Safe, Sane and Consensual
Contemporary Perspectives on Sadomasochism

Edited By Darren Langdridge and Meg John Barker

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Dr. Darren Langdridge is Head of the Department of Psychology at the Open University, UK, Honorary Professor of Psychology, Aalborg University, Denmark and a UKCP Accredited Existential Psychotherapist working in private practice.

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“One could say that Safe, Sane and Consensual poses more questions than it answers, but it is not necessarily a criticism – it was high time that these questions were asked, dispelling some damaging stereotypes in the process.”
- Toni Brennan, Feminism and Psychology

“An impressive collection of empirical, theoretical, historical, clinical, personal, and legal perspectives on sadomasochism and related practices [...] The collection spans an impressive array of subjects, beginning with a section on the history and basic principles of S/M that would likely work well for graduate and undergraduate students as well as those unfamiliar with or under informed about S/M [...] Both in its scope and in its sensitivity to the multi-faceted dimensions of S/M practices, it offers a unique and much needed look at S/M as powerful, revealing, and non pathological.”
- Breanne Fahs, Journal of Sex and Marital Therapy

“The book is a valuable contribution to the field [...] In the face of a scarcity of research into S/M culture and practice, the book provides an excellent entry point into many of the discussions around S/M. Its didactic structure, its attempts to dispel common myths and stereotypes, and the lack of heavy theoretical jargon turns it into a good teaching source.”
- Christian Klesse, Sexualities

About the book
Psychological and medical perspectives on sadomasochism (SM) have historically been concerned with understanding it as a form of psychopathology. In the past (but still often today) studies of SM have been concerned with extreme and most often non-consensual acts. More recently, however, there has been growing interest in exploring the meaning of sadomasochism in non-pathological ways.

Safe, Sane and Consensual includes work from across the social sciences exploring a variety of aspects of SM from a non-pathological perspective. There are discussions of the history and culture of SM, medical and legal understandings, along with theory and original research on the topic. There are also sections on SM and psychotherapy and writing on bridging the academic/activist divide.

This book, now in paperback with a new introduction, includes contributions from an international group of academics, practitioners and activists and represents some of the most recent cutting edge work in the field by leading scholars.

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