I shakily dismounted the stage and tottered my way back into the DJ booth, Justin smirked, “I’ll have you do some paperwork, then I’ll give you the tour.”

Moment of Conception: Cash in Hand

I stayed until midnight that first night. Utilizing what I could from an all-too-well-performed hustling tutorial from Justin, I made my ungainly advances, sat on strangers’ laps and giggled about having “never done this before” and it being my “first night,” holding up my pointer finger and offering a shy smile.

I was amazed whenever my offer of a lap dance was accepted and at the end of my four-hour debut, I counted just over \$200 in my stripper purse. Never before had I experienced such a direct method of payment. For the first time, I started to believe that my financial problems might be surmountable; that I may be able to focus on my art, fund my art, and not have to work four jobs to barely do so.

And in that moment, cash in hand, The LapDance Scholarship was conceived.

CHAPTER II

A DISCOURSE ON FINE ARTS FUNDING:
WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY COME FROM?

Grant making is a multibillion-dollar-per-year business. The dollars involved are so large that if grant making were a single firm, it would rank near the top of the *Fortune 500* list

Dr. Emily Beth Devine, The art of obtaining grants

In the following Chapter I will attempt to look at some of the common sources of fine arts funding. I'm interested in bringing attention not only to where our money comes from, but what artists must do, and potentially sacrifice, to receive said funding.

In Part I, I will address grant-writing and what is required of an artist to secure funding, including altering one's work to fit the needs of the funder as well as the time and energy required for application.

In Part II, I will address the question of where our money comes from, including well-established family names such as Rockefeller and Carnegie, and the issue of corporate sponsorship of the arts. Typically, the source of fine arts funding is evident only in name and the history attached to the money is more or less obscured. Within this chapter, I pose the question of responsibility: how (if at all) responsible is the recipient of funding to research the funding's history and how culpable (if at all) are they for the history itself?

Traditionally, the funding of fine arts, and the fine arts themselves are "highbrow" elements of society. The LapDance Scholarship not only brings this "highbrow" world of fine arts in direct contact with the "lowbrow" world of stripping, but also *funds* the former *with* the latter. The attention the Scholarship brings to the source of funding also brings the "accepted" highbrow sources into question. The source of The LapDance

Scholarship is transparent, the face of the funding readily offered. This chapter lays out some of the foundational thought processes behind the nature of the Scholarship's formation by looking at traditional sources for fine arts funding.

Part I: Grant-Writing

For many artists, aside from those who happen to be independently wealthy, grant-writing typically comes with the territory. In fact, sometimes the largest obstacle an artist comes up against *is* how to fund their work. I, for one, can say that this is an issue I have struggled and continue to struggle with, as do the majority of artists, writers, musicians, poets, actors, and other individuals in various creative vocations.

The following section looks at the bare bones of grant-writing. Opening with my own personal grant-writing experience, I will then focus particularly on the requirements an individual must fill in order to apply and the strategies suggested for being successfully chosen as a recipient. I will raise the issue of the sacrifices and alterations one must make at times in order to become the most appealing candidate, and how this mirrors acts of prostitution. I will also raise the question of the responsibility of the applicant/recipient to become aware of the fund's history and their possible culpability for that very history.

Part I [Subsection I]: Personal Account of My Initial Grant Experience

In the first year after my college graduation, I had secured a show at the ARC Gallery in Chicago. I was going to be displaying my undergraduate thesis show, a fourteen-piece mixed-media installation, "Stations of Her Undoing," dealing with the socio-political pressures on women and the resulting manifestations of suffering and

degradation therefrom. I had submitted my portfolio and proposal to ARC before graduating, and had received a show for the following December.

As a new artist, I had to pay for the space in the gallery, the goal being to get my work “out there.” A financially strapped recent college grad, I decided to look into grants to help with the entire process. My expenses were significant: I had to pay ARC, rent a truck, drive 3.5 hours to Chicago, install the show, rent a storage space to hold the pieces’ crates for the month the show was up, pay for a hotel room, and then do this all again in reverse at the end of the month.

Looking into grants turned out to be a most overwhelming experience. There are countless websites housing grant databases that you must pay to access; some are legitimate, some are not. There are federal grants, private grants, corporate grants, and many grants whose source, even with some digging, is unclear.

I decided to focus on a grant that seemed more entry-level and new-artist friendly: an Iowa Arts Council Mini-Grant. An artist receiving a mini-grant could receive up to \$1,000 of matching funds from the Iowa Arts Council. “Matching funds” meant that the artist must document that they themselves will be personally investing \$1,000 in the project.

As I will try to outline in the following section, grant-writing is a very arduous process. I did receive the full \$1,000 for my show. This entire application process was during the time period I was working 80-90hrs a week at the job I had had through college. Amassing \$1,000 seemed impossible; I was barely breaking even each month.

Just for clarity, I was and am terribly grateful for the assistance I received, and am very aware that life in general takes hard work, that every victory come with a struggle.

I'm not meaning to create a treatise against the funders of grants, nor a critique of the grant system itself. I'm simply trying to provide some background for the thoughts and experiences that went into the creation and development of The LapDance Scholarship.

That said, from start to finish, from my initial registering as a grant applicant to the end of my obligations to the Iowa Arts Council, the entire process took a little over seven months. This investment of time and effort, hours of writing and submitting, clarifying and editing and resubmitting, mapping out budgets, travel plans, ledgers, was familiar to me from my years of rigorously academic education. I was used to pouring countless hours and precious sanity into a research paper, or project, or exam, or exhibit.

With my background in academia and hourly-paid employment, I didn't expect to have to perform any less for a \$1,000 grant. In fact, I more than half expected to put out all the effort and be denied. At the time I didn't know that years later, at Woody's Show Club in Cedar Rapids, IA, I would have nights where I'd make \$1,000 in six hours. This, though, came at a cost all its own.

**Part I [Subsection II]:
The Art of Applying-
Fitting Into the Prescribed Mold
(With Strings Attached)**

If you search for books or articles concerning how to best obtain a grant, you will be met with an inexhaustible number of resources. I'm going to try to offer a Reader's Digest's Reader's Digest of some of the guidelines, particularly the ones I find most pertinent to The LapDance Scholarship's founding. Far from a complete overview, this will hopefully offer more framing for the thought process behind the Scholarship.

Every resource on grant writing (that I've consulted, that is) seems to have one point in common: writing a proposal is hard work, requiring considerable preparation,

diligent research, applied intuition, and good ol' dedication. The arduous process of applying is well established; I would like instead to focus on the aspects of grant-writing that border on and blatantly involve selling oneself.

As an artist applying for a grant, you know that you are one of hundreds or thousands or more vying for the exact same funding. Thus, you must make yourself the most appealing, seem the most desirable option for the funder. You must fit your work to their goals. This, for me, is its own form of veiled, high-brow prostitution. I could say this for applying for jobs, to college, or any other endeavor where one must “dress oneself up” in hopes of being “picked.” While the process of grant-writing is much longer than a typical act of prostitution, it is perceived as far more respectable, the implications of selling oneself are more obscured. All the same, the applicant must *be* what the funder *wants* in order to get paid.

When applying for a particular grant, it is vital the applicant research the institution or individual dispersing the funding. Dr. Emily Beth Devine, in her article “The Art of Obtaining Grants,” explains that “Grant makers are motivated by specific goals that reflect the concerns of the organization they represent. It is fundamental that the grant seekers align their interest with those of the grant maker.”¹ As an artist, the issue becomes what one’s work is about and just how far one is willing to “re-mold” that work to fit the funder’s goals. Dr. Devine elaborates:

Too often, grant writers focus on their need for funding instead of matching their need with the sponsor’s priorities. To pique the interest of the grant maker, each proposal must be tailored to the needs of the grant maker. In some ways, being a

¹ Devine, Emily Beth. “The Art of Obtaining Grants.” *American Journal of Health-System Pharmacy* 66.6 (2009): p581.

grant writer is like being in business for yourself, in that it involves selling your ideas...²

This is nothing surprising. In one way or another, the getting of money means the selling of oneself.

Kenneth T Henson, in his similarly titled article “The Art of Writing Grant Proposals, Part I” takes a more aggressive approach in explaining the priority of the granters needs:

A prerequisite for successful grant proposal writers is recognizing that most funders are astute and demanding. Their objective is not to give away money or to garner a tax deduction. They are using their money to achieve definite goals, *their* goals. They know what they want and they are determined to get it. Successful proposal writers find ways to meet these expectations. [emphasis added]³

The proposal isn’t the only step in which the applicant must work to meet the funder’s needs. As Dr. Devine says, “being awarded a grant presents a different set of challenges.”⁴ There are often reports required concerning the application of the funds, proof of all purchases, and other inquiries and tasks set forth by the funder. In simple terms “funding often comes with strings.”⁵

Part II: Where Your Money Comes From: Critical Thinking About Source

As an artist, obtaining funding for a project, show, work, or program is exciting and empowering. While an applicant is instructed to do some research on the funder’s

² Ibid

³ Henson, Kenneth T. “The Art of Writing Grant Proposals, Part I.” *Contemporary Education* 68.1 (1996): 61-63.

⁴ Devine, 585.

⁵ Roschwalb, Susanne A. “Corporate eyes on the market: Funding the arts for the 1990s.” *Journal of Arts Management & Law* 19.4 (1990): 73-84.

needs, in order to fulfill them, the actual source of the funder's money is not always so readily researched or even accessible.

In thinking about arts funding, I've always been interested in not only the history of the money, but also the level of culpability, if any, the recipient shoulders for that history. I'm not trying to draw a line in the sand to separate the "bad" money from the "good." Nor am I arguing that the institutions with troubled histories have not contributed greatly to works of art and culture. I'm simply suggesting a level of accountability in understanding where our money comes from. If we are willing to take the assistance, we should be aware of all that comes with it.

In the following subsection, I will explore some particular black marks in the history of two of the major funding institutions for the arts: Rockefeller and Carnegie. To reiterate, this is not an exhaustive historical account balancing good deeds against evil, but rather, some concrete examples of the baggage funding can carry.

**Part II [Subsection I]:
Old (Blood) Money**

If you men don't withdraw, we will mow every one of you down.

Captain Frederick Heinde, Pinkerton Captain addressing the
steel workers at the Homestead Strike

The Ludlow Massacre was the culminating act of perhaps the most violent
struggle between corporate power and laboring men in American history

Howard Zinn, *The Politics of History*

Case Study One: Carnegie- The Johnstown Flood and The Homestead Strike

In 1889, 2,209 people were killed when a dam broke and flooded Johnstown, Pennsylvania; “at the time of it’s occurrence, the Johnstown Flood...was the largest national disaster in the history of the United States.”⁶

Johnstown was an industrial coal and steel town, situated on the Conemaugh River and composed of mainly German, Welsh and Irish immigrants. Upstream from this working-class settlement sat the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club, an “association of Pittsburgh’s elite.” The Club

boasted an elegant lodge with forty-seven rooms and a main dining room that held one hundred and fifty finely-dressed persons who dined on innumerable dinner courses. Sixteen cottages and assorted outbuildings surrounded an artificial lake made by erecting an earthenwork dam on the Conemaugh River,⁷

the very dam that, due to shoddy repairs made with straw and horse manure, burst on May 28th, 1889. Among the members of the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club were Andrew Carnegie and his business partners Henry Phipps Jr. and Henry Clay Frick, the chairman of Carnegie Bros. & Company and the founder of the South Fork Club.⁸ The Club and its members, deemed “the Robber Barons,” were blamed for the fatal flood.

The Johnstown Flood left a lasting mark on Pennsylvania and the United States as a whole. Author Lyn Brown most effectively captures the incredible timeline of the disaster:

It took barely 10 minutes to drown Johnstown under the 20 million tons of water released by the dam. Four hours for oil to spread through the water-sodden debris

⁶ Wharton-Michael, Patty. “The Johnstown Flood of 1889.” *Journalism History* 38.1: p23.

⁷ Godbey, Emily. “Disaster Tourism and the Melodrama of Authenticity: Revisiting the 1889 Johnstown Flood.” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 73.3 (2006): p274.

⁸ Ibid.

swirling at the town's Stone Bridge, which acted like a sieve straining boxcars, animal carcasses, barbed wire, factory roofs, homes, and humans (some 300-400 still breathing). An instant for that oil to catch fire, the spark likely coming from spilled coals still hot from a nearby kitchen. One night for the fire to rage. Five days for the brand-new relief organization, the Red Cross, to appear in town. One month for businesses to reopen. Five years for the cleanup effort to be completed. Seventeen years for the last victims' bodies to be discovered in a floodplain near New Florence, Pennsylvania. In the end, more than 2,200 people died -- 770 of whom were never identified -- and hundreds more were never found. The worst part? It didn't have to happen.⁹

Three years after this deadly flood, another violent event marred the Carnegie name, this one a bloody labor confrontation.

Andrew Carnegie, a real rags-to-riches self-made man, prided himself in his relation to the working man. The nations “foremost steel magnate,”¹⁰ Carnegie (deemed “the Man of Steel”), asserted that he would rather negotiate with his workers directly than bring in strike-breakers. However, on July 6th, 1892, as two barges full of armed Pinkerton Agents were approaching the Carnegie mill in Homestead, Pennsylvania, The Man of Steel was curiously absent.

At the close of the 19th century, labor unrest was rising in the United States in part due to the “rapid technological advancement and the unchecked pursuit of profits by wealthy industrialists like Andrew Carnegie increase[ing] the tensions between workers and management.”¹¹ Though Carnegie initially agreed to recognize the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers (AAISW), the country’s largest, most powerful union, at his Homestead mill, within three years he was working secretly to destroy it,

⁹ Brown, Aimee Lyn. “Swept Away.” *National Parks* 85.3 (2011): 15-17.

¹⁰ Kashatus, William C. “If you men don’t withdraw, we will mow every one of you down.” *American History* 35.1 (2000): p63.

¹¹ Kashatus, 54.

believing that “the union had acquired excessive power.”¹² While maintaining his image as “a friend of the working man,”¹³ Carnegie removed himself from the conflict, placing Henry Clay Frick in charge, the very same Henry Clay Frick who founded the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club.

Placing Frick, known for his “iron-fisted will to squelch any labor movements that got in his way,”¹⁴ at the helm of the labor conflict at the Homestead Mill was a tactical move by Carnegie. He left Frick with the assurance that he “approved of anything you do, not stopping short of a contest with labor.”¹⁵

The AAISW was protesting a lowering of wages; their pay was supposed to be set to the price of steel, fluctuating up and down along with the price, with a set minimum of \$25 per ton. However, claiming the company had “spent large sums of money on new machinery,”¹⁶ Carnegie’s company wanted to lower the set minimum to \$22 a ton. At this point the negotiations deadlocked. Shortly thereafter, Carnegie and his wife strategically retired to a private retreat in the Scotland Highlands for the remainder of the year.

The Homestead Strike grew out of these wage conflicts in January of 1892 and stretched on until November 20th of that year, when the union declared defeat. While the AAISW was hoping to negotiate, Frick was “determined to force a showdown.”¹⁷ He threatened the workers with a lock-out if they did not accept the lower wages and

¹² Kashatus, 55.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Kashatus, 56.

proceeded to transform the mill into “Fort Frick”;

He lined the plant’s periphery with a three-mile-long, 11-foot-high fence made of two-inch thick wooden planks and topped by barbed wire...erected searchlights on 12-foot towers and bored holes in the fence every few yards so sharpshooters could thwart any attack by strikers. Now in the event of a strike, boatloads of strike-breakers could safely reach the company property.¹⁸

Frick then assured the eruption of violence by employing the Pinkerton National Defense Agency, a contractor known for breaking up strikes, and abhorred by workers across the United States.

After again refusing a negotiation offer from the union, Frick locked out 1,000 workers from the mill. The remaining 2,700 workers refused to return to the mill days later on July 1st, officially beginning the Homestead Strike. The AAISW took over the mill, but were careful not to incite violence that may inadvertently harm the residents of Homestead, even going to far as to “visit liquor saloons and warn proprietors against drunkenness and disorderly gatherings.”¹⁹

Frick was not so cautious. The 300 enlisted Pinkerton Agents advanced upon the mill on July 6th, their Captain Frederick Heinde uttering the famous words “If you men don’t withdraw, we will mow every one of you down.”²⁰ It is still uncertain which side opened fire first, but the ensuing battle was bloody and violent, leaving both sides with many wounded, and six steelworkers and two Pinkerton Agents dead.²¹

Officially, the Pinkertons surrendered, but the workers were far from a victory. Frick, still determined to crush the union, made them out to be the violent perpetrators in

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Kashatus, 58.

²⁰ Kashatus, 54.

²¹ Kashatus, 61.

the press. He “insisted that he had done everything in his power to avert the calamity, and he placed the blame for it squarely on the strikers’ shoulders.”²² Far from being satisfied with this strategy alone, Frick demanded the dispatch of the National Guardsmen. The Governor of Pennsylvania acquiesced and sent out the “entire state militia of 8,615...to occupy Homestead.”²³

The strikers initially welcomed the militia, believing them to be negotiators there to resolve the conflict. It was soon made evident, however, that the militia was there to further the interest of the company and protect the strikebreakers replacing the strikers. Frick, “as unyielding in his defense of company profit as he was in his opposition to unionism,”²⁴ came out of the entire endeavor victorious.

The workers, defeated, returned to work without any contract or union organization. Carnegie, for his part, continued to distance himself from the entire conflict, denying any involvement. In order to deflect criticism he “continu[ed] to plow his money into trusts, university endowments, and public libraries.”²⁵

His philanthropy, however, was not always welcome. As David T. Javersak writes in his colorfully titled article “One Place On This Great Green Planet Where Andrew Carnegie Can’t Get a Monument With His Money,”

In 1903, in Wheeling, West Virginia, as a bitter legacy of the Homestead Strike of 1892, the Ohio Valley Trades and Labor Assembly, which held Andrew Carnegie personally responsible for the violence of that strike, successfully opposed the bond issue necessary to raise the money needed for a matching grant for a

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Kashatus, 64.

²⁵ Ibid.

Carnegie Library. In 1911, Wheeling built a library from its own resources.²⁶

Case Study Two: Rockefeller- The Ludlow Massacre

The Ludlow massacre was part of the Colorado Coal Strike that stretched from September of 1913 to December of 1914. Referred to as the “deadliest strike in the history of the United States”²⁷, the Colorado Coal War, as it was also titled, claimed between 69 and 199 lives.²⁸ The strike, organized by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), was against the coal mining companies of Colorado, the largest of which was the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company (CF&I), a Rockefeller-owned operation.²⁹

With 10% of the population of Colorado completely dependent upon CF&I for its livelihood, the company had powerful political influence, particularly in the Southern Coalfield counties, where “its control over the political life...was nearly total.”³⁰ Almost every aspect of the miner’s lives was provided, and thus controlled, by the company. Miners lived “in company towns, in company houses, and bought food and equipment at company stores and alcohol at company saloons. The doctors, priests, schoolteachers, and law enforcement, such as it was, were all company employees.”³¹

²⁶ Javersak, David T. “One Place On This Great Green Planet Where Andrew Carnegie Can’t Get a Monument With His Money.” *West Virginia History* 41.1 (1979): p7.

²⁷ Andrews, Thomas G.. *Killing for Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008. p1

²⁸ Casualty figures vary amongst various historians and archeologists.

²⁹ Walker, Mark. “The Ludlow Massacre: Class, Warfare, and Historical Memory in Southern Colorado.” *Historical Archeology* 37.3 (2003): p67.

³⁰ Walker, 67.

³¹ Walker, 67-68

While the company towns did bring some improvements to the miners' lives in terms of education, medical care, and housing, the underlying concept was to avoid worker unrest by increasing the standard of living while simultaneously overtaking control of all avenues of their existence. The atmosphere of these constructed societies is captured in the historian Philip S. Foner's description of a company town as a

feudal domain, with the company acting as lord and master...The 'law' consisted of the company rules. Curfews were imposed. Company guards - brutal thugs armed with machine guns and rifles loaded with soft-point bullets - would not admit any 'suspicious' stranger into the camp and would not permit any miner to leave.³²

Safety was another major issue within the mining industry, with Colorado being second only to Utah as having the country's most dangerous mines.³³ Miners' work placed them at risk of cave-ins, suffocation, explosions, and other serious occupational hazards. CF&I did not pay workers for the majority of their hard labor, termed "dead work"- i.e. shoring, timbering, laying track. A worker was only "paid by the ton of coal he mined, not by the hour."³⁴ Two of the seven demands to be laid forth by the UMWA at the beginning of the strike were for a 10% increase in the tonnage rate wages and payment for "dead work."

While the UMWA had succeeded in organizing the northern Colorado coalfields in 1903, the attempt in the southern fields had failed and the workers there were replaced by immigrants brought in as strike-breakers.³⁵ One of the major issues hindering the

³² Foner, Philip S., *History of the Labor Movement in the United States, Volume V: The AFL in the Progressive Era, 1910-1915*. New York: International Publishers, 1980. P196-198.

³³ Walker, 67

³⁴ Walker, 68.

³⁵ Ibid.

UMWA from organizing this worker population was the language barriers; “before the strike, the UMWA counted 24 distinct languages in the Southern Coalfield camps.”³⁶

This lack of communication made not only organization difficult, but also greatly increased risks of injury and death during work as miners could not effectively convey safety needs to one another while performing dangerous labor.

The Colorado Coal Strike itself began in September 1913, when the UMWA announcing its list of seven demands. The vast majority of the workforce struck, around 90%, and therefore stood in violation of the company town’s laws, resulting in the eviction of 10-12,000 miners and their families. The workers took refuge at camps set up by the UMWA; Ludlow was the largest of the striker camps, consisting of roughly 200 tents.³⁷

The reaction of the coal industry operators was quick and multi-pronged: strike-breakers were brought in and a private contractor hired to harass and assault the striker camps. Working together, coal industry operators and their hired contractor, the Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency, utilized brutal tactics in efforts to provoke the strikers to violent action.³⁸ This campaign of harassment was driven by purely financial goals; if the strikers took violent action, it would “provide a pretext for the Colorado governor to call out the National Guard, thus shifting a considerable financial burden from the [coal industry] operators to the state.”³⁹

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

The operators and contractors employed strategies ranging from aiming high-powered searchlights at the colonies during the night to carrying out beatings and murders. A particularly shocking tactic was the “use of the ‘death special,’ an improvised armored car that would periodically spray selected colonies with machine gun fire.”⁴⁰ Eventually, the National Guard was called out to the coalfields and martial law was unofficially declared by the militia commander.

During the essential “reign” of the National Guard, habeas corpus was suspended, a cavalry charge was led on the demonstrating wives and children of miners, and prisoners were tortured and beaten.⁴¹ The Guard was eventually pulled out of the area after 6 months, as cost of maintaining a “force of 695 enlisted men and 397 officers” had bankrupted the state.⁴²

Though the Guard had withdrawn, two militia companies remained; these consisted mainly of the mine company guards. On morning of April 20th, shots broke out near Ludlow. The initial source remains unclear, but “by 7:00PM the tent colony was in flames and was being looted by the militia.”⁴³ Mark Walker paints a drastic picture of this day:

The leader of the colony, Louis Tikas, was captured by the militia and summarily executed along with two other miners. Casualty figures vary, sometimes wildly, but a good estimate is 25 fatalities by the end of the day, including three militiamen, one uninvolved passerby, and 12 children. During the battle, 4 women and 11 children took refuge in a pit dug beneath a tent. All but two, Mary Petrucci and Alcarita Pedregone, suffocated when the tent above them was

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Walker, 68-69.

⁴² Walker, 69.

⁴³ Ibid.

burned. The dead included Petrucci's three children and Pedregone's two children. This pit has been preserved and is now known as the Death Pit.⁴⁴

In response to the Ludlow Massacre, other tent colonies erupted in violence, a period referred to as the 10-Day War. The Coal Strike itself continued another seven months before ending in December 1914.

While the UMWA was officially unsuccessful in the strike, the brutal event did lead to some significant changes in labor relations. Ludlow remains an "icon of industrial conflict," marking "a turning point in the struggle for union recognition."⁴⁵

On Old (Blood) Money

It is true that the origin of art museums in America was rooted in the private wealth of old families whose descendants still now sit on their board of trustees and govern their affairs. The notion that American art museums are therefore 'private' institutions is, however problematic. Despite the magnitude of the private philanthropic tradition, the fact is that if this money had not been given away, most of it would have been taken away in tax.⁴⁶

Chin-Tao Wu,
Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention Since the 1980's

So what does all of this have to do with receiving arts funding from the Rockefeller or Carnegie name? Surely, every prolific family, every large-scale business has skeletons in its closet if you dig deep enough in history. And there's no denying the many positive contributions the Carnegie and Rockefeller names, in all their various manifestations, have made and continue to make.

I offer these case studies simply to show that money always comes with a history. Sometimes the history is more transparent than others. But all money is weighted. With

⁴⁴ Walker, 69-70.

⁴⁵ Walker, 70.

⁴⁶ Wu, Chin-tao. *Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention Since the 1980's*. London: Verso, 2002.p4.

the long-standing names of art funding, this weight has lightened over the years and is rarely considered by the applicant.

If money sourced from the Carnegie and Rockefeller names can be called “blood money” then certainly the funds from The LapDance Scholarship can be called “gutter money,” as it comes from a business that is typically perceived as “lowbrow.” This juxtaposition of the lowbrow world of stripping funding the highbrow world of fine arts is a core of the Scholarship. I say this not to weigh the relative “evil” or “good” of blood vs. gutter money, but rather to offer a simplified encapsulation of the implications of source.

In general, when applying to large institutions for fine arts funding, there exists a distance, both physical and emotional, from the faceless funder, a separation of source and recipient. With The LapDance Scholarship, I was interested in making the source of funding as well as the funder herself as abundantly clear as possible. The complete transparency of source in The LapDance Scholarship has led to discomfort among many artists I have spoken with; they are simply too uncomfortable with how the Scholarship’s money is being acquired to even apply.

**Part II [Subsection II]:
“Enlightened Self-Interest”:
The Corporatization of Fine Arts Funding
And the Vacuum Left by Federal Funding Cuts**

Never before has the corporate world in America and Britain exercised such sway over high culture, in which business involvement had previously been thought of as inappropriate, if not completely alien.

Chin-Tao Wu,
Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention Since the 1980’s

The 1980's proved to be a most revolutionary decade in the history of arts funding. The mirrored reigns of Reagan and Thatcher produced public policy in the United States and Britain that cut government spending and encouraged private sector growth. As a result, the arts world found itself turning to private businesses for funding and corporations found their next marketing niche.⁴⁷

Today, we are accustomed to corporate sponsorship and philanthropy. We barely, if at all, notice the absurdity of McDonald's funding the Olympics and other sporting events. We are encouraged by the brave face the BP corporation puts on as it supports the cleanup of our waters and protection of our wildlife. And we aren't phased when an athlete, actor, musician, and now even visual artist endorses this or that product.

In her 1990 Article "Corporate eyes on the market: Funding the arts for the 1990s," Susanne A. Roschwalb discussed the "marked change in arts support" characterizing the 1980's, a pattern she said "we can expect to continue into the next decade."⁴⁸ This new pattern was the shift of companies from "direct donation to the arts" to "cultural event sponsorship" with the crucial outcome being the "source of corporate dollars ha[ving] moved from the company's *giving arm* to its *marketing department* [emphasis added]."⁴⁹

Visual arts became the new marketing frontier of the 1980s as companies shifted away from the traditional sponsorship of athletic events and stepped in to fill the void left by governmental budget cuts to the arts. In a 1989 article, *The New York Times* addressed

⁴⁷Wu, Chin-tao. *Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention Since the 1980's*. London: Verso, 2002. p4.; Roschwalb, Susanne A. "Corporate eyes on the market: Funding the arts for the 1990s." *Journal of Arts Management & Law* 19.4 (1990): 73-84.

⁴⁸ Roschwalb.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

this shift in marketing, stating that “as the sponsorship of traditional sporting events has grown more costly and crowded, companies are turning to out-of-the-ordinary events to help polish their images and increase their sales.”⁵⁰

The eighties thus saw an emergence of corporations not simply supporting the arts philanthropically, but rather utilizing the opportunity for direct, visual sponsorship. “A growing number of companies [were] looking at arts sponsorship as they [had] long viewed sports sponsorship-as a prime area of marketing activity.”⁵¹ Corporations saw the partnership as a symbiotic relationship, referring to it as “enlightened self-interest,” the driving concept being that “everyone can benefit: culture is sustained, and the corporation reaches a new audience, presenting to that audience a sympathetic human face.”⁵²

Corporate sponsorship for the arts presents a complex and important set of questions and challenges for artists and art institutions. Like any funder, corporations have their own set of goals and expectations, the nature of which are not always in harmony with those of the artist or institution. The question thus becomes how much to compromise, and what (if anything) to sacrifice, in order to secure the funding and fulfill the contract. The thought-process for the recipient must shift to fit corporate interests. In her conclusion, Roschwalb summarized the job of the art institute or artist in courting and securing corporate funding:

This is a full-time effort that requires significant lead time, planning, and information gathering. It requires an attitude that is not typical to nonprofits. Words such as marketing, entrepreneurial, ventures, pricing, premiums, and positioning must become part of the vocabulary. In some arts organizations, this represents a significant change in thinking, as in some of these groups, people

⁵⁰ Melvin, T. “Art Trust Attracts People and Funds.” *New York Times* March 12, 1989: section 12WC, 14.

⁵¹ Roschwalb.

⁵² *Ibid.*

who are recipients of outside funds have been accused of a combination of arrogance and naiveté in failing to recognize that there may be little corporate benevolence. *The budget process for corporations is directly related to profits. If the funds designated for an arts organization come from a marketing budget, the arts group should recognize that it has entered into a business relationship; as in any business venture, it must learn to bargain wisely.* In a corporate market that is tight and competitive, global, and in a state of flux, working for marketing funds is a valid goal, but one that arts groups should pursue with open eyes. [emphasis added]⁵³

Art and business become synonymous, the separation of intents and agendas unclear.

In his 1989 book *Filthy Rich (& Other Nonprofit Fantasies)*, Richard Steckel, who single-handedly revamped the Denver Children’s Museum by working successfully with corporate sponsors, took a real bottom-line approach. Steckel believed that an entire paradigm shift needed to occur within art institutions, that they “must abandon their traditional ‘program-driven mentality’ and become ‘market driven.’”⁵⁴ While critics viewed him as “too slick” in his methods, Steckel’s business-savvy proved most effective in the art world corporatization of the eighties. Like it or not, his museum programs were bought and paid for.

Both Roschwalb’s article and Steckel’s book, published in 1990 and 1989 respectively, offer a telling look into the developing corporate influence in the art world at the brink of the 1990’s. In his 2003 book *Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention Since the 1980’s*, Chin-tao Wu provides a thorough retrospective analysis of the changes Roschwalb and Steckel were experiencing, as well as the ongoing evolution of the corporate-art relationship into the twenty-first century. The quote from Wu that opened this section is a powerful commentary on the state of this evolution: the corporate

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Steckel, Richard. *Filthy Rich (& Other Nonprofit Fantasies)*. Berkeley: Ten Speed Press. 1989. p18.

influence has continued to grow and integrate into the very framework of the art world. “In short, business influence is by now well advanced in every phase of contemporary art- in its production, its dissemination and its reception.”⁵⁵

Many corporations now have their own curators, art collections, even travelling exhibitions. They produce their own cultural events, increasing brand-name exposure and enhancing their company’s public image. In addition to “emulat[ing] the former prerogatives of public art museums and galleries,” corporations have also “successfully transformed art museums and galleries into their own public-relations vehicles, by taking over the function and by exploiting the social status, that cultural institutions enjoy in our society.”⁵⁶

From philanthropic contributions to sponsored events to almost complete co-opting of institutional roles, corporations have irrevocably enmeshed themselves with the art world of today. But this union was not an entirely one-way courtship. It was a perfect storm of mutual need- businesses needed a new, less expensive marketing field and the art world, crippled by cuts to federal funding, needed a new source of income.

In the opening of this section, I alluded to the Regan-Thatcher eras of the U.S. and U.K., a time when federal funding for the arts made a major retreat. Roschwalb, in 1990, wrote that the cuts in governmental subsidies are what drove the art world to seek funding from corporations. Today, this reliance is almost taken for granted, and federal budget cuts to the arts continue to rise. With this widening chasm, the need for corporate funding grows stronger and more dire.

⁵⁵Wu, Chin-tao. *Privatising Culture: Corporate Art Intervention Since the 1980's*. London: Verso, 2002.p2.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Interestingly enough, while the decreases in federal funding for the arts have more or less mirrored one another between the U.S. and U.K., the reaction of the respective populations have not. In his article “Why Aren’t Americans Angrier?”, Tyler Green compares the British taking to the streets in protest with Americans failing to act at all, even though the cuts to the U.S. budget are more extreme:

Although you’d hardly know it from Americans' comparative silence...decreases in U.S. government funding to arts groups are almost certainly going to be deeper than the ones that have provoked such a strong reaction in the U.K. At the federal level, President Barack Obama proposed 13 percent cuts for both the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities for the fiscal year 2012. (Over the past three decades, it's typically been conservative Republicans who have slashed NEA and NEH spending, while presidents and legislators from Obama's party, the Democrats, have generally sought increases.) Seeing that the White House wasn't going to stand up for the arts, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives promptly doubled the president's figure to 26 percent, *the deepest funding decline in 16 years*. (The Senate is highly unlikely to take up the NEA and NEH budgets until at least midsummer.) [emphasis added]⁵⁷

Though we are facing “the worst funding decrease in nearly a generation,”⁵⁸ we Americans are, as a whole, passively ambivalent.

Green offers several theories as to why there is such a lack of reaction among Americans, the most simplistic of which is that “no one is suggesting they be mad.” He points out that there is a lack of organization in the U.S. art world, with its multi-cities, coast-to-coast presence. Whereas the U.K. can organize around the one central art hub of London, the U.S. art world is greatly dispersed.

While I agree with Green’s observations, I also wonder how significant the influence of corporatization in the art world, and our culture in general, has blinded and numbed us to issues of public policy. Perhaps instead of putting out the effort to

⁵⁷ Green, Tyler. “Why Aren’t American’s Angrier?: The slashing of arts funding in the U.S. and U.K.” *Modern Painters* 23.4 (2011): p29.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

organize, inform and protest, we, as a culture, prefer to be lulled into passivity by a familiar logo, Roschwalb's so-titled corporate "sympathetic human face," promising us protection and support for just a few minor things in return.

Some Concluding Thoughts To Chapter II: A Discourse on Fine Arts Funding

In the preceding document, I have attempted to distill some of the key issues surrounding the politics of arts funding that fueled my development of The LapDance Scholarship. My initial interest focused on two central questions:

1. Where does our money come from?
2. What must we (artists, art institutions) agree to do or not do in order to secure this funding?

From these core questions, countless threads reach back in history and grow towards future implications, touching on social, political, gendered, racial, and class-based issues, to name a few.

Asking about our money's source opens decades of history, begging the questions of whether the recipient of said money is culpable for any portion of that history. This, in turn, brings up the issues of artistic, moral, ideological compromises one makes in receiving weighted money and whether recipients have the responsibility to even investigate this history. For artists, these are particularly poignant questions. If art is an extension of the artist, is not the funding for that extension also integrated into the artist as well?

I have no hard and fast answers to any of these questions. With The LapDance Scholarship, I simply hope to bring attention to these issues. The Scholarship offers forth a transparent history with an all-too-clear source and process. This money is earned by

the act of stripping, thus funding something as decidedly “highbrow” as fine art with something as decidedly “lowbrow” as lap dancing. Artists receiving The LapDance Scholarship cannot help but be aware that their money, literally the very bills they are awarded, comes from the commission of a sex act. The Scholarship unveils the source, replacing a distant, highbrow, faceless entity with an individual, *actual* human face.

CHAPTER III

SNAPSHOTS

The following Chapter is a collection of informal “snapshots” of sorts, closer looks at certain instances and aspects of the world of stripping, as experienced by myself, as Hailey, at Woody’s Show Club. These snapshots, taken cumulatively, will not fully illustrate all the issues at hand in regards to the source of The LapDance Scholarship’s funding, but will touch upon some of the threads, including gender issues, power dynamics, questions of agency, and economic, social, and political elements. I offer these as layers to an undefined whole, sans cumulative analysis or conclusion.

Technical Notes: The names Hailey and Emily will be used at times interchangeably and simultaneously. Anytime I speak in terms of “I,” I’m referring to one or both of us. There are no clear divisions. Also, each snapshot will be labeled as “Shot 1, 2, 3, etc.,” in keeping with the formal practice of distinguishing any visual elements of a thesis from written elements. Notwithstanding, they are intended to be read as continuous elements of this chapter.

Snapshot One-
The Economics of Woody's Show Club

As far as strip-clubs go, from what I've researched and heard from other dancers, Woody's is good to its girls financially. Some clubs have dance quotas that girls must meet before they can keep any money. Or drink sale minimums at clubs that sell refreshments. Each club is different in its economical structure, but one thing is consistent across the industry: lap dancing is where the money's at.

Payment Before Profit:
House Fee, Tip Out, Dance Fees

Many patrons are unaware that, as a dancer, you pay to work and *do not* have an hourly wage. At Woody's the house fee policy is such that the later you come, the more you pay the house. By contract you are technically an independent contractor "renting" the space from the club. Woody's scale ranges from \$5-\$35 with increases every hour.

So you start in the hole. A second hurdle to then clear is tip out. The bare minimum is \$10 to the DJ and \$10 to the bouncers. The DJ is one person not to piss off. If you don't want your music butchered or your spot in stage rotation skipped or over-called, some DJs have unspoken requirements for a little extra. If you want a special favor, like never having to go onstage so you can work at getting private dances (where the real money is), handing the DJ \$65 or so should do. If you are overly dramatic and/or volatile and/or whiny, you will be scorned by the DJ, kicked out of the booth and denied any favors.

On busy nights, you'll have two bouncers working. They keep track of your dances, secure your payouts, and help alleviate "disputes" among patrons. These guys deal with a *lot* of shit and they get it from both sides, customers and dancers. It's a toss up as to which is worse on a given night. Tipping your bouncers earlier rather than forcing them to hunt you down in the parking lot as you attempt to leave, will help your bouncers maintain something of a cordial manner amidst the chaos, at least when

interacting with you.

Having met your house fee and tip outs, you've broken even. But the rest is not pure profit; a portion of each private dance goes to the house. The exceptions are table dances (brief "teaser" dances at a customer's table) for \$5, and any tips received onstage or on the floor. For these you keep 100%. There are those choice girls that have customers lay hundreds down just to sit and talk, but this is not common.

By and large, your main income will derive from lap dances. At Woody's, there are two main divisions of dances: private (couch) dances and VIP (bed) dances. The regular private dances are conducted in a room full of black couches. There are sheer curtains between couches but not around them. These dances are out in the open, in full view of one another. A regular private is \$25. Of this, you pay the house \$5.

Now the VIP beds. Woody's is the only club in the area to have private beds. These are where you want to spend the majority of your time. There are three separate beds, affording more privacy and opportunity for more creative positions and levels of contact than the couches. In general, a higher quality experience. A customer can buy these either by the song, or in set allotments of time. The more time they buy at once, the less it is overall per song. You can explain this as "the Sam's Club of Stripping: buy in bulk and save."

A single song on the beds is \$40. Rack up three of those and you're at \$120. For each single song dance, you pay the house \$10. So one song gets you \$30, and three would get you \$90. This is where time dances come in.

Fifteen minutes on the bed (roughly 4 songs) is \$125 and you pay \$25 to the house, leaving you with a solid hundred. Fifteen minutes are your best friend. Get a customer back for two songs and you can most likely lock them into a fifteen. Just tell them, in a moment of passionate yearning, that "we can do two more for only another \$45 and just call it a fifteen." Next bracket is a half hour at \$235. You pay \$45, keep \$190. Then comes the largest chunk of bulk dance time purchasable at Woody's: an

hour on the beds, which runs \$400, of which you pay \$65 and keep \$335. Customers may book (and have booked) multiple hours with a girl, but each hour is still \$400. Get a good hour dance under your belt and your night's looking up.

A Note On Cutting Corners

There are various ways to cut corners as a dancer, and keep/make more money. This is not something that falls within the club's approved income methods, and definitely falls outside my personal "code of stripper ethics." These examples come from my observations and conversations with dancers and customers over the years at Woody's. Some girls will consistently manipulate and lie even to gain or keep a couple dollars. Some won't lie, but when the bouncer makes an accounting mistake in their favor, they won't object. And some rare strippers will be honest about their earnings and dance counts.

At its core there is an inherent level of deception in stripping. It's a sliding scale of severity for the most part, vacillating girl by girl and dance by dance. Using your skills of manipulation are encouraged and awarded by the house, but manipulating the house itself is biting the hand that feeds you. You may get away with more money, but you risk losing your income source altogether.

Ways to cut corners include lesser offenses, like perhaps saying you did four private couch dances with one customer because you "sat the first one out" or were "just finishing up payment and everything" during the final song before you emerged, when you actually did five dances. The passability of this depends on the bouncers current level of attentiveness. This varies from bouncer to bouncer and throughout the night. If the club is busy and he's tracking multiple girls while dealing with a volatile customer, you may be better able to succeed in this deception. All said, such a short-cut leaves you with an extra \$5 (you keeping \$105 rather than \$100). Notice that five songs on the couches leaves you with the same \$100 as one fifteen minute on the beds. Do not doubt the potential of \$25 couch dances.

Another way to come out with an identical \$5 advantage is by charging a customer for a fifteen minute when only performing two dances. You would thus pay the house \$20, \$10 for each song, and charge the customer \$125 rather than \$80, leaving you with \$105. This deception hinges on the attentiveness of your customer. If you short them dances and they are strip-club savvy, they will fight you and the tape will be reviewed by management.

This type of corner cutting comes in endless incarnations: performing fifteen minute dances and billing the house for one thirty minute, performing a half hour and attempting to pass it off as a fifteen, performing a half hour plus fifteen minutes with a customer and claiming it was just the half hour. If you do this consistently, you will be stealing (by omission of accurate dance accounting) significant amounts of money.

Another method of financial manipulation is not providing clear and current rates to the customer. You get them back onto a bed with all the seduction you can muster and grind on them, breathing heavily through the gap between songs, too passionate to mention the change-over. All of a sudden you tell your customer that it's been fifteen minutes and they owe \$125. This practice is greatly frowned upon as it not only pisses off the customer, but also affects future business. A customer ripped off is unlikely to return, and even less likely to spread positive reviews. In these cases, the manager will often step in to mediate. The house doesn't lose money directly, but the loss of repeat business must be weighed.

There are many ways to financially scam and manipulate customers and the house. Some of them are sanctioned, taught, and encouraged by management. Others are products of well-honed and seasoned manipulators in heels. Once this becomes an inherent element of your character as a dancer, it may be difficult to switch off or properly discern appropriate application.

Snapshot Two-

Questions of Responsibility: The Potential Emotional and Psychological Costs/Damages in the Dancer-Customer Relationship

The following are two case studies of men that I met as customers at the club. Their names have been changed along with overtly identifying descriptive elements out of respect for their privacy. Both of these men developed very real feelings for Hailey/Emily, with differing levels of encouragement on my (as Hailey and Emily) part and with differing evolutions and outcomes. I offer these cases, as they are, to illustrate some potential emotional casualties of the dancing industry. This raises the question of responsibility, a question I remain unable to answer with any absolute certainty.

Case Study One: Richard

The first time I met Richard, he was sitting at a distance from the stage, nursing his drink. He was well-groomed, pleasant-smelling and wore a sweater shirt soft to the touch. My first encounter, as usual, was a physical one of sitting on his lap and stroking his hair, so all my senses were involved.

In chatting with Richard, me in some bikini-like stripper outfit, a perverse blend between underwear and a costume, he told me he'd just gone through a painful divorce. His wife cheated on him. He'd worked day and night for his family. She'd taken the money. She'd taken the kids. He'd given everything for her and was walked all over in return.

I listened sympathetically. I felt for him. This was early on in my stripping and I wasn't yet jaded and coarse, hadn't yet developed my stripper calluses. I still spent up to half an hour talking to a guy before even introducing the idea of a dance.

Richard was a good man. He was giving to a fault. He spoke of his nature to put every woman he'd been in a relationship with first. While I don't believe he was conscious of it, Richard set himself up to be taken advantage of time after time. And time after time, the pain of having his heart ripped out was just as raw, just as

devastating, just as unexpected. This man was the perfect mark. I could recognize this objectively, knew that any seasoned stripper could run him through the ringer. But I could not. It wasn't my nature to take advantage of vulnerable people. I could empathize too much with anyone one else's position- see myself in them, how I would want to be treated, how I believed a human being should be treated.

So I went with my nature. I listened and talked, honestly, Hailey's name but Emily's answers. That's how it was in the early days: Emily in everything but name and mascara. Eventually, Richard himself suggested we go for a dance. I don't know how long the first one was, nor exactly how things proceeded to where they did.

Months later, Richard has been coming in weekly, sometimes both nights I work. I sit and talk with him between rounds of working the crowd. He's become my home base. He buys dances consistently.

At some point, I'm not sure how far in, he brings up feelings he's developed. We are on a VIP bed, Richard laying back, me on top in the customary dance positioning. He would like something more. I've told him from the start that I am not looking for a relationship. That I'm not at a point where I'm ready for that in my life. He understands. He doesn't want to push.

I tell him I do care for him. This is true. I tell him he is a good person and deserves to be treated well. This is true. I tell him I'm at a vulnerable time in my life, no time to start anything serious. This is true. I'm honest again in everything but name. Or maybe by now I've told him my real name. He eventually comes to know it. Comes to know my full name.

I tell him that I don't want to be another one of the women to screw him over. That if it's too much to stop coming to the club. A couple times he does swear it off. Says he can't keep doing this. I say that's okay. To take care of himself. He always comes back. I worry about him overextending himself, setting himself up for another evisceration. But I'm grateful for the money. It is my job, after all. And I've been

honest. I'm not leading him on. I'm not like those girls.

Around roughly two and a half years after our first encounter, Richard is in my parking lot, at my apartment. It's three am. He's called me, saying he needs to talk. At this point he stopped going to the club long ago but we text every once and a while. I'm exhausted. I've been home from work only forty five minutes. I just want to sleep. But I do care for this man. So I go out.

He's been here before. To drop me off or pick me up. Never inside. He's been drinking. He needs to talk. He needs to let go of me for real, fully and finally. I've heard this before. I thought he had. Almost a year ago, maybe, he'd sent texts about how he'd realized what all this was, that it was "just for money." He'd been angry. He'd needed to cut ties. I'd answered I understood. I didn't want to defend myself or try and convince him otherwise. He'd found a way to make a break from it all and I wanted him to run with it.

Yet here we were. He tells me how much he tried to win me over. The money he took out. The emotional turmoil. The unforgiving obsession. He can't understand why he can't let go of me. I'm like "no woman he's ever met."

By now I've built up my stripper calluses. Not that I don't care about people, but I make my transactions at the club as fast and surface as possible now. Because this hurts. He wants nothing more than to take care of me and love me the rest of my life. I want nothing more than for him to be happy. But I can't be that for him. And it hurts.

So here is this man. A good man. A man I care for and believe deserves the best. Here he is. In my parking lot at three am. Heart ripped out again. And who is responsible?

Case Study Two: Earl

Earl has come down to Iowa City to see me, even for a moment, at his insistence. He's brought me oranges. I meet him in the K-Mart parking lot of Highway 6, having never revealed to him where I live and having no intention of doing so. After

scampering from the warmth of my car to his, I sit in the passenger seat, smile, and say “hey, babe.” Earl asks me if I’m going to marry him. He wants to get me on his insurance and put me in the will. This is not a new question.

Earl fell hard and fast for Hailey, in fact so fast that I was completely unaware of the event. Earl was one of the many white-haired, bearded, fifty-something year old men that I tended to zone in on upon their entrance to the club. By the time he entered the picture, I was a more practiced stripper, by and large less invested in the time I spent with each prospect before going for the sale. Excepting extreme behavior or repeat payment, each face blended into the next.

I can’t place a finger on when or how Earl came onto my radar as more than an occasional VIP customer. At some point he referred to us as “dating,” the first I’d heard of it, and spoke of needing to have time with me outside the club, like a “normal couple.” Some time later this turned into ongoing proposals of marriage, along with ongoing insistence on my acceptance.

Earl brought me jewelry. He brought me clothes. I told him this was not necessary. That I don’t wear jewelry and don’t need clothes. In all truth, they were so far from anything I needed or would use that I wondered just who he professed to love and how I had gotten involved in the matter. Earl continued to bring gifts, upset when my reaction wasn’t appropriately proportionate to his gesture. Or when I didn’t put on the jewelry immediately to wear the remainder of my shift.

Week by week, our relationship deepened in complexity, unbeknownst to me. Earl would text me that he was taking the day off of work and was on his way to Iowa City and where could he meet me? This would be in the middle of the day, with no prior notice. I would respond that I had classes and appointments. Earl was again crushed by my not making time for him.

Thursday nights at the club, he’d ask if we could do something Sunday and I’d redirect the conversation. That Monday I would receive distraught and angry texts

about my shirking of our commitment. Earl and I had many fights that I'm not privy to.

I remain baffled by the extent of Earl's enmeshment, and completely unsure of its origin and development. I give every customer encouragement, to an extent. And Earl received nothing special, nothing to indicate anything other than a stripper doing her prescribed stripping job. So when he says one night at the club that "we've been dating a year and a half now" and asks me for the millionth time when I'm going to marry him, I can't help but get frustrated.

Earl doesn't buy dances anymore. He still brings me gifts I don't want. I've told him he doesn't need to buy me things. That if he *must* keep spending money on me, buying dances is the most helpful as it goes directly to my education and to fund local artists. I tell him practical is best, but nothing is necessary.

Once I meet Earl at Target, after months of him pushing for time "outside the club." He had asked about getting together at the mall and picking me up some things. He'd asked what I needed and I had answered honestly. So we'd met at Target to pick out a vacuum for my apartment. Most often spurred by a recent cleaning, I still occasionally remind my roommate that "my vagina bought that vacuum."

I battle with my Earl conundrum. I vacillate constantly in my feelings of culpability and responsibility, and what (if any) action I need to take. I've felt like a soulless money-driven leech, an entitled, spoiled child, one of the stereotypical "bitches" stereotypical men complain about that "take your money and bleed you dry." I've felt indifferent to the whole situation, thinking "if he wants to keep doing this, who am I to stop him? Especially given all the 'outs' I've provided." I've felt utter frustration and exasperation. Most disturbingly, I've felt moments of complete disregard for Earl's feelings and overall existence.

So here I sit in his car in the Kmart parking lot, listening to him tell me that I really need to meet his mother before she dies. And I'm just lost. This is not someone I've ever been. This is not something I've ever wanted to be.

Snapshot Three- Codes of Ethics

Part One: Select Statutes of the Customer Code of Ethics

As a customer at Woody's ...

You may touch the dancers during a private dance

Note: Approved areas are individually mandated by each dancer (ask before you touch)

Note: The genital area is **always** off limits. This includes the anus and perineum, as well as the *outer* elements of the vagina, not *just* the vaginal lining. This is a **federal law** not a personal attack on your freedom to enjoy yourself.

Note: "Touching" means *with your hands*. Your penis is **not** a finger. It must remain in your pants.

Note: Nipples are *not* radio dials or teething rings.

Note: The excuse that "no one will know" falls short of the girl you are fingering/biting/sucking. She will know.

You may talk dirty to the dancers

Note: The level of willingness to talk dirty back and the specific fetish limits of each girl will vary. She is not obligated to be turned on by your defecation fantasies, though she may be more than willing to pretend she is.

Note: Talking dirty back, dancing suggestively, being impassioned and showing you her body are the dancers job. This does not mean she's wanting to take it further, nor, frankly, that she is actually enjoying herself.

Note: This is *fantasy* play. Enjoy yourself. Feel free to be creative. But remember where you are.

You may reject dancers

Note: It is best to be direct. Excuses such as “I need to settle in/warm up,” “come back in a little bit,” et cetera, are not original. If you don’t want to get a dance, you may say so politely. After several return trips with identical put-offs, you will piss her off.

Note: If you tell one girl you don’t have the money or aren’t ready and then immediately go back with another dancer, be prepared for possible stripper fall-out ranging from death stares to a good tongue-lashing and demand for tip.

Tipping is optional

Note: Some girls are aggressive and will demand a tip. Others will not mention it. Tipping is always appreciated.

Payment is not optional

Note: Some special deals are dictated by the house. Ex: Tuesdays are 2-for-1 private dances all night.

Note: Come prepared. Non-payment is not appreciated.

Note: Be aware. Some girls will fleece you.

You are not at a brothel

Note: Your stripper is not here to prostitute herself. She will most likely not take kindly to your propositions.

Note: If you *are* dead set on soliciting a sex act, at *least* offer more money than she receives for a dance. Otherwise, it’s doubly insulting. She doesn’t care to know “what you *could* get for that much” somewhere else.

Helpful Example:

If you are at a fine dining establishment and, referring to the price of their filet mignon, say “do you know how many McDonalds hamburgers I could get for that?” they’re not going to care because that’s not what they’re offering.

**Part Two:
Select Statutes of the
Stripper Code of Ethics**

As a stripper at Woody's...

You are not to interfere with other girls' business

Note: If a girl is on the lap or by the side of a customer, do not approach said customer until she has disengaged.

Note: When customers are at the tip rail of the stage, do not approach them. This is "poaching" the stage girl's business.

Note: Talking bad about a girl to customers or sharing aspects of her "real" life are not appropriate actions. Stripper vengeance is a powerful thing.

You are not to mess with other girls' belongings

Note: The cameras are not just for the customers. The dressing room is under surveillance. If you take something, it will be captured on film.

You are not paid to take malicious advantage of customers

Note: Customers are just that-customers. They are there to enjoy themselves. Maliciously ripping them off will only guarantee they do not return, and will piss off the other girls. This practice gives the entire club a bad reputation.

Note: Be upfront and clear about dance prices.

Note: Be courteous and alert your customer to the end of a dance or agreed upon time limit. Ask if they want more.

Note: Falsely accusing customers of inappropriate behavior is unfair to them and weakens real cases of violation.

You are allowed to reject a customer (including mid-dance)

Note: Some customers are not worth your time. Do not waste it on them.

Note: Some customers will try to touch you where they are not allowed, even when explicitly told multiple times with strong physical cues. You may stop the dance and keep their money. You may report them and have them kicked out of the club, depending on their level of trespass.

Note: Just because you're good at your job does not mean you have given your customer license to pursue things further.

You are to pay your fees

Note: Shorting the house, neglecting to tip-out, manipulating your dance count, and directly lying to staff, if discovered, is grounds for ejection from the club.

It's best not to get involved in "drama"

Note: Come to work in order to work. Sitting in the back all night will not bring you money, and usually increases your likeliness to be ensnared in stripper drama.

Note: The politics of a strip club are more back-stabbing than actual politics.

Note: Be courteous to your fellow strippers. You are all competing, but no need to throw out civility.

Note: Fistfights and hair-pulling will be met with ejection from the club.

Note: While substance use and intoxication (be it alcohol or illicit substances) is not officially sanctioned by the management, a certain level is tolerated. However, if this interferes with your ability to be civil with customers or coworkers, you will be similarly ejected from the club. Just because one girl can perform an acrobatic stage set in 9-inch-heels while three sheets to the wind does not mean it's advised.

Note: Starting said “drama” with the bouncers, the DJ, or the manager is ill-advised and will not be tolerated beyond a certain level dictated by each individual and subject to variation without notice.

You are not at a brothel

Note: Any overt sex acts going beyond the boundaries of a private dance are illegal and deemed as acts of prostitution. This includes but is not limited to genital touching by either party, oral stimulation by either party, and vaginal or anal penetration by any bodily appendage.

Note: Securing dances by allowing sex acts will not endear you among your coworkers.

Snapshot Four-

Moments from the Early Days: Emily/Hailey Blurbs From First Six Months (When it Was All Still Novel)

Stella was wasted Saturday night and stumbled up to me saying “How do you cast your spells? You’re a spell caster.” I asked what she meant and she swayed precariously on her 9-inch stripper stilettos saying, “You get this deep emotional connection.” I explained that I just talk to them but that I want to learn the sex approach cause it’s faster and more successful. She said “yeah I used to do that...now I’m so money hungry I’m like ‘you gonna pay for me or not?’”

I had my first amputee. He was kind and gentle and rubbed his abbreviated stump on my naked body. I thought that people may naturally avoid it. So I made a point of touching and caressing it with my hands.

I had something akin to “emotional sex” with this guy Dillon for an hour. My first hour lapdance. Exhausting mentally. I wonder if by trying not to be fake and cheap like “most strippers” I’m being even more cruel. I’m establishing “real” emotional connections with these men then not following through. This may be more vicious than just throwing sex at them....cause at least when it’s all fake surface shit, no one expects it to go outside the lines of the club.

I did a 15 minute lapdance for a University professor tonight. He said “you like fucking a professor behind his wife’s back?” as I gyrated on him. I said I did (of course) and added “You gonna give me an ‘A’ professor?” He came in his pants and I felt like I should’ve asked for an extra \$50.

I’m trying to get one customer to VIP. He says he’ll do the \$25 dances. I take him back and I’m caressing the side of his face and running my hands through his hair. He turns so my hands run down his face. He loves it. The song ends and he says “don’t stop.” We go on for 7 songs, me feeling his face while I ride him. At one point he hugs me tight and says “hold me.” So I do.

I rode an economics professor from the U of I for over the half hour he purchased. My manager forgot about us because the pole broke. He writhed under me spastically yet fluidly, his eyes closing in what appeared to be the blissed out state of a thoroughly baked pothead but was apparently just his enjoyment face. He kept kissing my neck and cleavage and even tried to take a fucking muff-dive! I slammed my palm into his forehead and held him back from my nether-regions. He reached his tongue towards

them, his eyes now distorted from my palm pulling the lids up from his forehead. His already disturbing countenance created by his lean face, cracked teeth, and moppish thinning hair, was now contorted into a menacing joker mask complete with additional Gene Simmons tongue, sold separately

The same night a group of guy friends came in and one said his buddy's mom had died and they'd come to forget. They were all darling and sweet. They asked to have me place my nipples on their closed eyelids. My first "bulls eye" ever.

Almost a new year. Almost. I'll be celebrating the changeover clad in almost nothing on 6-inch clear stripper platforms, most likely sitting on some stranger's lap whispering into his ear and playing with his hair. Or (hopefully) straddling him in the back or (even better) riding him on a purple and black velvet bed.

I tell my manager about my idea to wear light-up underwear that blinks a countdown on my ass. How I'll go down the pole spread-eagle as the countdown begins. A living New Year's Stripper-ball. At the bottom, I'll shoot confetti out of my vagina. I tell him to give me a week and I'll be ready. He gives me a feeble half-smile.

I sit on this kid's lap. And I do mean kid. He's got braces. Greasy hair. Fading acne. On his hand there's one of those stamps you get going into a club. It's repeated on his forearm only smaller. I look closer. It's two dicks. Two cartoon cocks. One behind the other, presumably fucking the first one. I ask him where he got it. He says it's a tattoo. He says he made a stupid bet over a game of pool. And now this. Glaring penis caricatures permanently etched on his hand and forearm. His friend tells him to show me his back. This kid stands up and lifts his hoodie. I see clouds and a rainbow. I see carebears. S&M Carebears bound at the wrists and ankles. S&M Carebears whipping one another. S&M Carebears with sagging bitch-tits and ball-gags. Another bet lost.

I'm sitting on this guy. Muscle bound. Shirt opened the first three buttons. Fake-bake tan that makes me question his ethnicity. I caress his chest. It's stubbly. He says he needs to shave again. Tells me he shaves his entire body. His skin looks like aged leather. He asks me to guess his age. I say I'm horrible at it. I shoot really low. Thinking 48 I say 28. He smiles. His eye lines crease. He says I'm dead on.

There's this woman. 35 maybe 45. Looks like a librarian on casual Friday. Massive glasses occupying half her face. Frizzy hair pulled back in a ratty ponytail. Ill-fitted mom jeans. Cotton floral-print shirt. She's at the tip rail. Puts a dollar down. I put my tits in her face. She lifts her shirt. She's completely flat chested. Her nipples stick out a good inch. They're fucking torpedoes. She says "rub your tits on mine" and begins to climb on stage. I make a big to do out of how hot she is. She grabs me everywhere.

Later, I'm working a customer by the ATM. Torpedo librarian comes up behind me. I'm trying to get a dance. She's running her hands down my back. I'm focusing on the customer. And then there's a tongue in the crack of my ass. I turn my head to see the librarian behind me, on her knees. Her plate-glass-window-worthy glasses are up against my butt cheeks. Her shirt is up. Her nipples are out, ready to cut glass. I jump away from her and pull her up. Smiling, giggling, I caress her face. She turns into my hand, hungrily kissing it. I pull her shirt down and send her to her table. A stranger's tongue in my ass. This is my job.

Tonight I had a streak of men who all were of the mindset that my nipples were radio dials. That shit hurts.

There's this man that comes in. He wears track pants. More full-on stimulation potential for him. More chaffing for me. I see him go back with two girls throughout the night. They disappear to the couches for a slew of songs. Finally I see him alone. I wait outside the restroom for him and pounce as he exits. It's been a slow night. Stalking is not below me. I go in for the question and he says yes, he'd love a dance. We go back to the couches. He wants me to go really slow. He wants me to look into his eyes. I do this. I do this for twelve songs in a row. He reeks of marijuana. He intermittently adjusts his erection. He says oh it feels so good. Oh just like that. I tell him yeah its just how I like it. My thighs are burning. My crotch is on fire. My eyes are tractor beam-locked on his. I see desperation. I see intense sadness. I don't look away. I tell him oh its so good. Finally he says he's done for now. I go to the front to get his \$300. He leaves and my manager says so you got Mr. Slickypants. Mr. Slickypants is well known. He is the stripper version of getting lucky at the slot machine. Beneath the reefer and the track pants, though, something is killing that man.

It's Saturday night. No. It's Sunday morning. 4:30am. I've been here since 6:30pm yesterday. I'm tired as hell. I don't care anymore. I've lost all semblance of stripper charm. They announce a 2-for-1. I parade my ass across the stage and go to the first man I see. I ask does he want a 2-for-1. He says no. I say fine and walk away. I'm caustic and terse. I'm over this. I'm at the bouncer podium when he comes over. Okay, he says. You're a little fucking late I tell him. I say let's go. I don't even smile. I lead him to the couches. They're full. So I lead him to the beds. They're full. He says it's gross that other guys lay there. He says can we just stand there. So we do. My head on his shoulder. His head on mine. He is exhausted. Played basketball all day. I close my eyes. He says he'll pay me \$40 to just nap with him. The 2-for-1 ends. The beds empty. We slump back to the farthest one and lay down. I've stripped naked. Second-nature by now. We lay there together. They call me onstage. I don't move. Eventually they call another girl. He drifts in and out on my shoulder. His hand rests on my boob. Might as well, he says. I smile weakly. A second song

ends. I'll have to pay out \$20 of the \$40. I rouse him and say it's time to go home. He grumbles a bit and gets up. Hands me \$40. We walk down the ramp. Our feet drag. I say night and thanks for the nap

It's sometime after 3am on a Friday night/Saturday morning. I'm sitting on the muscled-out 48-year-old-28-year-old when a guy comes up and interrupts. He says it's his friend's birthday. That he's been waiting all night for a dance with me. I politely excuse myself from my leathery companion. The guy leads me over to a group of men and points out the birthday boy. He is short, balding, greasy black hair all askew over thick glasses. He has a gut. I say I've heard that you've been waiting for me! I'm sorry it took so long! He smiles and holds up a large bottle of tequila. He has consumed the vast majority of it. He says he saw my tattoos and wanted only me. He lifts up his shirt to display an array of small, poorly executed tattoos. I touch them with feigned interest and reverence. He says he has \$120 in his wallet and wants to spend it all on me. I tell him we could do 15 minutes on the beds for \$125. He is very drunk. I guide him to the beds. He is apologizing for being so drunk. I assure him it's ok. I giggle and tell him he's sweet. I start his dance. He continues to apologize. Over and over. He starts telling me that he can't get a girlfriend. That he still lives with his mom. How can you bring a girl home when you live with you mom? he asks. It's not attractive he tells me. He says he's been rejected from eHarmony three times. That he is unemployed. Oh yeah I'm a catch he says, I have no job and live with my mom. I keep dancing and reassuring him. He keeps apologizing for being drunk. Towards the end he says I think I'm going to be alchologically sick. I ask should I get his friends. He keeps apologizing. He says he may need an ambulance. I say I'll get his friends. He keeps apologizing. I say let's at least get to the bathroom. He hands me his wallet and says to take what I need. He can't concentrate enough. I take his money. He is \$5 short. I try to guide him to the bathroom. It takes over ten minutes. I find his friends and tell them that he's in the bathroom and seems really sick. Then I ask do they have \$5? It's over half an hour later. I'm on stage with some guy's face buried in my cleavage when I see a team of EMTs come in pushing a stretcher. They disappear into the bathroom. They come back out. Birthday boy is strapped down with a plastic mask over his face. No one really seems to notice this entire occurrence. I guess naked women are distracting.

Final Snapshot-

Exhaustion

Stripping is addictive. The high of racking up a solid run of timed dances and watching your stack of bills grow. The power of knowing you have a customer ready to do whatever you ask of him. The satisfaction of hearing a “yes” and leading him to the VIP section, you walking just ahead, back arched and butt out, turning back over your shoulder, your bottom lip in your teeth in a naughty-girl smirk. The satisfaction of looking at the dance record sheet and seeing the tallies by your name. The thrill of a good stage set, of commanding the stage, letting the music take over and working the pole with skill. The knowledge that you could go in for a night’s work and come out with a grand or more.

Leaving this world is difficult. Even when you want to. Try going to an hourly pay job from one where you can make \$100 in fifteen minutes. The thing is, it’s not always a high. There are nights you go in, work your ass off, grind your hips out, bruise your knees, chafe your genitals, and come out with nothing. Nights you get shot down, rejected by customer after customer, watch other girls walking the victory walk to the private dance areas, watch the same guy who just rejected you go back with a girl with better boobs or nicer hair or more makeup, or whatever you decide is the crucial element you’re lacking. Nights you get into a mental rut, expecting failure before even approaching a customer, assured that he had no desire for you, that you’re not good enough. Nights you become enraged with it all. Nights you are crushed by repeated rejection and retreat home, tail between your legs, a crumpled wad of singles your fiscal reminder of failure.

I’ve experienced all sides of this. I’ve had nights that flew by, me riding a stripper-high of empowerment, my purse bulging with my cash. Nights I almost didn’t even have to try. Nights I felt powerful, confident, sure of each “yes” and not phased by any “no’s” I get. Nights I get a thrill climbing the pole, spinning upside-down,

performing. And I've had nights where every moment was painful. Nights I couldn't get a dance if I paid someone. Nights every customer tried to finger me, or asked for sex, or said they'd get a dance if I offered "something more" with it. Nights I've felt violated, been violated, and wanted to castrate every male I saw.

No doubt, this is a tough business. Financially, it's basically a gamble. You can make bank one day and nothing the next. Emotionally and psychologically, it can be a roller-coaster. If you keep your head on straight, focus on the prize, develop a tough skin, and hustle your ass off, you'll come out okay. It can be cut-throat. It is always exhausting. But there are moments of great satisfaction.

As for me, I'm exhausted down to my marrow. I need to recharge. I want a reason to break from it all. But, like I said, it's addictive. Nights I stay home I *could* be making two months rent or a bulk student loan payment.

When you're out, you think of the good times. When it's 3am on a slow night and you've only made a couple hundred, there's still *maybe* the next guy. You're tired and worn out, just got propositioned and fondled for who knows how many times tonight, but you stay. Because there's always the promise of more.

All in all, this is the easiest and the hardest money I've ever made.

CHAPTER IV
SELECT CASE STUDIES FROM THE
CANON OF LAPDANCE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

The LapDance Scholarship has been awarded to ten recipients, all based in Iowa City, with projects ranging from local endeavors to works in London and Venice. It has funded writers, performers, visual artist, and collaborative groups. The total amount awarded over the life of the Scholarship is \$2,886. The following are three select case studies of recipients, including the amount they received and the nature of their proposals. A full list of all ten scholarship recipients, dates, and amounts, follows.

**Case Study One:
Lisa Johnson, November 2011, \$256**

Lisa Johnson was the fourth recipient of The LapDance Scholarship. Lisa is an artist of many trades and received her MFA in Art from the University of Iowa in 2012. As of this writing, Lisa is completing an artist residency at the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, Vermont. The following is an excerpt from her winning proposal:

For almost 2 years I have been researching, and making work about, the ways that different communities tell their stories. In particular, I have focused on marginalized communities – groups who, for one reason or another, have voices that are less-heard in everyday society.

My research looks at these four questions:

- a. How does “silencing” of certain populations impact the culture as a whole?
- b. How do other cultures/cultures of artists address this idea?
- c. How do “silenced” communities develop alternative languages in art?
- d. What are the measurable ways that artistic and theatrical storytelling affect a community whose stories have been previously silenced?

This summer, I travelled to Prague, Czech Republic, to examine how different artists work with marginalized or “silenced” members of a community. My work included interviews, visits to arts facilities and to an international prison, and the creation of an original, collaborative work of art on location in Prague. This piece took place on V. Kotcich Street. It was part performance, part installation, part public gathering space, and it involved members of the local community, including a small group of homeless men who lived on the street where we worked.

I am planning a show at the Market Dubuque Space in mid-December, where I share the work that I did in Prague with the Iowa City community. I feel that there are links between marginalized communities everywhere, and I would like to present the work I did in Prague as a step towards open dialogue about the issues of voice and marginalization.

For the December show, I would like to recreate parts of the Kotcich Street installation inside of the Market Dubuque Space. This will include gathering spaces, musicians, and a group dinner, to which the entire community is invited. On the walls, I will present photos of the original Prague piece, and will include my research and creative notes to help guide viewers through the exhibit.

All of this will lead to a great dialogue but it is very expensive! I am applying to the lap dance scholarship to offset these costs.

I am seeking a new combination of sculpture, theatre, and community storytelling that explores the value and power of the human voice. My long-term plans include multi-national study of these issues, the formation of a large-scale arts ensemble linking Midwest prisons and their surrounding communities, and the development of open, community dialogue on the issues of voice and marginalization. Presenting international, cross-cultural investigation of these issues is essential, because it frames the work beyond on marginalization, storytelling, creativity, and dialogue.

I feel that the Market-Dubuque Show is a step towards those goals, bringing the initial research to the Iowa City public so that we can begin to talk about the issues presented, and provide a place for people to gather and do so.

**Case Study Two:
The Missionaries of Free @art Sch001,
May 2011, \$256**

The Missionaries of Free @rt Sch001, an outgrowth of the (dis)organization known as the Free @rt Sch001, were the second recipient of The LapDance Scholarship. Free @rt Sch001 is a nationwide, at times international, informal movement of individuals working together to create art classes, events, and experiences for anyone and everyone, for free. The “Free” in Free @rt Sch001 is not only an adjective, but also

meant to be a verb, part of the mission being to *free* “art school” itself. Anyone can be a part of the school. The Missionaries themselves were formed after Free @rt Sch001 was invited to host a Marvelous Monster Mash at GALERIE8 in Hackney, East London. The following is an excerpt from their winning proposal, beginning with their self-definition of Free @rt Sch001:

Free @rt SCh001 as an adjective:

Free @rt SCh001 is an intentionally nebulous collection of artists and troublemakers hailing from the ruins of the American ivory tower. With performances and interactive events imbued with ritual and spectacle, the Missionaries of F@S haunt academic conferences, de and re construct social norms, and concretize the everyday as the mythic.

The Missionaries work to highlight the joy of learning and making artwork, and hopefully inspire others to do the same. We work with children of all ages, adults, people who pretend to be adults, robots, artists and fakers of all sorts.

The Missionaries to Free @rt SCh001 are inspired by the historical precedents of the Situationist International group, have an obvious reverence for Dada and a penchant for hyperbole. We work to make art and whimsy with our bare hands, endorsing a d.i.y. aesthetic and an Arte Povera politic.

Free @rt SCh001 as a Verb:

The Missionaries find intrinsic value in making things. With little concern for exchange value, we find collective production fun and soul sustaining. Our events, which are participatory by nature, seek to nourish their participants socially and artistically.

Project Proposal:

Free @rt SCh001 proposes to host a live, Marvelous Monster Mash at Galerie8 in early June. The event would require two to three days of site-access for two (or ideally more) F@S Missionaries to prepare. There would then be a daytime Marvelous Monster Mash workshop and small parade. This would function under the umbrella of education at most art institutions.

Using evangelical techniques we attempt to, at least temporarily, unschool education and remind children big and small what it’s like to play. We are interested in the idea of becoming monsters, of parading as monsters, of examining the theme from the simple, face-value standpoint of how it provokes curiosity in kids, to the larger metaphorical questions it asks of all of us.

To set the mood, the missionaries will host story time by the (dry ice) “fire”. We will share tales of monster colonization on planets far, far away. Surrounded by transmissions from Transylvania, the mood will be set with projections and decorations made by the visiting missionaries beforehand.

In addition to the workshop, we could present an evening talk geared towards adults about the monstrous state of higher education in Europe and The United States. This could be set up as a panel with other education activists, or as an informal talk. The Missionaries could report on protests and actions in the USA and Croatia and hear from locals about the U.K. As with all F@S events, the idea is to encourage creative thinking and dialogue and remind one another that infinite possibilities exist here on earth.

This event would be a good tie in with Lorena Rivero de Beer's work re: The Free University of Liverpool. She talks about, a "laboratory to explore new models of transmitting knowledge." Our lab here is both literal and metaphoric.

**Case Study Three:
Rachel Singel, December 2011, \$230**

Rachel Singel was the fifth recipient of The LapDance Scholarship. Rachel is a printmaker, currently pursuing her MFA at the University of Iowa. Her scholarship proposal was for funds to aid in a Summer residency in Venice. The following is an excerpt from their winning proposal:

My work is inspired by the landscape, particularly the relationship between the sky and the ground. Venice has the biggest sky I have ever seen, and its fields of water are constantly changing, reminiscent of Iowa's sea of corn. I am fascinated by these ever-shifting environments and believe that a residency at the Venice Printmaking Studio will teach me not only more about traditional printmaking and papermaking practices, it also will give me an opportunity to reflect on these unique natural/manmade environments.

In Venice, I would have a chance to meet other international artists and learn first-hand about this place surrounded by beauty, but also the threat of degradation. This duality is currently present in my prints and books. I wonder: What will only be there for a moment, and what might endure? I want to become a part of the Venetian community and learn more about their environmental situation. I then hope to bring back stories and imagery and share them with my community in Iowa, paralleling these landscapes through the development of my thesis work.

My dream is to one day be an artist and art instructor. Mastering these traditions would allow me to pass on fine craft skills to my students. This would be an ideal opportunity to continue to refine my abilities as a craftsperson and future teacher.

**Canon of
LapDance Scholarship Recipients**

First Awarding:

Catherine (Cassie) Krahe, April 2011, \$383

Second Awarding:

The Missionaries of Free @rt Sch001, May 2011, \$352

Third Awarding:

Allison Welch, October 2011, \$329

Fourth Awarding:

Lisa Johnson, November 2011, \$256

Fifth Awarding:

Rachel Singel, December 2011, \$230

Sixth Awarding:

Steven Crompton, January 2012, \$301

Seventh Awarding:

Samantha Mitchel, February 2012, \$323

Eighth Awarding:

Rodrick Whetstone, March 2012, \$202

Ninth Awarding:

Rodrick Whetstone, August 2012, \$274

Tenth Awarding:

Leeyeon (Lee) Yoo, October 2012, \$236

Total Awarded Monies: \$ 2,886

CONCLUSION

The LapDance Scholarship is more than the projects it has funded, the money it has produced. The questions it addresses and elicits are important ones. There is no final summation I can give that will adequately encompass all the elements of this project. As formerly stated, this is also not my intention. I have tried to offer some insight into the creation, development and execution of The LapDance Scholarship along with some of the issues inherent within and arising from the project. These are instances, glimpses. Parts unveiled, but never the whole.

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