



The Tattooed Lady: A History

Amelia Klem Osterud

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Living in a time when it was scandalous even to show a bit of ankle, a small number of courageous women covered their bodies in tattoos and traveled the country, performing nearly nude on carnival stages. These gutsy women spun amazing stories for captive audiences about abductions and forced tattooing at the hands of savages, but little has been shared of their real lives. Though they spawned a cultural movement—almost a quarter of Americans now have tattoos—these women have largely faded into history.

The first book of its kind, *The Tattooed Lady* uncovers the true stories behind these women, bringing them out of the sideshow realm and into their working class realities. Combining thorough research with more than a hundred historical photos, this social history explores tattoo origins, women's history, and circus lore. A fascinating read, *The Tattooed Lady* pays tribute to a group of unique and amazing women whose legacy lives on.

Amelia Klem Osterud is a tattooed academic librarian from Wisconsin. She has a master's degree in history from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and writes and lectures on the subject. This is her first book. Visit her author blog at tattooledladyhistory.vox.com

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