



Dummy Up And Deal: Inside The Culture Of Casino Dealing (Gambling Studies Series)

H. Lee Barnes

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The glitter and excitement that tourists associate with casinos is only a facade. To the gaming industry's front-line employees, its dealers, the casino is a far less glamorous environment, a workplace full of emotional tension, physical and mental demands, humor and pathos. Author H. Lee Barnes, who spent many years as a dealer in some of Las Vegas's best-known casinos, shows us this world from the point of view of the table-games dealer. Told in the voices of dozens of dealers, male and female, young and old, *Dummy Up and Deal* takes us to the dealer's side of the table. We observe the "breaking in" that constitutes a dealer's training, where the hands learn the motions of the game while the mind undergoes the requisite hardening to endure long hours of concentration and the demands of often unreasonable and sometimes abusive players. We discover how dealers are hired and assigned to shifts and tables, how they interact with each other and with their supervisors, and how they deal with players—the winners and the losers, the "Sweethearts" and the "Dragon Lady," the tourists looking for a few thrills and the mobsters showing off their "juice." We observe cheaters on both sides of the table and witness the exploits of such high-rollers as Frank Sinatra and Colonel Parker, Elvis's manager. And we learn about the dealers' lives after-hours, how some juggle casino work with family responsibilities while others embrace the bohemian lifestyle of the Strip and sometimes lose themselves to drugs, drink, or sex. It's a life that invites cynicism and bitterness, that can erode the soul and deaden the spirit. But the dealer's life can also offer moments of humor, encounters with generous and kindly players, moments of pride or humanity or professional solidarity. Barnes writes with the candor of a keen observer of his profession, someone who has seen it all—many times—but has never lost his capacity to wonder, to sympathize, or to laugh. *Dummy Up and Deal* is a colorful insider's view of the casino industry, a fascinating glimpse behind the glitter into the real world of the casino worker.

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