

THE OPRAH
MAGAZINE

BODY BLISS

Feel great in
your own skin
JUST IN TIME
FOR SUMMER!

**HOW NOT TO
LOOK FAT IN A
BATHING SUIT**
Need we say more?

THE LONELY WOMAN'S GUIDE
to getting back in the game

**OPRAH'S AHA!
MOMENT**

Fighting the
Mashed Potato
Wars

**IS HUGH
JACKMAN
THE NICEST
HUNK ON
EARTH?**

You decide, p. 242

**PLUS:
GETTING
MARRIED
AT 50**

**SEX TOYS,
DOCTOR
PRESCRIBED**

**TAKE YOUR
BODY TO
WORK DAY**

JUNE 2006

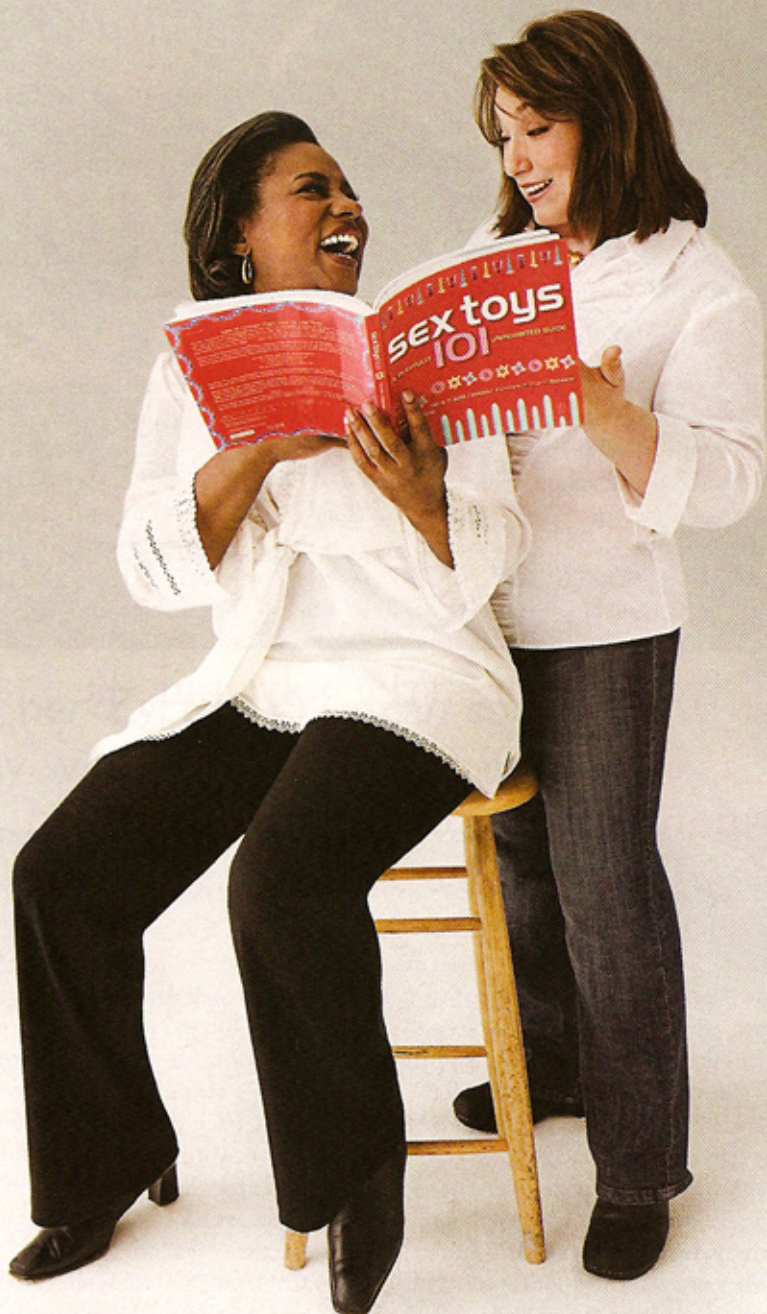


\$3.95 US/\$5.50 Canada/Foreign

OPRAH.COM

Lisa Kogan Tells All

Everything she always wanted to know about sex toys and wasn't afraid to ask Hilda Hutcherson, MD. Our intrepid columnist gets the buzz.



THIS MONTH I'M GIVING READERS A CHOICE: We can either (a) discuss the possible privatization of Social Security and its impact on 21st-century macroeconomics or (b) go shopping for sex toys. May I see a show of hands? Okay, so that would be 2.4 million women ready to hit the stores, and one retired stockbroker from the suburbs of Detroit who'd be ever so grateful if I'd start writing for *BusinessWeek*. Sorry, Dad—the people have spoken.

With friends like Hilda Hutcherson, MD, my

go-to sexpert and the author of *Pleasure: A Woman's Guide to Getting the Sex You Want, Need, and Deserve*, who needs sales help? I call my fearless pal and offer to buy her lunch in exchange for a guided tour of the best sex toys currently on the market. My education begins in the personal massagers section of a discreet midtown Manhattan shop called Eve's Garden. I check out a shelf of architecturally unobtrusive little gadgets as Hilda heads straight for a periwinkle ▶

Hilda Hutcherson, MD (seated), and Lisa Kogan read between the lines.

blue confection. "See how pretty," she says, grouping it with the chartreuse and salmon ones. "They're so sculptural, you could really have them on your coffee table without anybody realizing they're vibrators." But before I can lay out what I feel is a rather cogent argument for not displaying an assortment of pastel sex toys in the middle of my living room, Hilda has moved on. "Ooh, look, Lisa—it's the smoothie!" She picks up an ultra-sleek tiger-stripe number and turns it to low. "Smoothies are a bit more phallic," she says, as it dawns on me that Hilda's idea of a bit more phallic is my definition of the Washington Monument. "These are terrific for women who are just trying to get their feet wet." As the smoothie buzzes away, I start to offer her a little free advice: "Technically, Doctor, it's not the feet that need to get—" But before I can finish, Hilda is zeroing in on an odd contraption.

My eyes light on the holy grail, the Rolls-Royce of sex toys. Drumroll, please: Ladies and gentlemen, I give you the Rabbit Habit.

"Here's one based on a medical device for women with arousal disorder. This piece suctions the clitoris," she says, holding up a rubbery thimble, "while this cylinder vibrates. I write lots of prescriptions for these," she says matter-of-factly.

"But isn't everything here over-the-counter?" I ask. "Aren't sex toys more about leisure activity than medical need?" I can't help picturing an operating room in which a dedicated young surgeon calls for his instruments: "Scalpel! Sutures! Box of remote-control panties!" Hilda puts down the sample of edible Kama Sutra Honey Dust she's been enjoying. "When I write a prescription, I'm giving a woman permission from a doctor," she says. "And some of us need that. Ten percent of the sexually active female population have never had an orgasm, and God knows how many women have trouble climaxing with a partner. I prescribe a vibrator for use during intercourse. Toys give you control and provide extra stimulation."

NOW, I'M AWARE THAT AT this point certain readers (and you know who you are, cousin Myrna) would just as soon have me cut to waves crashing against the shore, but for my friends with a healthy curiosity—here goes nothing: "Hilda," I say, pointing to a gigantic vibrating penis that looks and feels just like the real thing...and then some, "you don't think most men would find this a touch daunting?" "Well, you can always start small. Here," Hilda says, handing me the Fukuoku 9000. "This finger-puppet-y vibrator slips over any digit, looks totally nonthreatening, and still gets the job done. How could this tiny toy make a man think he's being replaced?" She pauses a beat, shifting into pleasure-activist mode. "But I'm telling you, Lisa, that other one is definitely worth a try. I mean, for one thing, it's dishwasher safe!"

And there you go. At exactly 12:39 Eastern standard time, life as I understand it officially ends. I note the sign that informs customers of a 10 percent discount on floor models, I see the make-your-own-dildo kit containing special molding powder, patented "liquid skin," stir stick, vibrating unit, easy-to-follow instructions, and I suggest we break for lunch.

Over Cobb salads, I ask Hilda if there's any truth to the rumor that vibrators are addictive. "That's ridiculous," she says. "Granted, if you're using it five or six times a day, it'll be hard to go back—"

"Or hold a job or raise a family or... walk," I chime in.

"But," Hilda goes on, "the thing most of us love junkies ache for can't be found in a toy. They've yet to come up with a vibrator that whispers in your ear or holds you tight at 3 A.M."

"They've yet to come up with a lot of men who do that."

"True, but toys tend to put the oomph

back into long-term relationships, so you start releasing those hormones that actually do keep couples close." Hilda spears a cherry tomato. "And if you don't have a steady partner, they help your body remember how to respond. Or if you're menopausal—and not sexually active or taking estrogen—they keep the blood flowing through those vessels. You've got to prevent your vagina from shrinking and getting dry—a dildo is fantastic for that," she says as I watch the busboy who's refilling our iced teas go pale and back into a waiter.

If Eve's Garden is demure, our next stop, Babeland, is big, bright, and in-your-face. "Taste this," Hilda says as she squeezes a drop of "strawberry cheese-cake lube" on the back of my hand. Before I can mention that this lubricant tastes an awful lot like Robitussin, my eyes light on the holy grail, the Rolls-Royce of sex toys. Drumroll, please: Ladies and gentlemen, I give you the Rabbit Habit, complete with strategically placed rotating pleasure pearls, fluttering ears, swiveling head, and varying speeds for both rotation and vibration. This bunny does it all!

"It's a brave new world, my friend," Hilda says as she gives me a hug, gathers her three shopping bags worth of erotica, and heads home to celebrate her husband's 50th birthday. After checking out the vibrating bullet, the Pocket Rocket—which Hilda swears by—and the G-spot vibrator, I collect my purchases (yes, I managed to find a few things, but that's between me, my boyfriend, and the nice woman in accounting who signs off on expense reports) and grab a cab.

With Johannes in Europe, it'll be a girls' night in—just me, my 3-year-old, Dora the Explorer, and Angelina Ballerina. Someday Julia will go through my drawers just the way I did my mother's (and by the way, Mom, I'm onto you—a diaphragm is *not* a kitty cat's bathing cap), and who knows what she'll come across. Maybe I'll take that moment to tell her how you have to work at relationships, and how you have to care for yourself, and how—unless you want to be surrounded by a SWAT team and two dozen bomb-sniffing beagles—you have to take the batteries out of toys when you travel. Or maybe I'll just send her to lunch with Auntie Hilda. ●