



## **Class Overview**

**Title:** My Grandma Was an Exotic Dancer?!

**Presented by:** Leslie Cunningham

**Class Description:** A look at early Black Burlesque through a glimpse into the lives of the Bates Sisters, three brown-skin showgirls who helped innovate exotic dance from the American carnival stage.

**Delivery Format:** In-Person and Virtual class includes a 28:00 pre-recorded docu/storytelling video; 20+ minutes of discussion questions (4 total); 10+minute review/questions.

**Audience:** global audience interested in American entertainment history, Black life, Women's Studies, and Dance history.

**Prerequisites:** None, informational

**Virtual class access needs:** Internet for streaming and viewing a 28:00 video via computer or mobile phone; a class journal for answering discussion questions if you are watching this presentation alone.

**Class Objectives:**

1. Meet the Bates sisters who helped innovate exotic dance.
2. Learn about their influences, like the Cotton Club and legendary exotic dancers.
3. Consider a brief history of exotic dance.
4. Discover how the Bates sisters left their mark from the American carnival stage.

**Class Outline:**

1. Class Introduction
2. Meet the Bates Sister
3. Dance Influences
4. Exotic Dance History
5. Leaving a Mark on Burlesque
6. Discussion Questions
7. Review

**Discussion Questions:** (5-minutes each to be discussed in a group or the individual student can journal their thoughts)

1. Does exotic dance, striptease and burlesque mean the same thing?
2. Who are some of your burlesque artist/exotic dancer influences?
3. How do you think our society views burlesque performers, exotic dancers and striptease artists today?
4. How do you feel about this burlesque history and what does the future hold for exotic dance?

**Review Questions:**

1. What did you learn?
2. What stood out for you about the video presentation?
3. What did you find relevant as it relates to your current art forms?
4. Do you have any questions?

**Presenter Contact Information:**

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## **Introduction**