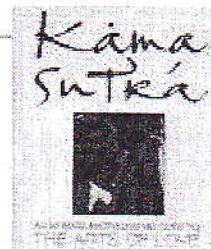


A British Dude with a Stiff Upper Lip v. A Feminist Chick (that Can Make Other Parts Stiff)

Doniger's new translation of the Kama Sutra hopes to set the record straight on the G-spot

by Kate Rockwood

The Kama Sutra, second only to the locker room in supplying sexual advice and encouragement, is most historically read in the translation by Richard Burton. But some women claim the translation is unbalanced in the department of pleasure, fraught with everything from vague references to mistranslations. So what's a pro-sex boy or girl, interested in pleasing his/her partner(s) while pleasing himself, to do? Well, you could pick up an issue of Cosmo with such titillating titles as "55 Ways to Orgasm" and "3 Million and 4 Places to Put Your Mouth," or you could grab a copy of Wendy Doniger's new translation of the Kama Sutra, which promises an accurate translation and a bucket of sexual fun. So how do the two translations stack up?



Burton in all his repressed glory

*translates the word for homosexuals ("the third nature") as "eunuch," concealing the long, detailed, sensual description of fellatio between men.

*leaves many of the terms for plants used as drugs untranslated in Sanskrit, or translates them into Latin, instead of supplying the rough English equivalent.

*cites the women in indirect speech, muffling their voices. "When the woman is not accustomed to striking [a phrase not in the text], she continually utters words expressive of prohibition, sufficiency, or desire of liberation."

*eroding women's agency by saying that the wife of an unfaithful man should never scold her husband.

*turns erotica into paint-by-number. The vividness of "He touches her on the thigh..." becomes "He should touch her on the thigh."

and finally...

*mentions the G-spot vaguely as the part "on which she turns her eye." I don't know about you ladies, but I've never been able to turn my eye on my G-spot (\$20 and a lifetime of pleasure to any girl that can).

Doniger basks in the afterglow

*Gets down and dirty. Turns out men-on-men action has been happening since the beginning of time.

*goes all out and gives you the rough English equivalents (and we're not just talking Viagra).

*gives women strong voices and encourages men to listen. "When a woman is slapped too hard she may say "Stop!" "Let go!" or "Enough!" This applies for both Sexual Pleasure 101 and Sexual Abuse 101.

*tells it like it is, sister. The text advises the wife of an unfaithful man to scold him "with sharp language." The sharper the better.

*He touches her on the thigh and the calf and the breast and the neck and the lips and the... Her moans supply all the "should" you'll need to try this at home.

*corrects the serious mistranslation by writing "When a man is inside a woman and touches her and when her eyes roll around, he should touch her more." Um, duh.

Kate Rockwood thinks any place the body bends is sexy.

