

RAYMONDS REVUE BAR – MY EXPERIENCE OF

INTRODUCTION

This was the most famous strip club in Britain, where about 8 girls (and 1 lad) would put on superb performances.

In its heyday it helped make Paul Raymond one of the richest men in the country.

Round about the turn of the Millenium, its popularity was waning, and it closed down in about 2004. (Places like this were being replaced by ‘Standard’ Lap Dancing Clubs – see below.)

(It was about 1999 that I started going there.)

My article about my visits to Raymonds Revue Bar is quite long – it now follows:

ARTICLE 1

Note 1: *For the purposes of this article, we can consider that sexual repression is what happens when a person's sexual needs are not fully satisfied. Sexual repression, for one thing, results in a reduced 'life force'.*

Note 2: *This article was mainly written for a male readership, but it is true to say that women seem these days to be far more excited by (the female version of) the type of event written about, than men do. Therefore I*

am sure the article will be of just as much interest to women.

RAYMONDS REVUE BAR

As a young man, I found that when I didn't have a girlfriend, I often was unable to make much of an impression on new girls that I met – not so much as I had done when I had a partner.

I'm sure it was due to sexual repression. Therefore I think that, especially when one is without a girlfriend, one needs to see what one can do to combat this.

(I'll talk from the point of view of men) – and give a little bit of defence of (or indeed some praise and recommendation of) 'erotica'.

Surely, to be heterosexual, partly means that we find a good looking woman who is naked very attractive in some way.

About the best way that I can define the phrase ‘sex-phobic’ (analogous to aggression-phobic as described elsewhere in my writing) is to say that it is a denial of that.

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And I am going to say that just as those in the encounter group movement of the eighties thought we had an aggression-phobic society, it could be said that today we have a very sex-phobic one.

Of course, there have always been a lot of people – for example, religious people – who have thought that women should be ‘modest’. There have always been a lot of people who

have very much looked down on glamour models, for instance.

But when I say that we are becoming very much a 'sex-phobic' society, I am going much further than that. Very much further indeed.

I can't quite say in one paragraph, really, exactly what I mean. All I can do is give a few examples. Everything is relative – and I shall quite often compare 'the situation' as I see it now, with what it was like, as I remember it, about 25 years ago.

Until about 20 years ago, I was quite religious and felt very guilty about anything in the way of 'erotica', but after I rejected Christianity, felt that guilt no more.

I bought a few girlie magazines first of all, and these helped to relax me – made me feel less tense – in other words helped me feel much better.

But eventually, wanting some ‘real live action’, I decided to go to a strip club in London. Probably the main reason why I didn’t make this decision sooner was my finances. I’ve always hated staying in the whole evening and watching television or whatever, but I knew that if I went to London, even once a fortnight, it would come to that quite often (because I wasn’t very well off).

But anyway, in the end I decided to go – to hell with the financial consequences.

The only place I had heard of was Raymond’s Revue Bar – it had been advertised – a full

back page advert sometimes, in one of the girlie magazines I bought.

Also, I had read an article about it once which I was sure had mentioned that there were afternoon performances,

So I decided to go on a Thursday afternoon. Obviously it didn't really matter to me what performance I went to, and I thought it would be easier to get a ticket for an afternoon performance.

When I got there about 1.30, the place was all shut up. I found out that there were 2 performances a day – 8pm and 10pm. Also that the box office didn't open till 5pm.

My hopes sank quite a bit, actually. I thought it was unlikely that I'd get a ticket. But I

decided to go along when the box office opened anyway.

I had taken quite a lot of money, and I went to a local pub and had maybe 3 drinks, though a couple of them were cokes, for obvious reasons.

I needn't have worried about ticket availability at all. When I got to the box office just after 5, the man asked me if I wanted a front-row seat.

I decided to take a seat 3 or 4 rows back – they were a bit less expensive. But I was very surprised that I had the chance of practically any seat I wanted – and I hadn't even expected to get a seat at all. Bear in mind that Raymond's Revue Bar is one of the most famous strip clubs in the world.

So anyway, back to the pub for a couple more drinks (the seat I bought was £20, or maybe £25, by the way).

I went back to the Revue Bar about 25 minutes before the performance was due to start – I was probably the first or second person there.

The music was good – quite loud, and I began to get quite excited with the anticipation. It was the first time I'd done anything like this.

I ordered a drink – served by a waiter. It was a bit more expensive than a pub, but not exorbitant (about £3.50 for a bottle of Budweiser, I think) – I had been used to nightclubs charging well over double pub prices for drinks when in my twenties – so I was actually quite pleasantly surprised.

More people arrived in the next quarter of an hour or so, of course, but really not that many.

The performance started about a quarter of an hour late (as I came to discover was normal). I'm not really good at describing things like that – the performance, I mean – it's not the kind of writing I'm best at.

But it was stunning. Those girls – there were about 7 of them – were gorgeous. I had very rarely seen such beautiful women.

Though I am certainly no expert at all, they all seemed very talented dancers to me. (There was one man too, by the way – I was to find out that there were quite often a few women in the audience.)

The costumes were amazing too - though for quite a lot of the time – much more time than I had dared hope, the girls were effectively naked.

(Incidentally, there was quite a bit of ‘aggression’ in some of the dancing too.)

I suppose the total performance time, compared to, say, a ‘normal’ West End theatre, wasn’t that great. The performance was over just after 9.30 and there was about a 10 minute interval – so I suppose the performance time wasn’t much more than an hour.

But when you think that for a significant amount of it you’ve got 2 or 3 girls perhaps – sometimes all the dancers, dancing very provocatively without a stitch on, just a few

feet away from you – well I had no complaints at all. I thought it was incredible value.

But the crazy thing was that there couldn't have been more than 30 or 40 customers. And there never really were many more than that – which meant that the theatre was just about always only a quarter full or less – though I suppose the later performance might well have been busier. But I just couldn't understand it at all. (Also a high percentage of them tended to be foreign – obviously tourists – quite a lot were Japanese I think. There really were very few ordinary British people indeed.)

(I am sure that 15 years before this, a place like this would have been jam-packed nearly every night.)

So – I very greatly enjoyed my first visit to Raymond’s Revue Bar – but the best thing about it was still to come.

This was because the next day I felt like a new man. I hadn’t felt so good in many years. My friends, especially the regulars at the pub I went to about 3 times a week, noticed the difference too. Overnight I became more confident and less tense.

I want to come back later and say something about the reaction of the people I knew (especially those in the pub), to what I told them.

Going back now to say something about there being so few customers at Raymond’s Revue Bar.

I just couldn't believe it, to be honest, and here's why. I hadn't at this time really been a part of a large group of maybe a dozen men, socialising together, for some while. But at one time it was quite common (e.g. after football training). And I always felt that I had quite good insight – that I could 'suss people out' quite well.

Anyway, suppose, then, that I was amongst this group of about a dozen men, in a pub after football training, say. And suppose that the question was put to us, that we could either go to a strip club show like the one I've just described, or to a top level football match – my instinct would be that it would be about half and half – half a dozen would like the idea of the strip club, and the others the football. That would be my guess.

And what I couldn't get my head round at all, was the fact that it appeared this guess was so inaccurate.

It is true that during the period I was going to Raymond's Revue Bar, its star was falling – it was in a bit of a decline (and I understand it closed down just a few years later). Also these stage performances were not its principal activity anymore – it turned into a lap dancing club called Amazons at 11.30pm until about 4am, I believe. And I think that format for a strip club (although outside my price range – you could get through several hundred pounds of a night) had become more popular than the stage shows it was replacing.

Nevertheless I was still surprised at this very low turnout (that it was not more than quarter

full) at these superb stage performances, at this very famous strip club, and I couldn't help but compare it with the vast stadiums filled to capacity, which top level football matches often achieve.

Going back to when I mentioned to the regulars at my local about having been to a strip club. The change in me because of this experience must have been obvious to them. You would have thought that they would be pleased for me that I had found something that 'suited me' – that made me feel good.

Not a bit of it.

I chose mainly to tell the people there about this when there might have been a group of men, a couple of them telling a few dirty jokes – it happened quite frequently. They often

would be laughing like mad at really quite crude jokes. Fair enough, I've never been one to complain about an off-colour joke – but I was really surprised that the reaction of these same people, when I told them that I had seen real strippers doing their stuff, was very subdued. It all went a bit quiet, and I realised that I had made a bit of a faux pas.

I soon learned not to mention my trips to Raymond's Revue Bar.

And I really found this hypocritical, that they would laugh so enthusiastically at a few dirty jokes, but go all quiet – obviously disapproving – when I told them I had been to a strip club.

I said I was going to compare the situation with how I remembered it quite a few years before.

I never got round to going to a strip club in my twenties – my religious views at the time more or less precluded it.

But I did get sent on a computer course in London with about 12 colleagues, and one night we all went round Soho.

Everyone (as I remember it) was quite excitedly looking at what was on offer (from outside the various premises). I was very disappointed that no-one could reach any agreement about actually paying an entrance fee and venturing inside one of these ‘dens of iniquity’. (On spur of the moment things like this I could sometimes suspend my religious

principles and I probably would have enthusiastically ventured in, if only a consensus to do so had been reached.)

But anyway, as I say, everyone was fairly excitedly discussing the possibility of going in somewhere. And supposing a couple of us had gone off and been less ‘stick in the mud’ – then I’m sure the reaction of the majority – when the pair of us came back to report, wouldn’t have been nearly so negative as I had found that many years later – I’m convinced that attitudes had changed dramatically in the intervening years.

I carried on going to Raymond’s Revue Bar, usually every fortnight, for a year or so, I suppose.

Then one of the pubs in my home town became a 'pound in a pint glass for a dance' place, and I transferred my time (and my money) to that.