



Lust in Translation: Infidelity from Tokyo to Tennessee

By Pamela Druckerman

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- Russian spouses don't count beach resort flings as infidelity
- South Africans consider drunkenness an adequate excuse for extramarital sex
- Japanese businessmen believe, "If you pay, it's not cheating."

Voyeuristic and packed with eyebrow-raising statistics and interviews, *Lust in Translation* is her funny and fact-filled world tour of infidelity that will give new meaning to the phrase "practicing monogamy."

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- Sales Rank: #754642 in Books
- Published on: 2008-03-25
- Released on: 2008-03-25
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .80" w x 5.40" l, .55 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 304 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Former foreign correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal* now living in Paris, Druckerman offers an anecdotal rather than a scholarly exploration of the international etiquette of adultery. From American prudishness about the subject to French discretion, and from Russian vehemence about the obligatory affair to Japanese adherence to the single marital futon, one factor rings true in all cases: people lie about sex. Druckerman interviews numerous adulterers, starting with the conflicted Americans who "gain status by radiating an aura of monogamy" while sneaking around on the side; guilt more often than not brings them to confession and absolution by therapy. Druckerman is at pains to uncover reliable statistics about infidelity where such research is suppressed, such as in Islamic countries or those formerly Communist; in contrast, Finland demonstrates the best sex research, e.g., clearly half of men there enjoy "parallel relationships." Druckerman concludes from one study that people in warmer climes cheat more (Scandinavia is the exception), while people in wealthy countries tend to cheat less than those in poor countries (exception: Kazakhstan). Druckerman found that the rules of sexual cultures differ widely: adultery is the least dangerous social evil in Russia, while in Japan, buying sex doesn't count as cheating. Druckerman's work is quirky, digressive and media quotable. (Apr.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Here's a surprise: the U.S., which in the past 30 years has grown more open-minded about some sexual issues (such as homosexuality and premarital intercourse), has at the same time grown substantially stricter when it comes to extramarital affairs. Americans are vehemently against adultery, ranking it just a bit below polygamy and human cloning on the list of major no-nos. But in many other countries adultery is not such a big deal--often it's accepted if not formally condoned. In her quest to find out what it is about extramarital sex that provokes such widely differing reactions, the author visited 10 countries, including the U.S., Russia, Japan, and France, and spoke with adulterers, cuckolded spouses, sexologists, marriage counselors, and other interested parties. Interestingly, there seems to be no generally accepted view of adultery. Is it a sin, or a harmless pastime? It depends on whom you speak to, and where you speak to them. This engagingly written, intellectually provocative book is sure to be hotly debated by special-interest groups and individuals who think they know what's best for everybody else. *David Pitt*

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Review

"[Druckerman's] finely calibrated moral compass is matched by a reporter's knack for deft, understated description....[This] thoughtful and myth-busting study of infidelity deserves to be widely translated and read."

-*The Economist*

"A witty, engaging exploration of comparative infidelity. . . . Undeniably alluring."

-*The New York Observer*

"Colorfully told. . . . Entertaining."

-*The New York Times*

"[Druckerman's] finely calibrated moral compass is matched by a reporter's knack for deft, understated

description."

-The Economist

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Patricia Kirby:

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