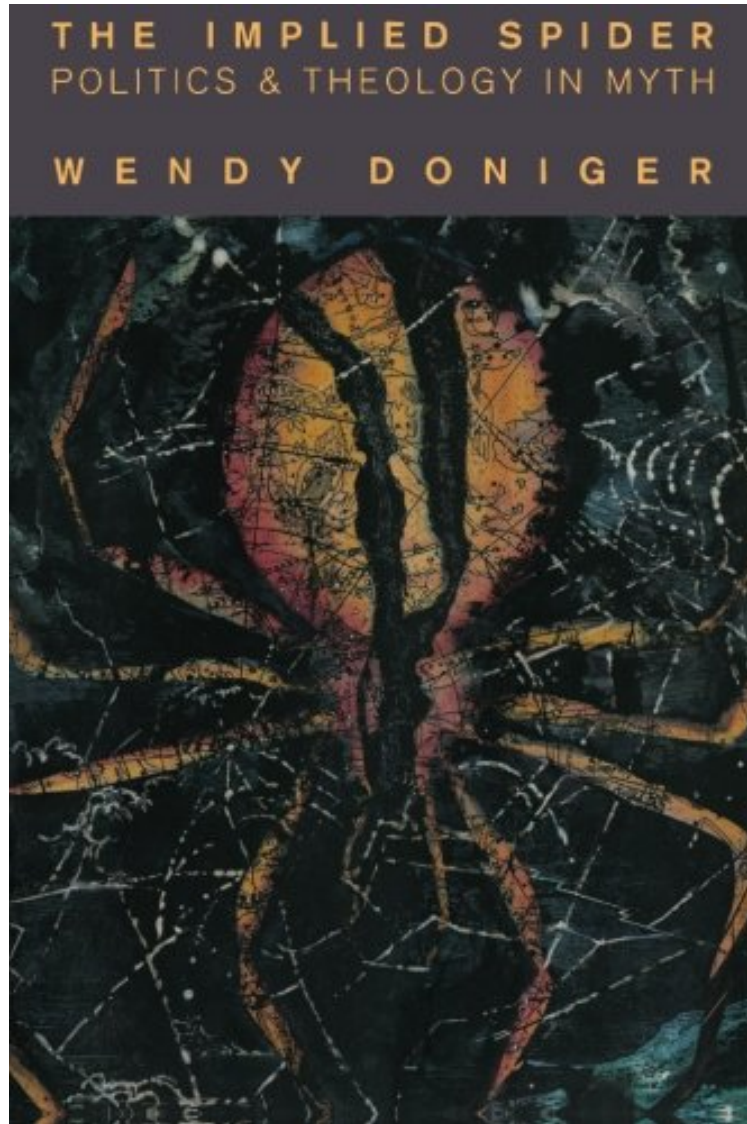


The Implied Spider

Wendy Doniger

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Wendy Doniger : The Implied Spider before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Implied Spider:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful study of mythologyBy DFWQThis is a brilliant book, even for non-academics. Its a fascinating read and analysis on how mythology works, and I especially loved Wendy Doniger's formulation of the telescope/microscope, a great way to look at the effectiveness of storytelling.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Wendy Doniger is one of best mythology experts on the planetBy CustomerThis is not fiction, so most of the above questions do not apply. Wendy Doniger is one of best mythology

experts on the planet. Her writing is never less than superb!! 1 of 4 people found the following review helpful.
Important book
By Elizabeth Dorsey
One of the most important books in my library. This book explains EVERYTHING. Is there a God (god) (goddess)? Or do we simply make it all up?

At this time of heightened political sensitivities, it may seem impossible to make serious comparisons among different cultures. And at a time when human difference is so relentlessly celebrated, it may even seem impossible to talk about the traditions and experiences that join us across race, religion, and nation. Wendy Doniger offers a powerful antidote to the paralysis of postcolonial intellectual life. In this spirited, enlightening book, she shows just how to make sense of, and learn from, the extraordinary diversity of cultures past and present. Tapping a wealth of traditions, from the Hebrew Bible to the Bhagavad Gita, Doniger crafts a new lens for examining other cultures, and finding in the world's myths--its sacred stories--a way to talk about experiences shared across time and space. "Of all things made with words," Doniger writes, "myths span the widest of human concerns, human paradoxes." Myths, she shows, bridge the cosmic and the familiar, the personal and the abstract, the theological and the political. They encourage us to draw various, even opposed, political meanings from a single text as it travels through different historical contexts. And she demonstrates how studying myths from cultures other than our own can be exhilarating and illuminating. Myth, Doniger shows, provides a near-perfect entree to another culture. Even if scholars such as Freud, Jung, and Joseph Campbell typically overstated the universality of major myths and suppressed the distinctive natures of other cultures, postcolonial critics are wrong to argue that nothing good can come from a systematic comparative study of human cultures. Doniger offers an engaged, expansive critical tool kit for doing just that. She suggests critical and responsible ways in which to compare stories--or texts or myths or traditions--from different cultures by revealing patterns of truth from themes that recur time and again. In this book, Doniger helps expand the arena of meaning we live in, leaping, in her words, "from myth to myth as if they were stepping stones over the gulf that seems to separate cultures." She enables us to see, at last, the "implied spider" that weaves the web of meaning that sustains all human cultures--the fabric of our shared humanity.

From Library Journal
The Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Chicago, Doniger here offers an introduction to comparative mythology. By analyzing the political, theological, and psychological structures of the sacred stories of various cultures through time, from the Hebrew Bible to Star Trek, Doniger shows how myths create a shared interdisciplinary narrative of all human cultures. She also argues that sorting out the feminine voice in this male-dominated art supplements our fragmented understanding of myths. Ultimately, Doniger shows that myths are a means of transcending daily life. Ranging widely, she offers a detailed, scholarly account that may not be easy reading for general audiences, however intriguing her premise. Recommended for academic collections.
A Leo Vincent Kriz, West Des Moines Lib., IA
Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. A timely meditation on what comparative studies might mean.... The Implied Spider wrestles with the problems of carrying out the kind of study represented by Splitting the Difference
a cross-cultural comparison of different stories from different areas of the world, different tribes, different languages. (Margaret Anne Doody London of Books)
This is a racy, enjoyable book.... Deriving from Plato an understanding of myth as both truth and lie, Wendy Doniger brings to her study a wealth of story and folklore from many different traditions, exploring creatively the enduring role of myth through time and across cultures. (Alwyn Marriage Theological Book)
An entertaining and highly accessible look at how myths reveal what is common to all humanity. (Parabola)
In these creative, often dazzling displays of erudition and insight, Wendy Doniger gives a ceaselessly engaged and always subject-filled view of myth. Another gem in the string of gems that mark Doniger's scholarly productivity. (Bruce Lawrence, Duke University)
A book that is particularly worthy of the attention of readers in religious studies beyond the history of religions. Since it is Doniger's most methodological book, The Implied Spider is important, not for its analysis of myths, but for the arguments that it makes in support of the comparative study of myths. (Religious Studies)
About the Author
Wendy Doniger is Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Chicago and a member of the Committee on Social Thought. Her books include *Dreams, Illusions, and Other Realities*; *Other Peoples' Myths*; *The Cave of Echoes*; and the English-language edition of Yves Bonnefoy's *Mythologies*. Her translations of such sacred texts as *The Rig Veda* are widely considered definitive.