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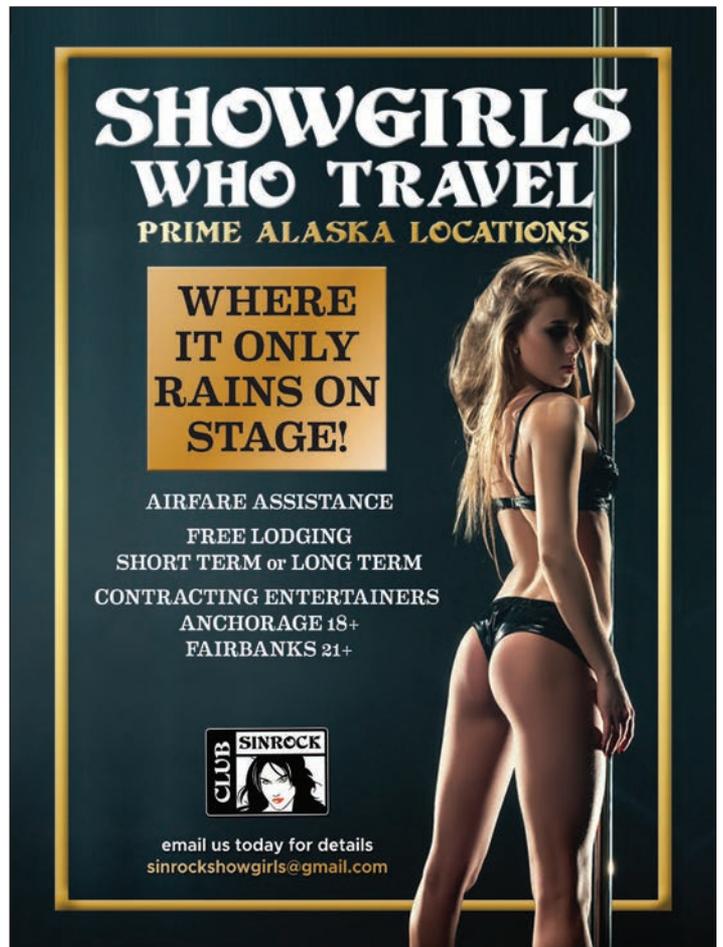
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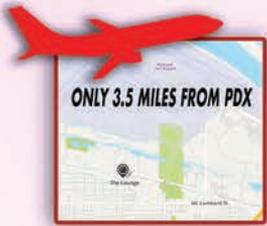
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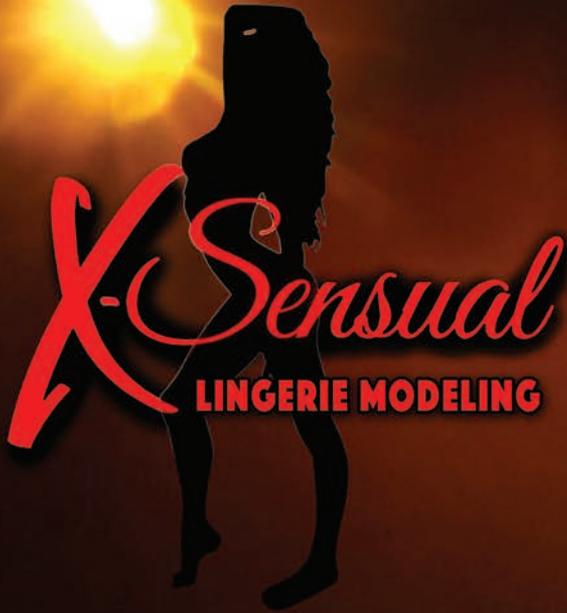
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FROM
STARS CABARET
BRIDGEPORT



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FEATURES



TALES FROM THE DJ BOOTH

part two of the 12 rules of stripping series
page 20 | by dj hazmatt



MOVIES YOU DIDN'T THINK HAD ROMANCE (BUT TOTALLY DID)

finding romcoms where few knew they existed
page 34 | by hannah one cup



FOUR WAYS TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT YOUR SHOW

the days of plastering posters on utility poles are over
page 38 | by blazer sparrow



YOUR HIGHNESS

a look at historical figures who got supremely wasted
page 40 | by wombstretcha the magnificent

INSIDE STUFF

EROTIC CITY PG. 18
SPOTLIGHT OF EVENTS PG. 19
EXOTIC PINUP PAGES PG. 24
EXOTIC MAPS (PDX/OR/WA) PG. 28
CLASSIFIEDS PG. 33



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Every Wednesday Night

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STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

I'm sure it comes as little surprise that industry revenue—as a whole—was down across the second half of 2025. Industry businesses are not only seeing less traffic but also less spending by those who do visit, which is a key indicator of a reduction in average discretionary income. The result is quite obvious...cigarettes, a six-pack, and OnlyFans consumed at home, versus heading to the local strip club. It's the natural adaptation. Follow me as we look at some economic indicators and statistics and explore the situation further, along with some possible solutions. (Note: I may incite some microeconomics horror flashbacks from your academic days, but stick with me!)

You may have heard adult businesses being classified as "recession-proof," but that's purely a myth. They are certainly recession-resistant, but by no means completely immune. And I'm not outright saying the US is in a recession, but I'm definitely arguing that certain states are effectively experiencing "recession-level economics," and Oregon is one of them. Comparing the national unemployment rate to Oregon's only further underlines my point: 4.4% nationally, to Oregon's 5.2% (December 2025). One key indicator that economists use to track the onset of a recession is a 0.5% or more increase in the unemployment rate in a three-month moving average, above the 12-month low (Sahm Rule). Oregon's unemployment rate in May 2025 was 4.5%, so we're there, folks, with room to spare. We're also currently experiencing Oregon's highest unemployment rate in the last decade (excluding the pandemic, of course).

It's not all doom and gloom, though. As I referenced above, our beloved industry is very recession-resistant, and we're the last to feel the effects of a bona fide recession—often much less severely than other market segments, such as the automotive and real estate industries. Why, you may ask? Well, quite simply put, we are amongst the likes of tobacco and alcohol, in that we're considered what economists call a normal good or defensive industry—we're always in demand! Sin stock is real, folks. Luxury vacations and expensive dinners get cut well before expenditures on local adult entertainment. We are therapy, in a sense. We provide what's called "escapism" from real-world stress and depression.

That said, there are still plenty of ways to help boost business in a slower economy, and all adult business owners and entertainers should be actively

taking part. Everyone knows where doing nothing and expecting better results leads to.

Social Media Marketing

Entertainers should be consistently working social media, including actively creating posts and stories, and directly communicating with followers. Yes, it's time-consuming, but it definitely helps to maximize your club shifts. We recommend creating specific "dancer accounts" for this, so it's not intermingled with your private life. Also, scheduling a professional photo shoot and gradually releasing new content across your socials is a great way to gain followers and expand your club's customer base. The official *Exotic* photographers (Jason DeSomer of Whatever.Photo and Saint Sasha of Saint Sasha Photography) are available to you as an industry entertainer. Check out their ads on page 33. Also, be careful what you post, so your social media accounts aren't restricted or totally deleted. Instagram, specifically, has been very strict and somewhat inconsistent in flagging many posts as "adult sexual solicitation," even when the photo contains no nudity or soliciting text. Our own magazine covers have been removed under this same scenario.

For adult business owners, you should also be actively participating on social media platforms—especially Instagram, Threads, and TikTok. We've seen a lot less engagement on X and Facebook, but it's still recommended to post across all platforms, and it's relatively easy to set up automatic cross-posting between many of them. If you aren't savvy or feel you don't have the time, recruit one of your trusted entertainers or employees to run your social media accounts. What's important is that there are consistent posts, stories, and engagements with followers. It does nothing to create the pages and then let them die from lack of activity.

Open During Stated Business Hours

There's no faster way to damage your returning customer base than to be closed during your posted business hours. I understand that many businesses in the industry have adjusted their hours and days open to reduce labor costs, but when these changes are made too often or followed inconsistently, they can negatively affect customer retention. It may seem like a good idea to close early on that cold, rainy Wednesday night, when there are only four or five customers present, but it's definitely harmful in the long run when done repeatedly.

Advertising

Alright, you all knew we would get here eventually...but it's a fact. Advertising becomes even more crucial when business is down. And this isn't just to toot *Exotic's* horn. While we are proven to be the most cost-effective and targeted advertising available, I'm advocating for *any* advertising that makes fiscal sense. Obviously, TV, radio, and billboards are quite expensive considering the conversion rate, especially since it's the ol' "shotgun effect" type of advertising, where not everyone reached is a potential customer of your adult business. But there are still local newspapers that are popular among nightlife connoisseurs, one of which still publishes weekly and the other more periodically. The main point is that if the only advertising for your business is on social media, you are limping along at best. *Exotic* has advertising rates and ad sizes to fit any budget, so get in contact with us and let's see what we can work out for your business.

On-Site Events

Specifically for strip clubs, industry events are a great way to attract new customers and entertainers, while boosting sales on the night of the event. It also comes with a plethora of marketing materials that provide greater exposure for your club, including sizable ads in *Exotic*.

Exotic operates two industry events annually: *Miss Exotic Oregon* and *Polerotica*. These events can be somewhat difficult to schedule at your club, as the current hosting venues generally prefer to continue the relationship. However, venue changes do occur over time, so if you're interested in hosting an event round, please let us know!

Aside from our events, DJ Dick Hennessy has quite a few annual events of his own, including *Best Breasts of the West*, *Pirates of the Caribooty*, *Motorbooty*, and the *Vagina Beauty Pageant*. Reach out to him directly if you're interested in knowing more (@djdickhennessy or (503) 380-5800).

At the end of the day, deciding how to market yourself or your business can be challenging, and we're here to help. Even if it doesn't result in selling you an ad, we'd love to discuss specific, relevant marketing options with you, whether you're a business owner or an entertainer. Feel free to reach out to us (@exotic_mag or (503) 241-4317).

THE P-TOWN HAPS

You made it, peeps! You got past the holidays with all the family gatherings, and most of your New Year's resolutions have long since been abandoned—you're back and unchained from inessential, self-imposed regulation. Did you know there's actually a Quitters' Day? It's the second Friday in January, when most folks typically desert their token pledges. I think it should be renamed to Freedom Day... Quitters' Day has negative connotations, and there should only be good vibes in the new year, right? You only have one obstacle to overcome this month...Vaseline's Day! I have faith in you; you will prevail!

It's now time to cover this month's birthdays. The first is not for the breathing, but as I always remind you folks, we cover *all* birthdays...even clubs! Lucky Devil is finally legal! Stop in on Thursday, February 5, and wish them a Happy 18th Anniversary! Next, it's Elayna's Birthday Party on Saturday, February 7, at Guilty Pleasures. Fast forward to Saturday, February 21, it's Ember's Cowboy From Hell Birthday Party at Hawthorne Strip. Wrapping up February birthdays, we have Shane's Birthday Party at Guilty Pleasures on Friday, February 27. Happy Birthday, ladies and "gentleman" (...and Lucky Devil), from all of us at *Exotic*!

On to other industry events, we have a handful of Super Bowl parties—in no particular order...AJ's, Stars Cabaret (Bridgeport), and The Lounge all have such offerings on Sunday, February 8, but we thought it important to note that The Lounge's shindig is titled "Stripper Bowl Party." Cute name? Or do we get to see some stripper football? I guess you'll have to drop by to find out!

The next events are at a brand-new club I wrote about last month. I hope you've already dropped by to check it out, but if not, the Sinners' and Saints' Party weekend is the perfect time. The Sunset Strip VIP will have the Sinners' Party on Friday, February 13, followed by the Saints' Party on Saturday, February 14. Wait, Sinners' before Saints'? More proof that nice guys really do finish last! Anyhow, make sure to drop by and see this beautiful new club! You'll even get a second chance if you're too busy on V-Day weekend, as they're throwing their Official Grand Opening Weekend Party on Friday, February 27, and Saturday, February 28. There are no excuses, now!

Finishing off events for February is everyone's favorite holiday...you guessed it: Love-is-temporary-but-STDs-are-forever Day! Roses and chocolates make everything better, though, so let's do this! On Saturday, February 14, Stars Cabaret (Bridgeport) has a Valentine's Party, Flesh and Bones Lounge has a "Lovers and Friends" Valentine's Day Party, and Stars Cabaret in Salem has a Vampire Valentine's Party.

Last but not least, is Angels' Amateur Night Daisy Duke Contest on Saturday, February 28! Yeehaw—see you there!

Happy Singles' Awareness Day, everyone! ♡♡

Support your local businesses, including every industry business within these pages.

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eroticcity spotlight

SUN 01 – DANTE'S – SINFERNO CABARET

THU 05 – LUCKY DEVIL – 18-YEAR ANNIVERSARY PARTY

SAT 07 – GUILTY PLEASURES – ELAYNA'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

SUN 08 – AJ'S – SUPER BOWL PARTY

SUN 08 – DANTE'S – SINFERNO CABARET

SUN 08 – THE LOUNGE – STRIPPER BOWL PARTY

**SUN 08 – STARS CABARET (BRIDGEPORT)
SUPER BOWL PARTY**

FRI 13 – THE SUNSET STRIP VIP – SINNERS' PARTY

**SAT 14 – FLESH AND BONES
VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY—LOVERS & FRIENDS**

**SAT 14 – STARS CABARET (BRIDGEPORT)
VALENTINE'S PARTY**

**SAT 14 – STARS CABARET (SALEM)
VAMPIRE VALENTINE'S PARTY**

SAT 14 – THE SUNSET STRIP VIP – SAINTS' PARTY

SUN 15 – DANTE'S – SINFERNO CABARET

**SAT 21 – HAWTHORNE STRIP
EMBER'S COWBOYS FROM HELL BIRTHDAY PARTY**

SUN 22 – DANTE'S – SINFERNO CABARET

FRI 27 – GUILTY PLEASURES – SHANE'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

**FRI 27 – THE SUNSET STRIP VIP
OFFICIAL GRAND OPENING WEEKEND PARTY**

SAT 28 – ANGELS – AMATEUR NIGHT DAISY DUKE CONTEST

**SAT 28 – THE SUNSET STRIP VIP
OFFICIAL GRAND OPENING WEEKEND PARTY**

HAPPY HOURS

AJ'S – 10AM-5PM
CABARET – 2PM-6PM
CLUB 205 – 10:30AM-8 PM
DEVILS POINT – 3PM-6PM
DESIRE – 6PM-9PM

DV8 – 12PM-3PM
GUILTY PLEASURES – 12PM-8PM
THE LOUNGE – 11AM-4PM
LUCKY DEVIL – 3PM-6PM



TALES FROM THE DJ BOOTH

BY DJ HAZMATT

12 RULES FOR STRIPPING

As stated before, I'm here to make you, the stripper, money. Last month, I spent two pages telling strippers to cater their music to the crowd. This month, I'm proposing a controversial, problematic, patriarchy-infused, I-thought-he-was-one-of-the-good-ones, can't-believe-we-fucked-in-2013 take: the market determines your income, and it's made up of people who might not find you attractive, so you should focus on finding out how to navigate the preferences of the average customer.

I expect backlash. CashApp me (\$RayRaysPhone) with a message, and I will reply with an apology, depending on the amount sent.

Rule 2: Get In Where You (Literally) Fit in

Personally speaking, I'm not a fan of mainstream preferences. I earned my DJ chops in goth/industrial clubs, playing goth/industrial bands. If you aren't familiar with the genre, it makes Nine Inch Nails seem like pop music—dark, drab, grinding rhythms, with abrasive effects and haunting vocals. Industrial (especially the earlier stuff) is raw nightmare fuel, and only a small portion of the population enjoys it. To fans of the genre, I would be considered a good DJ. However, if I landed a gig at a popular, mainstream nightclub and then decided to throw on some Sleep Chamber or Skinny Puppy, I would likely never be invited back (personal apologies to the Sorensen wedding). So, even as someone who appreciates the spookier side of Spotify, I understand that if I'm DJ'ing at a mainstream club, the crowd will usually appreciate mainstream music. I'm not there to lecture anyone about their tastes, convince techno fans to give KMFDM a chance, or inform hip-hop heads about the influence of Kraftwerk on early rap. In other words, it's not about my own personal musical tastes, but rather, my professional ability to provide the club with services that justify my fee. If I want to show off my goth/industrial skills, I do so at a goth/industrial club (shout out to Hive for being the longest-running night of said genre

in Portland).

At a mainstream nightclub, I don't get to determine what kind of music the crowd appreciates. On the same, exact, specific, barely-analogy, literally-the-truth token, customers at the strip club have their own preferences where physical attractiveness and body type are concerned, and you, the stripper, do not get to dictate what your customers find attractive. Whether the fault of basic biological instincts, societal norms, or the internet for convincing men to have a type, there is a universal understanding of what straight dudes (and gay dudes, straight girls, lesbians, and everyone else, for that matter) find attractive. As a stripper, it would behoove you to acknowledge that you cannot change this.

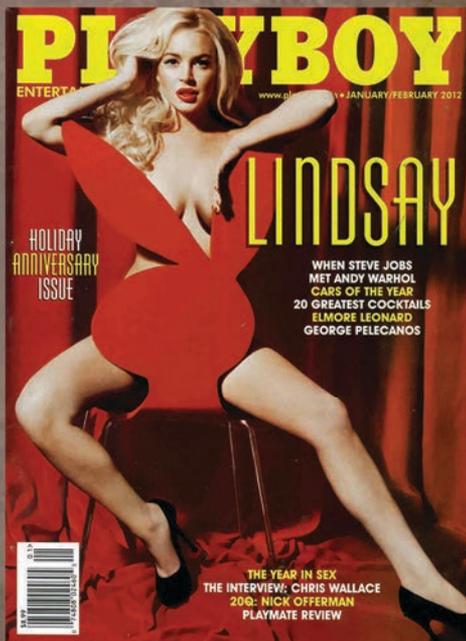
While emotionally comforting and academically justified, the idea that some grand council of evil men determines what males find attractive is an entirely false assumption. When we talk about "beauty standards," it's easy to attribute said standards to societal norms. Sadly, this is simply not the case, and it's notably ironic that a lot of the same folks who insist that attraction is a choice (determined in part by advertisements and politicians) don't realize that only a couple of decades ago, the phrase "you cannot choose who you are attracted to" was a progressive concept. "Men should unlearn their attraction to [insert Playmate of the Year archetype here]" is no different than pastors who think conversion therapy works on gay dudes. There are hundreds of studies that have demonstrated that, cross-culturally, from Kenya to Seattle, from the era of cave-men to NFTs, straight males of all races, ages, and backgrounds find the same demographic of women (early 20s) to be the most attractive (meaning 22-25 years old, not women from the 1920s). Aside from age, qualities like symmetry and "visible signs of fertility" (read: perky, healthy, etc.) are also commonly shared signs of attractiveness. Literally every beauty product and cosmetic procedure on the market

serves to mimic hive-brain signifiers of fertility. And, to us guys, this almost feels like sorcery. Attraction is not a choice. Men's brains are not, in any way, attached to our genitals. If I could make a conscious decision to find wealthy, retired women in their 80s attractive, your boy would be living in a mansion right now. Hell, most men would be dating other men. But, we can't, so we spend money we don't have on women we shouldn't respect, simply because "booty tight, nice smile, round chest." If I had a dollar for every bad idea on paper I took to bed because my lower half told me to, I'd be debt-free.

At this point in the article, if you are a more progressive dancer, I'd be surprised if you weren't a bit agitated, assuming I'm about to go into some rant about how fat girls in their fifties shouldn't strip. However, before you crumple up the pages of this magazine (and/or website, depending on where you're reading it), please back up to the point I made in the first paragraph—as a professional DJ, my ideal genre of music is one that very few people appreciate. However, among the people who appreciate it, they *absolutely fucking love it*. Just because the mainstream doesn't appreciate something doesn't mean it's not good—in fact, the more flavor or spice something has, the less likely it is to be absorbed by the masses, while still being the favorite selection among a specific demographic. Not a lot of people like goth/industrial music, but when I DJ goth/industrial nights, I can always expect a loyal handful of dedicated enthusiasts to be at the club. This is where the mainstream fails, because things may be hot one year and dead the next. But, sadly, the mainstream audience will always be the largest at any given moment in time. Do people still listen to the clap-stomp mustached irony of the barn hipster variety? I hope not. But for a few months in 2018, you could fill a dance floor with that god-awful Edward Sharpe song about Alabama being located somewhere in Arkansas. So, at that moment in time, it was beneficial to pander to the faux-lk

genre. Sadly, however, the “mainstream” preferences of most men have not changed since 420 B.C.

Still, the masses dominate in numbers, but the off-genres dominate in dedication. Think of food. You’ve got mainstream burgers and tacos and whatnot, but then you have that dumpy little Thai food place in the strip mall that hasn’t passed a health inspection since Bush was in office. It doesn’t try to compete with McDonald’s. It doesn’t blame the Trump administration for slow days. It won’t make passive-aggressive comments on social media about how Panda Express is ruining society. Instead, it just stays in its own lane and caters to a loyal crowd that appreciates sketchy Thai food (including yours truly—also, it’s called Thai Dish, and it’s located in Silverton on the main drag). And for those of us who appreciate it, there’s no alternative. We will ride until we die (guessing ten, maybe twenty years tops for the owner, so give the place a try...I prefer the orange chicken).



Back to the lecture at hand, the vast majority of mainstream strip club clientele appreciates the same thing: hot, young, symmetrical girls who could pose for Playboy, back when it was a legitimate publication. I’m not saying to quit your job as a stripper if you’re not built like a cheerleader. What I’m saying is, accept and embrace that cheerleaders hold a monopoly on the frat boys.

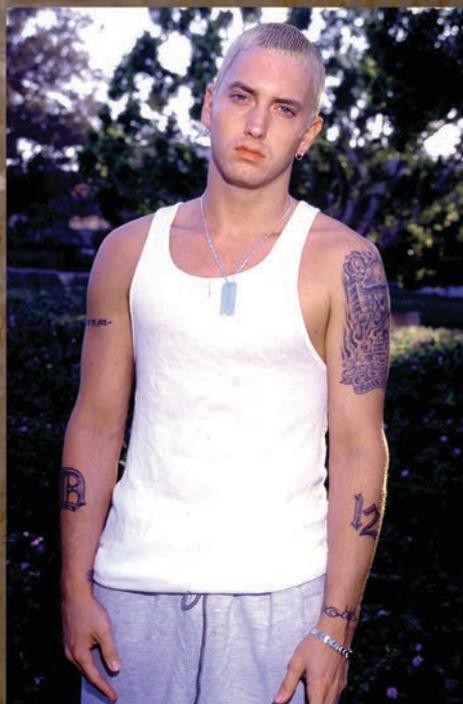
So, what do you do as a larger, older, unique-looking, bit-too-tall, shaved-head-to-get-back-at-the-ex, over-the-hill dancer who likes disco music and hates societal beauty standards? Find your lane and *own that shit*. Do not get mad if regulars at your club aren’t throwing

money at you. Instead, find a club where customers throw money at girls like you. There is an audience for absolutely every type of dancer, but only if you find said audience. If you’re a purple-haired anarcho-whatever dancing at Mainstream Mike’s on Blonde Bikini Car Wash Night, don’t be surprised if your tips aren’t the same as Sorority Sister Sarah’s. Instead, find a club with regulars who appreciate your genre. There are roughly 6,700 strip clubs in Portland. Find one where you shine.

Book yourself like a goth/industrial DJ. Find where your niche is appreciated, and get in.

Or (and possibly in addition to the above), consider what steps you can take to appeal to “the MaLe GaZe” (that pesky thing responsible for the survival of our species). Grow the hair back out (he doesn’t even look at your stories). Lose some weight. Dial back the “fuck you, dad” piercings, and begin to resemble the girl your ex cheated on you with. Trust me, it’s gonna be tough for a bit, but I’m speaking as someone who has learned to play Creed and Taylor Swift at DJ gigs. Does it kill me a bit on the inside? You bet. But, do you know who really appreciates it? My wallet. I can’t pay my rent by saying “...actually, bro, this band inspired the one you just requested.” I pay my rent on small town girls, lonely worlds, and drunk Caucasians. Whether. Or. Not. I. Like. It. However, when I want to blast Sisters of Mercy at full volume, I book a goth/industrial club—somewhere that would kick me out if I played to the mainstream crowd.

We all have a lane, but it might not be on the freeway.



Exceptions to the rule always exist. The most popular rapper of the last twenty years is a white kid from a trailer park. Black Republicans run rampant on Twitter. I’m in my mid-40s and get away with saying “6, 7” (like I even know what it means). You don’t have to measure up to mainstream beauty standards to be a successful stripper. But by acknowledging they exist, you will do yourself a huge favor.

I’ve had several dancers tell me that they failed to make money because the crowd “didn’t appreciate them.” No, honey—you didn’t appreciate the crowd.

If you need any further proof, take a look at any porn site’s list of categories. Mainstream preferences will dominate the list (blonde, big tits, knows where she wants to fucking eat before getting in the car, girl-girl, etc.), but there’s still plenty of room for “mature” or “trans” or “Asian” but not the regular kind I mean more like the North Korea kind but I don’t want to be on a list so label it as just Asian” or “redhead.” Alternative tastes have dedicated crowds. This is why Juggalos have outlasted Dave Matthews Band fans.

There are more strip clubs in Portland than there are black guys who like Radiohead, and Portland is the capital of black guys who like Radiohead, so *there is a club for every type*. If you have a tattoo of a steak, don’t dance at Casa Diablo, go with Acrop. If you have a tattoo that says “Vegan 4 Life,” don’t dance at Acrop—go to Casa Diablo. If you’re gender queer, Bob’s Sports & Snatch might not be your market, but you will make bank at the Kit-N-Kaboodle night at Kit Kat Club. If you’re missing a leg, get a time machine and go to Beavers Inn on 82nd. Portland may not be L.A. huge, but it’s a giant black dot on a Google map, and there’s a venue for absolutely every genre of stripper.

All I’m saying is that you’ve got limited time in this industry, so find a way to celebrate whatever your body type is without banging your head against the evolutionary-biology wall. Trust me, as a middle-aged, self-identified Juggalo DJ with man boobs and a video game collection, I’m not exactly lining up to compete in *Who Wants to Fuck an Optimal Adult Male*. However, I’ve learned to find what type of women appreciate a guy like me (absent father, in recovery for substances, bad sense of humor), and I’m currently happier than I’ve ever been.

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I don’t check Facebook.

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Tue 8pm-2:30am, Wed-Sun 2:30pm-2:30am

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Daily 11am-2am

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DESIRE 11 **FOOD LOTTERY**
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5305 SE Foster Rd | (503) 774-4513
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DOMINIQUE STELLA 14 **FOOD**
15826 SE Division St | (503) 319-0318
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Daily 4pm-2:30am

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Daily 24 hours

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Daily 24 hours

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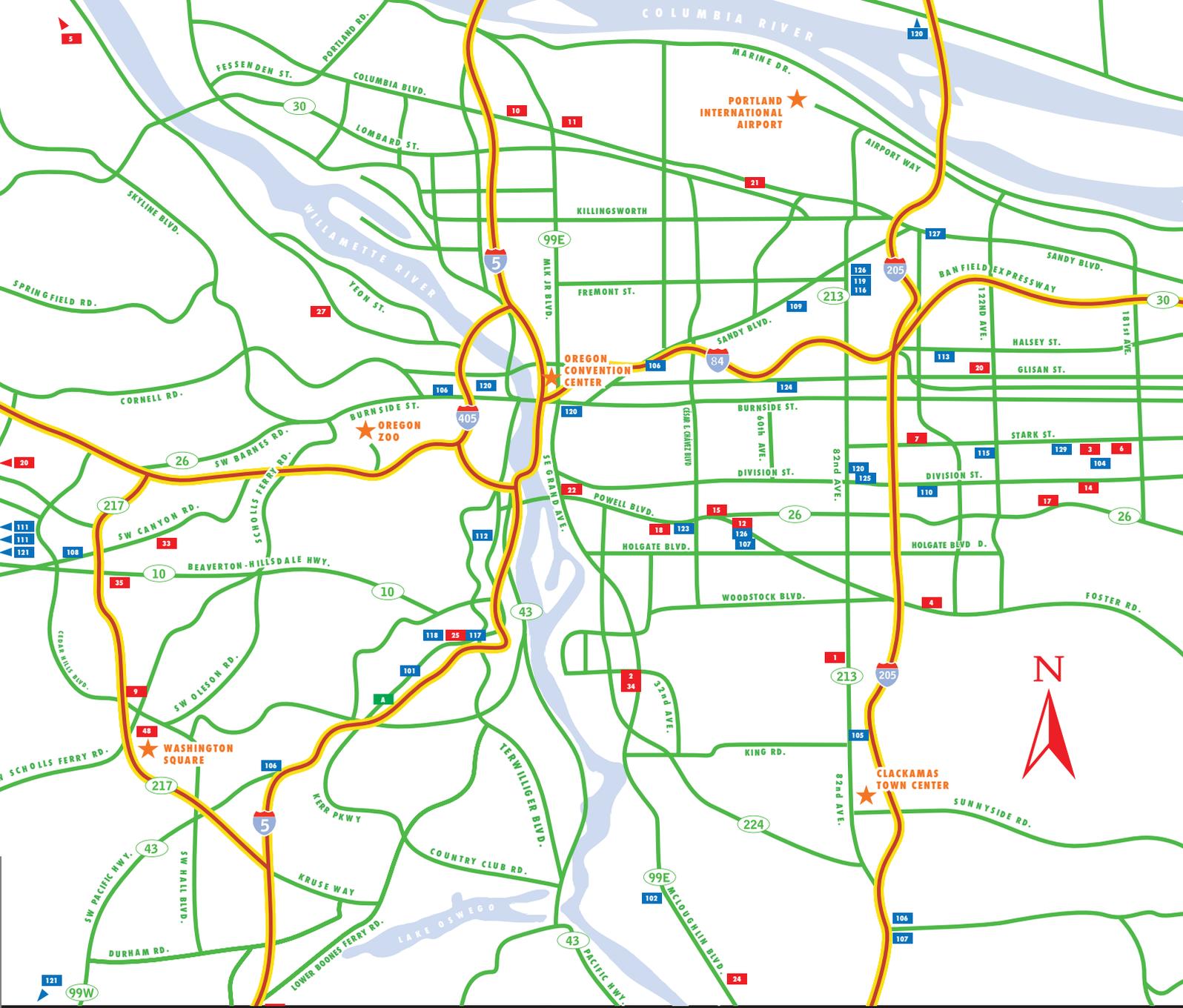
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MOVIES YOU DIDN'T THINK HAD ROMANCE

(but Totally Did) BY HANNAH ONE CUP

It's a well-known fact that the first Alien movie isn't considered a science fiction film, so much as it is a horror film. But did you know that the entire Alien series is also a romcom? If you search your feelings, you'll know it to be the truth. Now, I'm talking about the original Alien films, not the ones with Michael Fassbender as everyone's favorite, lovable android duo, Walter and David. Those films had obvious romantic storylines involved. But the original films might be something you didn't actively consider as a romcom until you read it in this article. You're thinking, "absolutely not, where is this coming from? You're just trying to write something for Valentine's Day." Well, part of that is true, but the other part is something I'll just have to prove to you. And I plan to, in the upcoming list of films you probably never considered as romance films. Starting with the aforementioned...



He's quiet, contemplative, and emotionally available... on Tuesdays

Alien (OG series) – It wasn't just the original film that made this a romcom; it has to be the entire original series. The one with the wacky, nine-lives cat, Jones, and Ripley, who is the ruddy, sexy, androgynous human they hate the least out of everyone in space. The first film, *Alien*, Jones shows us their hard-to-get personality by hiding from everyone on board when they go looking for him. Jones

doesn't really want to be found by anyone, other than Ripley, whom he lets grab them up. He doesn't even give a fuck that people died trying to find him. Jones ends up sharing a cryotube with the love of their life, Ripley. Honestly, though, I want to say that Ripley also has strong romantic feelings towards Jones, but obviously, Ripley is the perfect example of anti-social, asexual behaviors in an extremely attractive host. Almost a shame. But that's what makes this duo like water and oil, or an old married couple. Since Ripley takes Jones with her on the next adventure in *Aliens*, but smartly leaves him behind, like a cattle rancher leaving his wife, while she deals with moon shit. She tells Jonesey she'll be back, and Jones takes in pets and mentally says something like "yeah right, ok...you better". The following films did not contain the physical Jones presence, but their presence was there nonetheless in Ripley's heart, and in ours as well.

Silence of the Lambs – You can't tell me all the meet-cutes, facial closeness, and mouth noises made on Hannibal Lecter's side don't scream "romance." The tension between Hannibal and Clarice is palpable. Hannibal offers his protection at one point, after Clarice has a run-in with another inmate. That's the kind of guy you'd go bragging to your dad about, but maybe not bring home for obvious reasons. Clarice and Lecter are intellectual matches in heaven. Lecter loathes the men who objectify Clarice, as he really just wants to pick her brain...probably quite literally. Instead of dining on Clarice (who is treated like the forbidden fruit to him), he chooses to call her on graduation day and ask her not to look for him. Just like any bad boy would. Now... would you just leave something like that out in the wind to never return to? Probably not, I'd say. If the end of the film had done what it was supposed to, Clarice and Lecter would have lived happily ever after together, in another country, dining on fine meats and head cheeses, from exotic and local sources.

Mad Max (Fury Road) – Max and Furiosa obviously get off to a bad start, on a bumpy road, with Max being all gun-crazy and threatening to shoot Furiosa. Furiosa was making her vehicle into the scariest porcu-

pine you could imagine, all to keep out love... don't be fooled. Furiosa is just as afraid of being betrayed by others as she is of physical dangers, which I think is well depicted in the kind of vehicle she trucks around. But at the end of the day, both Max and Furiosa needed each other to survive at multiple points. Even though Max always claims to be something like... "a lone wolf" or some crap, he goes back to help the lunatic Furiosa, even giving her a blood transfusion at some point! Something I'd absolutely be more terrified of than any sharp object or gun being pointed at me, honestly. But besides all the hygiene not being accounted for, you would say something like... "awwwwwww, how sweet. Two disgusting, unbathed survivors who obviously were meant for each other." How sweet.



He's rugged, resourceful, and ready to commit... unless there's a briefcase full of cash involved

Barbie – I wouldn't say this is totally out of left field, but obviously, Barbie isn't exactly known for her romantic feelings, and quite frankly, even as a doll, she seemed to always be lukewarm towards Ken. The film shows this beautifully. However, what you might not be thinking about during the film is how Barbie is really just too innocent to understand Ken's feelings towards her. Ken, on the other hand, has no idea what he is supposed to want out of a relationship, which then draws Ken

into a confusing love affair with things of power...like horses? I think Ken, and his obsession with horses, were mainly due to the simplistic nature of not needing to understand where you stand with them, and the fact that you don't have to be jealous of not having sleepovers with them at their mansions. "Men and horses are just meant to be," was Ken's final thought, until Barbie came in and changed how he thought about life (again), and somewhat drew him back into this make-believe "will they, won't they" situation (it's always "won't they"). Oh, unrequited love.

Some honorable mentions which I'll allow you, the audience, to give your own opinion on: *Birdman*, *Gladiator*, *Lighthouse*, *Gone Girl*, *The Departed*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Oppenheimer*, *A Quiet Place*, *The Revenant*, and last, but not least, *Parasite*. The only movie I actually was unable to find a shred of romance in, or a semblance of romantic aspects, was *No Country For Old Men*...



**He's got great hair,
a quiet charm,
and a coin that
decides your
romantic fate**

but when I think about it more, it makes it all the more hilarious to consider a good laugh track and some typical Fox network TV show background music put into it. Maybe turning it into some dating show.

Anyway, this was my short list of movies you could consider when trying to come up with a romantic movie to watch on "Valentine's Day," or whatever. Or just watch another movie and give consideration into how it could be flipped into a romcom. It really opens your eyes to a whole new, yet-to-be-discovered genre of film.

Hannah One Cup can be found trying to decide which of the characters from *NCFOM* she would date, while arguing that all of the *Terminator* movies are equally a sort of romance film, especially *Dark Fate*...that's a real romcom.

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FOUR WAYS TO

SPREAD THE WORD

by Blazer Sparrow

ABOUT YOUR SHOW

For this next joke, I was seeing some friends perform at Mississippi Studios. A few songs in, they asked the audience for a show of hands as to who heard about the show from the posters they printed and plastered all over town. One hand shot up—just one. The singer laughed and gave the sole respondent shit, because he lived with the singer.



You would probably also think that folks living with musicians would be well aware of their roommates' upcoming recitals, particularly at such a prestigious venue. You would be wrong. There is no one who cares less about a local musician's dalliances than the folks living or dating them.

But I digress.

Although the singer played it for laughs, I'm sure they were flabbergasted at the utter waste of time, paper, and money it took to print out the bazillion or so posters I saw plastered over every telephone pole from the venue to the uncivilized borderlands past 82nd Avenue.

To be fair, I'm sure a bunch of people in the audience saw this poster. They just saw it online...the telephone pole for the digital age.

It begs the question of whether or not physical posters are even necessary anymore. There were a lot of people at that show. Really? Not one of them was made aware of this show from a poster in a record store or a grocery co-op?

To be clear, I love the art of local band posters, ever since I was first made aware of them as a teen in the Bay Area. Especially for punk shows, where poster art was integral to the scene. Bands trying to one-up each other with the cleverness of the obscure tv show or movie still used for the background. Great stuff.

Great, but obsolete.

We are losing the world's forests at a record pace. Based on current events and who's in charge in the places that count, that's unlikely to change. The waste of paper is no longer tenable. I'm sure those poor, tired record shop owners and baristas are sick of you asking them, yet again, if you can leave a stack of fliers on their counter. A stack that no one will touch. A stack they'll have to throw away the day after the show. Plus, our cities' telephone poles have had enough. Just look at those staple graveyards. It's a horrible site.

Here are four new, effective, and environmentally friendly ways to spread the word about your show.

Start a Phone Tree

A poster, whether on a telephone or someone's social media feed, is passive. You need to *actively* tell people about your show. By calling them! On the telephone! Hard data and rigorous research have shown that people—especially young people—*love* get-



ting phone calls. Also, you can use this trick that the boomers won't shut up about. A phone tree! After you call an unsuspecting victim (cough) friend and regale them with details about your upcoming performance, tell *them* to call three of their friends with the same info. It'll spread like wildfire, see, and then everyone in town will know about your show at the local dive bar.



Take Out Ads in Your Local Paper

See, the problem is, your little poster is on things that people don't look at: telephone poles, the window of a coffee shop, the counter at Guitar Center. But you know

where every eyeball in town is looking at? That's right, your local newspaper! That money you're spending on ink and paper to print out a bunch of little fliers and posters...why not just put that money towards buying an ad in a medium that is not dying at all, no sir. The very periodical you're reading right now sells ad space. On the cheap! Give them a call, put that cute little poster somewhere people will actually see it!



Bribe a Local Stripper

Speaking of things that people in this sad city look at all day... the many fine pairs of tits we have to offer! Ya see, people are only gonna go to your show if they think there's something in it for them. The only reason The Strokes took off was because Julian Casablancas's dad ran a modeling agency and literally paid girls to attend their early gigs. Word spread, and soon everyone wanted to check out this new band, where there were tons of hot chicks to hit on. So, aspiring little rock star, spend that money you were gonna spend on killing trees on your local flesh peddler, so *they* can tell their customers about your show. These poor gals are constantly being asked "what they're doing after work" by patrons. I think for some extra cash, they can lie and say they're gonna be at their new favorite local band's show. The strippers don't even need to show up! Just tell their customers. Now, your show is gonna be jam-packed. Jam-packed with sad rubes, yes, but jam-packed nonetheless!

And finally, and here's the thing you should *actually* do to spread the word about your band's next appearance:

Don't

Literally no one cares about your show at the local dive bar, and they never will. Please stop bothering your friends and coworkers, and the poor grad students at the coffee shop, desperately trying to study to secure the financial stability you will never know. Just text your circle of degenerates and be grateful if any of them come. Them, plus the members of the other bands playing, is the only audience you'll ever know. Get used to it.



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Drugs. We all kinda have to appreciate them. They can cure illness, treat conditions, or clear up that rash on your anus. That said, they can also get you high as fuck, and so far out of your head you might as well be living on a whole different planet. Many people throughout history have been into getting loaded, but mostly, they're not people of note. However, there have been a great deal of people in positions of significant power, who did enjoy gettin' lifted. Kings, queens, nobles, and dignitaries. People whose affairs were well documented, unlike Steve, who lives down the street and has been stoned since he was 13, but didn't keep records. Yes, elites have always pushed boundaries, because what are you exactly going to do about it? "My King, perhaps you shouldn't be getting high before you receive the Queen of the Netherlands?" "Appreciate your counsel, Reginald, but I am totally hooting this pipe."

Sorted in no particular order.

Queen Isabella the First, of Castile (1451 - 1504)

Okay, yes, she unified Spain and funded a voyage for an Italian who thought he was going to Asia, but got waylaid by finding this whole new continent. "Yeah, this is Asia, fellas." "Those people approaching us do not look like Asians." "What do you know about Asians, man? Maybe they just look like that?" "Have

you ever even *been* to Asia?" "I...think so." The queen was fairly pleased when Columbus returned and said he found some totally cool shit, and claimed it in the name of Spain. But she was high as fuck, so who even knows? "Oh, a new world, you say? Well then, thanks, I think. I have to return to my, uh, duties, yeah, that's it." She had her tea made with opium. *A lot* of opium, and she drank it pretty much all day. Oh, and she also liked weed. Yup, good ol' Mary Jane, like modern people consume.



I can't name a single person I know who uses opium, but I know a shitload of people who like marijuana. In addition to that, she also drank a distillation of mandrake root every day. What is mandrake root? Well, it's a highly toxic plant

that makes you hallucinate and might possibly kill you. As the root resembles the shape of a human, they thought it screamed when picked. She was okay with this, and so basically, when she went into diplomatic negotiations with other countries, she was seeing shit which did not exist, and yet managed to carry on all the same. She also used a plant called henbane. Henbane is another plant that people should not be consuming. It is full of psychoactive alkaloids and causes severe hallucinations, if it doesn't kill you. I can't even imagine being, say, the king of France, and then discussing alliances and realizing you are talking to someone who is gacked out of her gourd.

King Charles the Second of Navarre. AKA King Charles the Bad. (1332 - 1387)

You know that when people refer to you as "the bad," you probably earned that. That said, he didn't get that nickname because he was some kind of evil king; he was fairly nice, but he got the moniker because he made really dumb decisions. He's "the bad" because he did a bad job. While high. You see, Charles here was a firm believer in alchemy. Alchemy was what they sort of thought science was supposed to be in medieval times. He kept a council of alchemists, who were saying to themselves, "Well, the King is stressed, let's make him a



potion with opium and hallucinogenic plants! That'll do the trick!" They also managed to get him some sort of inhalable powder, not cocaine, because they didn't even know what an America was, let alone a South America. It's not really known what that powder was, but after he took it, he tried to negotiate an alliance with a rug on his wall.

**Frederick the Second,
Holy Roman Emperor
(1194 - 1250)**

This guy started out as the king of Sicily. Then he was the king of Germany. Then he was the king of Italy.



Then he was apparently the King of Jerusalem. Eventually, the world said

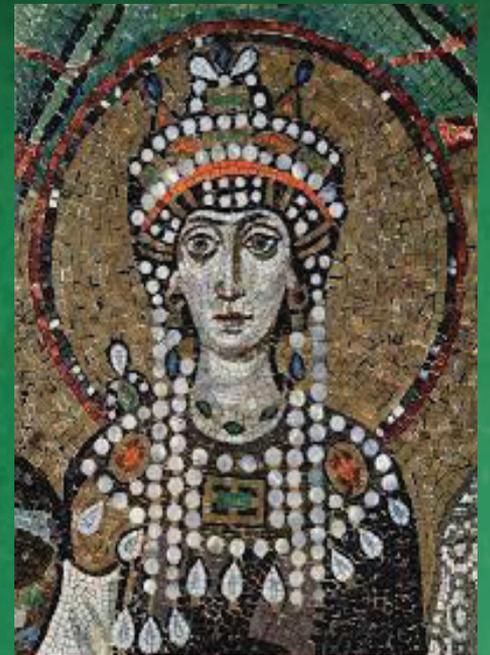
"fuck it," and he was the Holy Roman Emperor. The Holy Roman Empire was neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire, but people just called it that. He was big on drugs. He wanted to be the best damn emperor that he could be. So, what did he do? Why, he surrounded himself with scholars and so-called physicians, who would make him all sorts of potions, tonics, and tinctures.

He even imported people from the Islamic countries because "they gud," and had them all put to work making him potions, studying astronomy, and learning mathematics. Hope those guys got paid well. He was a fan of "aromatic resins," which were basically just hashish, "inhale the smoke, my King," and "herbal vapors," which were used by Arabian doctors to sedate patients. It did not sedate him. It made him really high and talkative, though. He was a very large enthusiast of being high as fuck all the time. He'd start his day with a "healthy" potion of who knows what, and he would have private conversations with angels, which made his advisors quite nervous. He died at the ripe old age of 55, after four wives, one being Isabella the Second. Apparently, he wanted a wife to do drugs with. He also wrote down records of his tripping. Fucker totally was watching his bath towels breathe, and decided to make it a public memo of record.

**Empress Theodora
(500 - 548)**

The wife of Justinian 2, the actual Roman emperor. She was kinda a ho. She'd put on performances where she would let birds eat seeds off her naked body. At a point in time, she was to visit a notable political figure, and decided to just strip down to nudity for fun. I can sort of get behind that, but I have no idea what Justinian 2 thought of it. Probably something like "Aw, she's doing that again." She was known to "burn incense," and what that meant at the time was not the stuff your witchy aunt sets ablaze, but blue lotus resin. Sounds pretty bland, but it is actually a very potent hallucinogen, which was infused with opium. She had it burning in every

room at all times. She also used cannabis oils when she was deep in prayer to the gods. Suffice it to say, she was quite high. She was not smoking it, but when it burns in every room to the point that the priests think the gods are talking to them, maybe take a break.



However, she did not. MORE INCENSE! So, I guess, basically everyone in her palace was just absolutely lit.

So it's not just your uncle Carl who was constantly focused on getting high. Many nobles, kings, queens, and other such folks in the past were quite about it. Boundless power and money apparently make your daily intoxication regimen completely acceptable.

Stay healthy, friends.

-Wombstretcha

Wombstretcha the Magnificent is not of noble birth, but is a hashish toilet puck enthusiast, Twizler fan, writer, and retired rapper from Portland, OR. He can be found at his website, wombstretcha.com, on Twitter/X/whatever as @wombstretcha503, on MeWe, and (begrudgingly) Facebook, as "Wombstretcha the Magnificent."



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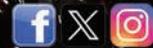
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