

Introduction

“Samuel Adams, a taste you can stay tied up with all night,” reads the tag line from a radio ad campaign from a very straitlaced Boston brewery. The pop-culture hit *The Family Guy* has a set of BDSM Peter and Lois action figures. An episode of the prime-time phenomenon *Friends* has girl-next-door Lisa Kudrow breaking up a catfight between Jennifer Aniston and Courteney Cox. As she holds both of the kneeling combatants by the hair, she says, “I guess if we were in prison, you’d both be my bitches.” Print media ads are glutted with glossy pictures of models in skin-tight latex, and somewhere in syndication, Xena, fetish goddess, adjusts her bursting breastplates and cracks wise with her demurely submissive traveling companion about how much men dig the leather outfit.

Clearly, the times we live in are rife with allusion and innuendo to once deviant sexual practices, which even a few years ago would have been considered risqué at best and taboo at worst. Now, everyone giggles at the sitcom references to bondage and spanking, but underneath the laughter, do straight people secretly wonder if they are missing out on something? Why do references to the dark world of BDSM, (bondage/discipline, dominance/submission, sadism/masochism)¹ titillate us and coerce us into buying bottles of expensive

1. There is some debate on the appropriate nomenclature for people who use the concept of power exchange for sexual gratification. For simplicity’s sake, I will often use the terms *dominance and submission*, *bondage and discipline*, and *sadomasochism* (or their abbreviations, *D/s*, *B/D*, *S & M*, and the catch-all *BDSM* interchangeably and at my whim. This will also be true for words that describe people who participate in these activities: dominant, dominatrix, dom, domme, submissive, sub, top, bottom, owner, slave, master, and so on.

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vodka and tins of painfully peppery mints? What is it about bondage that would captivate a former president's daughter and *The General's Daughter*? Why would a mainstream *country* singer like Shania Twain show up to perform at the Grammy Awards in a custom corseted costume of towering heels and elbow-length gloves that was only missing a flogger and a pair of handcuffs?

Frankly, I don't care why. I am just delighted they do, for I am a practicing dominatrix: a woman who *has* masks, floggers, and handcuffs. I use my personal power over my sexual partner for our mutual erotic enjoyment. I am not concerned with the psychological ramifications of why this is enticing—just knowing that it *is* enticing is enough for me. I don't have to mess my manicure twisting wrenches on the engine of my Bentley to be able to drive it, nor do I have to milk a cow in order to serve ice cream. I am not a doctor (although I play one with TVs). I don't presume to understand the human mind nor the biological machinations of human sexual response. I *do* presume to notice, however, that when I cross my thigh-high-booted legs, every male head follows the movement in unison, like center-court spectators at Wimbledon. I do recognize the playful spark in a man's eyes when I tell him I think I will kidnap him for the weekend and have my way with him. I *see* him stand at attention when I trace a line down his chest with my crop.

As a dominatrix, I am more concerned with the how, what, and where of this errant eroticism. Humans have a luxury that other animals presumably don't have: the fantastic ability to create a storyline to their sexuality; to write their own amatory menu. If there is a *why* to be asked it is, indeed,

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“Why choose plain vanilla, when you can have the decadence of ‘Death by Chocolate’?” *And it’s non-fattening.*

Traditions and accoutrements embraced by the sado-masochistic community are the perfect embellishments for those wishing to add variety and flair to this most private part of their lives. In practicing dominance and submission, one is able to find rich traditions, intricate formalities, and a sense of order, even while being inventive. And, of course, seemingly endless paraphernalia—which is a good excuse for shopping, if nothing else. As I have often said, “a little dominance and submission in one’s sex life is like a dash of cinnamon in potpourri.”

To guide you through this brave new underworld, I will share with you some of my favorite tips I use for training and pleasuring my own submissives—a smorgasbord of little dishes from which you can pick and choose according to your own appetites. I will give you hints on how to introduce D/s—either as an hors d’oeuvre, an entrée, or a dessert—to your own sexual plate. In the pages that follow, I shall give you step-by-step instructions on how to choose a role, set the mood, decorate your room, pick a proper outfit, buy the best bonds, tie the exact knot, and wield the perfect quirt. Think of this as an erotic cookbook with the spiciest of recipes.

While part of its excitement is based on BDSM looking or even being dangerous, I will alert you to safety precautions to avoid trouble, accidents, and embarrassment. Certainly there exist extremists among practitioners, as there are in all walks of life, but the scene is not so much about pain and suffering as you may have been led to believe. The essence of S & M is not about historical oppression or pathological sub-

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jugation. It is about the consensual exchange of power that exists between sexual partners. It is about taking someone to the brink. About taking your lover to a blissed-out subspace enabled by the releasing of his control to you. Yes, D/s is about a love of bonds—but it is also about a bond of love. This cookbook is filled with recipes for pleasure rather than pain, for sweet things rather than bitter ones. It is about fun and D/lightfulness—a trip to D/sneyland.

So much of BDSM is beyond the hot clothing and cool equipment. As you perfect the techniques I describe, you will pick up more than just arcane erotic knowledge. You will notice a change in your overall bearing as you become more confident with your D/s persona. People, and especially men, will notice your new confidence in ways that are hard to quantify, but are nonetheless apparent. You will talk confidently and walk tall, with or without your stilettos. The tips in the following pages will give you the power to instill this mystery and the methods to install it as part of your own sexual psyche. Within these pages, you will learn to read, between the black and white lines, the deeper meaning of the black and blue.

Life has certainly changed since this little book was published ten years ago. It is enough to give me pause.

9/11 has riveted our attention on reality and made us forgo our fantasies.

The behavior at Abu Ghraib has put my skills in a bad light.

On a lighter note, the Red Sox have actually won two World Series. The Cubs, keeping it real, have still not won one in a hundred years. Manchester United Football Club bent over to send the States Beckham and his wife.

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A woman, a dominatrix in her own right, almost got a chance to cane McCain.

Madonna, on the other hand, has traded in her Gaultier cones for the chance to write children's books. James Spader has gone from portraying a smarmy lawyer to, well, portraying another smarmy lawyer (and traded the saddle for a cigar smoking saddle bag).

As much as politics and economics have forced us into the here and now, we still need some of the "hear and kneel."