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BOOK REVIEW

Advanced Spiritual Intimacy: The Yoga of Deep Tantric Sensuality

(2014; Rochester, VT: Destiny Books)

by Stuart Sovatsky

Reviewed by

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Palo Alto, CA, USA

A*dvanced Spiritual Intimacy: The Yoga of Deep Tantric Sensuality* is a fascinating new book that enables readers to draw closer to something previously hidden to the Western mind. The author, Stuart Sovatsky, draws on decades of kundalini practice and the direction of Lee Sanella's Kundalini Clinic for Counseling and Research. From an expert who once received the first federal grant to bring healing yoga-based help to juveniles as well as sharing advanced tantric yoga practices, this is a book for all individuals.

Writing within the context of what he refers to as the *ars erotica* philosophy (a term borrowed from Michel Foucault and referring to an ancient Eastern approach to erotica), Sovatsky's wider approach to *Urdhvaretas* is even more direct and practical. From the sanskrit term referring to "a series of identity-maturing puberties"—the *Urdhavetas* approach is presented in combination with the author's extensive clinical experience. A critique on Western sexuality then spearheads the practical applications that the reader can then use in their own life and that Sovatsky himself has become adept in his own life.

Beginning as a story, the book first explores the foundational dichotomy between *ars erotica* and *scientia sexualis*. While *Ars erotica* has the potential to spark an awakening in the individual, *Scientia sexualis* becomes the target of Sovatsky's criticism; a damaging Freudian approach to human sexuality that is seen through its cultural and religious prohibitions. Writing with smooth, striking prose the book is both poetic and profound, leading the reader through the pulsing rhythms of an Eastern mystery and rising above the culture's cynicism and distress.

Sovatsky helps his readers to see how sexual experience can become more than just a mere physical intimacy, where the rising of kundalini energy can become the key that opens access to the *ars erotica* mystery. This is the practical aspect that explains how the kundalini can work as a creative power already gifted to each of us. It raises the alluring possibilities for the reader of hope, wonder, and peace in a world previously laden with endless limits and dissatisfaction.

Every human being who has ever loved can enjoy this book. It has already been passed down from a primal, powerful energy, a legacy and birthright, and can now be shared as the human quality that we all have. Through Sovatsky's guidance, our energy can be awakened as a growing awareness and an expanding ability to find enjoyment and fulfillment in life. The book brings the rhythm of kundalini energy up an octave, creating intensifying waves of connection through vividly described experiences. These evoke an inspired, emotional response and a shared experience between the reader and all of humanity.

In ultimate value to the individual, a concrete, practical set of applications can result in an embodied understanding of the various practices and concepts set forth by the author. Here, we have a source of access to that primordial energy that can be found within each of us and can become fully realized as we align ourselves with the text Sovatsky offers. Take this author up on his promise and reap the rewards that *Advanced Spiritual Intimacy: The Yoga of Deep Tantric Sensuality* has to offer. You will not be disappointed.

About the Author

Stuart Sovatsky, PhD, has been a juvenile probation officer, social worker, and marriage and family therapist since 1972, having worked with three generations of individuals, couples, and families. A yoga mentor since 1974, co-president of the Association for Transpersonal Psychology since 1998, and director of the first “spiritual emergence service” in the world, the Kundalini Clinic (founded by Lee Sannella, M.D.), since 1984, Sovatsky notably received the first federal grant to bring healing yoga-based help to juveniles as well as other early grants to assist halfway-housed mentally ill.

With a degree in religion from Princeton and a background of engaging in peace demonstrations, the author’s service spanned several decades and included bringing family counseling and yoga to the impoverished and mentally ill, as well as forgotten elders in retirement homes and school children in remote areas. In addition, he co-founded a 34-million-dollar green development project, co-created the first electronics-driven kirtan band, *Axis Mundi*, clinically directed a traditional counseling center, and brought spiritually-attuned counseling to marriage and family therapy clients and students across various continents.

About the Reviewer

Paul Ambrose, MA, has been an instructor of behaviorally, emotionally, handicapped children and a philosophy instructor at the Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, Wyoming. With a degree in philosophy and background in freelance writing, the author’s service has spanned several decades in 12-step work and reconstruction projects in the Third World.

About the Journal

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