



## THE LOVER'S TONGUE: A MERRY ROMP THROUGH THE LANGUAGE OF LOVE AND SEX

by Mark Morton

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Morton begins his romp with a quote from Samuel Johnson, remarking that the lexicographer is a writer of dictionaries, a harmless drudge, that busies himself with tracing the original, and detailing the significance of

works. *The Lover's Tongue*, reinvents the lexicographer's role as something more vibrant and titillating. Morton has produced a wonderful text on the philology of the language of love and sex. Thorough, indeed, if you can consider the extent to which he goes to pursue the origin and historical development of terms. Five pages list terms used to refer to the penis. It is quite clear from the introduction that this book may offend those sensitive to the subject matter. Morton's writing is more than a little tongue-in-cheek, and a real pleasure to read for those interested in philology's lighter side. Throughout the book, he quotes from the Bible to the dictionary, Chaucer to Shakespeare. Morton does not shy from the bawdy, and does not suffer from those sensibilities that Johnson refers to. It is clear that he enjoyed putting together this book as much as it is enjoyable to read, indeed like the "big O," it was over almost before it was begun.

REVIEWED BY TRUDI WRIGHT

