

Game of Desire: playing hard

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1. THE RUB:**INTERCOURSE WORK**

FRICION generates energy (in/out, push/pull, give/take, top/bottom, yes/no). Seek contrast!

SPECIFICITY: Art directs attention with intention to evoke an emotional response.

- Transformative, charged intimacy always trumps generic humps or cuddles.

ACTION IS NOT ACTIVITY. If your sex is not action, cut it. Sex = punctuation, not a metronome.

DESIRE (in your mind) vs. **AROUSAL** (in your flesh).

THE RUB: relationships are shown by the **EFFECT** characters have on each other.

- **NO EFFECT=NO RELATIONSHIP** (identify friction source: Physical/Social/Moral/Mental)

BODY LANGUAGE: the words characters use about intimacy telegraph emotional experience.

- **ADJECTIVES=weak/opinions** | **NOUNS=better/assumptions** | **VERBS=essential/dynamics**

THE GAME: Selection → Seduction → Subjugation → Separation

(cf Libertinage)

HEAT LEVEL: establish & honor the level: manage reader expectations & still surprise them.

FLAVOR: Make every moment count! Keep changing the *tune*. (**POWER, PACE, RISK, SURPRISE**)

PRIVACY: Intimacy creates private spaces in public & vice versa. (Private parts/public roles)

AMPLIFICATION: Establish Intimacy by tracking the **ARC** of transformation & escalation.

MONEY SHOT: Identify the arc/scene's highest point in POV. Readers can only handle one crest.

2. THE BALL:**LOVE MACHINE**

PRECISION: Enter Late, Leave Early...How/when/why does Arousal change/escalate/shift?

- **BALL:** pass control of the scene between characters. Engage & surprise the reader.
- **DIALECTIC:** Thesis → Antithesis → Synthesis (Intimacy is rhetorical).

SEQUENCE: track the cause/effect chain of physically sequential actions in the scene's Arc.

- Fastest thing should be told first, and so on. Guide the mind's eye. (Swain's MRU's)

MUSIC: Know the voices, rhythm, melody, high note...plan the Intimate beats accordingly.

- **PACE:** Intimacy dilates and contracts time; know when to accelerate and where to linger.

EROTIC PARADOX: Pathologize (simple/healthy, no danger) vs Sanitize (issues/illness, all danger)

- Both are false extremes and yet both play an essential role in erotic consciousness.
- **OBJECT VS. SUBJECT:** Great sex scenes weave between both. Look for the oscillation

SOPHISTICATION: Abundance+Sublimation+Control reinforce social order & personal fantasy.
vs.

ANIMALITY/ATAVISM: Appetite+Violation+Corrosion threaten both personality & civilization.

CONJUNCTION: physical & emotional intersections. Look for points of contact & separation.

PREPOSITIONS ARE PROPOSITIONS.

PREPOSITIONS specify relationships & evoke types of contact by directing the energy of **VERBS**.

F O C U S ▪ F R I C T I O N ▪ F O R C E

Mechanics Exercise: INDECENT PREPOSITIONS

Write a love scene using one of the following preposition lists. Make sure you build to a crescendo and moment of transformation. Hit your subject/object curves! Cross the prepositions out as you use them. Bonus points for using your chosen list *in order*. ☺

- *with, after, against, from, alongside,*
- *below, toward, for, rather than, until*
- *around, under, along, next to, beside,*
- *through, above, into, between, without*
- *during, inside, as well as, near, before,*
- *astride, except, prior to, across, beneath*

3. THE SCORE:

EMOTIONAL TERRAIN

AMPLIFICATION: precontact (Longing, Ambivalence), postcontact (Trespass, Control)

- Intimacy requires that characters maintain an **OPTIMAL DISTANCE**.

SIGNIFICANCE (cf Dr. Abraham Maslow & his work on the psychology of “peak experiences”)

- **WONDER:** first times & unexpected developments disrupt the status quo & identity.
- **INDULGENCE:** idyllic settings/partners/situations eclipse hang-ups, habits, & expectations.
- **DISTORTION:** perceived shifts in time/space add weight & urgency to the experience.

SENSES: Sex makes sounds, smells, sights, tastes, and textures. Provide unexpected specifics.

- **STILLNESS:** pivotal in intimacy (e.g. gesture/actions). Go past snuggles or rumpy-pumpy.

STRIP TEASE: Reading is voyeuristic. Consider your Reader’s gaze... what to reveal and when.

- **KNOW-ING** (in Biblical sense): Intimacy exposes our deepest truth & vulnerability. (*Torah*)
- **GAZE:** Shoot the scene with POV character. Consider closeups, cuts, & shifts in attention.

VIRGINITY: Rupture of any unique personal boundary changes character(s) forever. **IRREVOCABLE.**

- Possibility of violation creates contextually resonant **VULNERABILITY**.

TABOO: Know character limits, revulsions, hang-ups. **TRESPASS!** Specify fears & erotic history.

- Twist in any great sex scene: what we wish we could do. (**secret sauce of legendary sex**)

CATHEXIS: (per Freud) Focus of mental/emotional energy upon a person, object, or idea.

- **INTENSITY...** corresponds to directed (and received) **ATTENTION** between participants.
- **SUBTEXT...** charges intimacy with unexpressed **TRUTH**. (Stoke curiosity. Map the inscape)
- **DANGER...** permits heightened revelations by creating **VULNERABILITY** in participants.

DIRTY TALK erodes boundaries & language. Greater sensation/emotion → less articulation.

POETRY: Love scenes articulate the inarticulable. Pull out your literary firepower.

- Metonymy*, Simile, Metaphor, Onomatopoeia, Paradox, Symbol/Allusion, Euphonia, Assonance/Consonance/Alliteration, Rhythm/Cadence,
- Weigh **Expressionism** (*inside pulled out*) vs. **Impressionism** (*fragments create whole*).

“High states of arousal flow from the tension between persistent problems and triumphant solutions.” Jack Morin

4. THE MESS:**WET SPOTS****MYTHS & FLUBS:**

- PREMATURE BLISS: playing the orgasm/HEA before your characters have gotten there.
- RIGID ROLES: cartoonish, clichéd roleplaying plagues romance. Ditch the stereotypes.
- GEAR TROUBLE: rushing to payoff or stuck in first. Build to payoff, not too fast or slow.
- BIZARRE TIMING: sex during mortal threats, serious injuries, despair, critical decisions.
- CUM SOAKED: hyperbolic climaxes seem cartoony & unsexy. Guys need time to recover.
- ASSEMBLY LINE: grope, suck, 1-finger-2-finger-3-finger, bone. (e.g. *your porn's showing*).
- JARRING WORDS: “c#nt,” “shapely,” “masculine,” “bubbly” ass, “tresses,” etc.
- FAKE GRIT: farting/belching, swearing, unnecessary roughness, bro-posturing.
- LUBELESS SEX: no such critter. Either get ‘em wet, or *blood* is the lube.
- SNUGGLY-WUGGLE: foreplay & cuddling that kills time will kill the stakes.

DANGER ZONES:

- CLICHÉS: Toxic and inept. If anyone can say it, no one should. **THE WORST!**
- SWAPPABILITY: If you’ve written a scene that could involve *anyone*, cut it.
- ONE NOTE: Endless snuggle-fests or raunchy humpa-lympics get old. (subject/object riffs)
- TICS: Overused details/activities render love scenes robotic, repetitive, and ridiculous.
- CONVOS: If your characters discuss anything substantive, the sex is only an activity.
- MECHANICALS: Don’t get bogged down in sexual stereo instructions.
- GYMNASTICS: Hyperbolic sexual acts used as impersonal spectacle (*distraction*).
- SYNTHETICS: Sequential actions & linear progress stink on ice. Find organic moments of revealing digression, emotion, & clarity. (never ABCDEF)
- FLAB: Regurgitation & filler. If your sex is skippable, they will (and should) skip it.
- HYPERBOLE: Easy on the OTT. Exaggerate with caution. Earn your pyrotechnics.

MAKE PASSES: Before submitting, do an intimacy pass for each of the main characters.

- TURN-ONS: allow each character to eroticize certain anatomy, types, images, & acts.
- ARC: Track the intimate moments & verify they build for maximum impact/import.
- TASTES: Scan for erotic personality. Open or closed? Staid or rowdy? Kinky or vanilla?
- CHERRY: Map the path to “deflowering” the character(s) most intimate boundary.
- INTIMACY TAGS: Use tagging to maximize variety & pace. Guide their attention.
- REPETITION: Don’t reuse the same idiom or focus; give readers a language-scape.
- WHITE SPACE: Use breaks & punctuation to guide eyes. Vary language for pace & flow.
- SPICE: Add one surprising detail in every scene to reinforce character or emotion.

BOOK RECS:

“The pleasures in love are always in proportion to our fears.” Stendahl

- Lars Eighner - *Elements of Arousal: how to write and sell gay men's erotica*
- F. Gonzalez-Crussi - *On the Nature of Things Erotic*
- Rayne Hall - *Euphonics For Writers: professional techniques for fiction authors*
- Dr. Abraham Maslow - *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*
- Jack Morin - *The Erotic Mind: unlocking the inner sources of passion and fulfillment*
- A.D. Peterkin - *The Bald-headed Hermit: an erotic thesaurus*

Find more book recommendations & exercises at damonsuede.com/classes/intimacy.html