



# **Candy Barr: The Small-Town Texas Runaway Who Became a Darling of the Mob and the Queen of Las Vegas Burlesque**

*Ted Schwarz*

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Born Juanita Slusher in Edna, Texas, in 1935, the entertainer who became Candy Barr was perhaps the last great dancer in burlesque, a stripper who insisted on live, improvisational music and who at one time commanded \$2,000 a week in 1950s Las Vegas. But as Juanita she had started life as a prematurely well-developed thirteen-year-old runaway victimized by a Dallas ritual known as "the capture" that enslaved her into prostitution, for a time turning over 4,000 tricks a year before she was able to escape. A lover of Mickey Cohen's and friend to Jack Ruby, Barr's tumultuous life included a period of imprisonment on trumped-up drug charges, an appearance in a crude, 20-minute stag film, and unlikely role in the investigation into the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Based on over 100 hours of exclusive interviews with Barr, this book is not just the story of Juanita and Candy, but also paints an unflattering picture of all those who sought to exploit her.

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