

Ballroom dance offers intimacy, an emotional connection and physical closeness: "Inside the dance studio, on the competition floor, and on the social dance floor, partners touch, hold hands, hug, and kiss with seeming abandon." Partners might "massage a sore back or pin a pair of pants that have become unstitched. There is teasing, joking" (p. 22).

The "purchase of intimacy" in ballroom dance is fantasy, somewhat like what men buy when they hire taxi dancers, which Ericksen refers to, and also when they pay to interact with striptease (exotic) dancers (Judith Lynne Hanna, *Naked Truth: Strip Clubs, Democracy, and a Christian Right* [University of Texas Press, 2012]). The men in exotic dance clubs spend money for intimacy through tipping, talking with dancers, and getting table and other private dances; dancers and patrons create their own imaginary scenarios. Some patrons become regulars, seeing a particular dancer and treating her as if she were really his girlfriend (Katherine Frank, *G-Strings and Sympathy: Strip Club Regulars and Male Desire* [Duke University Press, 2002]). One barrier: generally, ballroom students and striptease dancers are not permitted to go out with teachers or patrons.

Ericksen does not define the word "sex," and it seems misplaced in *Dance with Me*. She says, "Ballroom dancing is about love and also about sex" (p. xii), "to feel the sex" (p. 9; also p. 116). A teacher understood that there is a "sex-work" component to teaching dance (p. 114). But "sex" usually refers to masturbation and sexual intercourse, which is different from being held, flirting, and floating along showing erotic, sensual, and romantic feelings between dance partners.

Although Ericksen says that Juliet McMains (*Glamour Addiction: Inside the American Ballroom Dance Industry* [Wesleyan University Press, 2006]), also a former professional competitor, describes the professional/amateur relationship as negative, at odds with Ericksen's and her respondents' experiences, Ericksen does not address this difference. Did these two researchers do their work at different times and places or have different personalities or experiences?

Reading *Dance with Me* will most likely make you the reader want to try ballroom dancing. At the very least the reader will probably become a spectator who knows how to understand the dance and check out the connection between partners.

*Techniques of Pleasure: BDSM and the Circuits of Sexuality*. By Margot Weiss. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2011. Pp. xviii+315. \$89.95 (cloth); \$24.95 (paper).

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At a time in which alternative and subversive sexualities such as sado-masochism (SM) are becoming more visible in the mass media and public

discourse, *Techniques of Pleasure* constitutes a timely and important contribution to understanding SM. Drawing on interviews and ethnographic fieldwork in the San Francisco Bay area, Margot Weiss analyzes the circuit between late capitalism and performativities within the SM community. Weiss harnesses cutting-edge theory to detailed ethnographic research in order to move beyond binary understandings of SM sexuality as either a “transgressive, queer, counterpublic practice” or a “hegemonic, heteronormative lifestyle” (p. 230). Instead, by using examples of “edge-play” scenes that eroticize social inequality, Weiss analyzes the mimetic circuit in which SM is simultaneously transgressive of and dependent on social norms.

Weiss’s analysis is strongest when she deeply analyzes ethnographic description of SM scenes and her reaction as an observer to these scenes. Her work comes alive in these moments and her analytical lens is sharpest when analyzing experiences in the SM community that produced ambivalence, disgust, or attraction. For example, her analysis of “race play” (or the creation of scenes based on racial hierarchies) interrogates the whiteness of the pansexual community, the way “edge play” such as this is constructed as a sexual choice by players, and how this choice relies on racial privilege. This analysis is coupled with a detailed description of a race-play scene in which her social location as a researcher is present.

However, despite the strength of these lurid descriptions of SM edge play scenes, the weakest part of this book is that it is easy to forget that sex is happening at all. Indeed, by focusing on economies and the semipublic aspects of the SM scene, SM becomes strangely nonsexual. Bodies are clearly present; indeed, Weiss builds on Foucault and studies of performativity to theorize about the “body in play” in SM scenes. And Weiss does analyze the nongenital yet sexual nature of SM activity. However, Weiss is analytically more interested in the organization of bodies as they develop self-mastery and use toys as a prosthetic extension of themselves in the SM community. Somewhere in the analysis of SM as about late capitalism, embodiment, flexibility, agency, and consent, the bodily experience of pleasure becomes lost.

Methodologically, this book is rooted in both ethnography and interviews, and throughout the book Weiss is transparent about her research process and provides a contextualizing detailed analysis of the ethnographic setting, the San Francisco Bay Area. She analyzes the role of the economy, particularly the software industry in the Silicon Valley, in constituting a particular pansexual SM community that is open to individuals of all sexual orientations and genders. The community that Weiss analyzes is predominately white, upper middle-class professionals who organize themselves into male dominant-female submissive relationships, although she does include interviews with people of color involved in the scene. However, one wonders when reading her book whether or not SM communities in other places are constituted differently and whether the organization of the scene in San Francisco is idiosyncratic and unusual. Weiss sidesteps both the va-

riety of queer and LGBT leather spaces in the Bay area in favor of a focused analysis of SM pansexual communities. In making this selection, she misses elements of leather communities, such as pageantry, that may provide a rich site for performativity analysis. Although she analyzes the sexism that SM activity both relies on and transgresses, she neglects homophobia. Homophobia may not have emerged as a central theme in a community based in the Bay area, but homophobia within pansexual communities elsewhere has been documented by both scholars and SM practitioners. In addition, by selecting a site like San Francisco that is open to BDSM, it is easy to forget how stigmatized SM sexuality is in other places and how that stigmatization may affect the way communities are organized or operate.

Overall, *Techniques of Pleasure* is an important theoretical and empirical contribution that moves beyond the existing analyses in feminist and queer theory that depict SM as either inherently sexist or inherently transgressive. Building on both these theories without discarding their core assumptions, Weiss demonstrates how SM can be both sexist and transgressive, often at the same time. Beyond the empirical focus of this book, Weiss contributes to the broader literature on late capitalism's impact on bodies, sexualities, and subjectivities.

*Love in the Time of AIDS: Inequality, Gender, and Rights in South Africa.* By Mark Hunter. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010. Pp. xviii+303. \$70.00 (cloth); \$24.95 (paper).

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*Love in the Time of AIDS: Inequality, Gender, and Rights in South Africa* details how South African women and men rework gender, sexuality, and intimacy in a context of socioeconomic marginalization, persisting gender inequalities, and climbing HIV infection rates. Developing the concept of the "materiality of everyday sex" (p. 4; emphasis removed), Mark Hunter contends that observers should understand contemporary sexual practices and relationships in South Africa as influenced by the "dialectic relationship between political economy and intimacy" (p. 5). In this dialectical process, sex, love, and intimacy in postapartheid South Africa have been transformed, in complex ways, by the vagaries of colonial and apartheid capitalism and a neoliberal democracy.

At the heart of Hunter's rich historical ethnography is an analysis of the "changing political economy and geography of intimacy" (p. 92). Through this concept, he examines how a constellation of several factors, including growing unemployment, social inequalities, declining marriage rates, and increasing female mobility, results in a new configuration of love, gender norms, sexual practices, and money, which, in turn, affect HIV infection rates. This place-based ethnography traces metamorphoses in gender and