

Gender and sexuality in the field: a female ethnographer's experience researching drug use in dance clubs

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Published

Friday, January 1, 2010 - 12:00

Publisher

Substance Use and Misuse

Volume

45

Issue

5

Page(s)

717-35

Abstract

This article provides an account of a female ethnographer's experience accessing participants and observing drug-using behaviors in highly sexualized dance clubs. Specifically, it describes how the researcher as a gendered and sexualized self can compromise safety and inhibit access while also serving as an advantage to establishing rapport. The author describes how various methods were employed to appear as part of the cultural scene and access participants, while avoiding, and responding to, unwanted sexual advances. To address such challenges, the author provides both practical and procedural suggestions for researchers and research institutions.

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