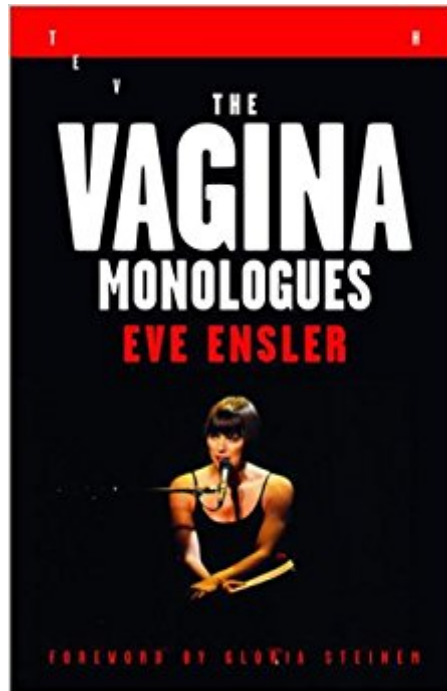




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The Vagina Monologues: The V-Day Edition



Synopsis

A poignant and hilarious tour of the last frontier, the ultimate forbidden zone, *The Vagina Monologues* is a celebration of female sexuality in all its complexity and mystery. In this stunning phenomenon that has swept the nation, Eve Ensler gives us real women's stories of intimacy, vulnerability, and sexual self-discovery. Celebrated as the bible for a new generation of women, *The Vagina Monologues* has been performed in cities all across America and at hundreds of college campuses. It has inspired a dynamic grassroots movement—V-Day—to stop violence against women. Witty and irreverent, compassionate and wise, Eve Ensler's Obie Award-winning masterpiece gives voice to women's deepest fantasies and fears, guaranteeing that no one who reads it will ever look at a woman's body, or think of sex, in quite the same way again. Included in this special edition are testimonials—both joyous and heartbreaking—from young women who have performed *The Vagina Monologues* at their colleges for V-Day, February 14, to raise money for organizations fighting to protect women.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"I say vagina because I want people to respond," says playwright Eve Ensler, creator of the hilarious, disturbing soliloquies in *The Vagina Monologues*, a book based on her one-woman play. And respond they do—with horror, anger, censure, and sparks of wonder and pleasure. Ensler is on a fervent mission to elevate and celebrate this much mumbled-about body part. She asked hundreds of women of all ages a series of questions about their vaginas (What do you call it? How

would you dress it?) that prompt some wondrous answers. Standouts among the euphemisms are tamale, split knish, choochi snorcher, Gladys Siegelman--Gladys Siegelman?--and, of course, that old standby "down there." "Down there?" asks a composite character springing from several older women. "I haven't been down there since 1953. No, it had nothing to do with [American president] Eisenhower." Two of the most powerful pieces include a jagged poem stitched together from the memories of a Bosnian woman raped by soldiers and an American woman sexually abused as a child who reclaims her vagina as a place of wild joy. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Ensler, famous, maybe notorious, for her witty, wildly popular meditation on female sexuality, *The Vagina Monologues* (1998), is as much journalist as playwright. Even her more traditional plays, such as this one, are based on extensive research. For *Necessary Targets*, she went to Bosnia to interview women who had survived the recent, brutal war. As in the *Vagina Monologues*, her hard work pays off. The play is a sobering reminder of the barbarism committed in the name of national sovereignty. Its accounts of the Serbian use of terror, especially rape, as a weapon against civilians are especially chilling. But the play is more than another news account of the war. Ensler shapes her findings into a series of compelling, highly characterized portraits of the refugees and a pair of well-meaning, sometimes misguided American women who come to help them. Ensler's portrayals avoid the easy clichés of quick-hit news stories and convey human experience in all its painful complexity. Jack Helbig Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As it were. I first saw these monologues performed in London, sometime in the late 90s. I went with a British buddy, and both of us were fascinated by the reviews (and admittedly the topic). After a brief survey of the audience, which seemed to be primarily women, with a few male significant others in tow, I concluded that we were probably the only straight or otherwise men who had simply come to enjoy the performance. And that was a pity, since I concluded that I loved its "edginess" and "consciousness raising," and was mainly surprised that it had not been done before. After all, isn't this a rather obvious topic? And what sort of repression has been operative to make the v-word so difficult to say, not to mention the much more guttural slang words for same? A central theme of the monologue is to stop violence against women. Eve Ensler, who conceived of

the monologues, and in the earlier versions, read the entire work, deserves an immense amount of credit for its production, then, as well as her continued efforts now. So, coming up on two decades after watching the performance, as part of my current reading program of significant plays, I decided to read it this time. Again, I felt the anger and outrage with some of the following:

“In the United States, the last recorded clitoridectomy for curing masturbation was performed in 1948 on a five year-old girl. (Source: The Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets). And: “For the last ten years I have been actively involved with women who have no homes. A home is a very scary place, a place they have fled, and that the shelters where I meet them are the first places many of them ever find safety, protection, or comfort, in the community of other women. “The Little Coochi Snorcher that Could?? With the subtitle of “Southern Woman of Color. Like some other reviewers, I have a LOT of objections to this piece. What was Ensler thinking or not? It conveys the traumatic upbringing of a southern black girl. At the age of ten, she is raped by her father’s best friend, and the father, in turn, shoots, and paralyzes the rapist. Additional traumatic events occur to her, but somehow it seems to be put right when she is 13, and seduced, with the help of alcohol, by a 24 year old woman. How can this possibly be justified, and portrayed in a positive light? Sex via power, and one of the most powerful modes is an enormous age discrepancy (and a bit, or more, of alcohol). There are some wise laws, and in New Mexico, it is NOT illegal for someone under the age of 16 to have a sexual relationship with someone, IF, that person is no more than three years older than the other person. And if that person is, it IS illegal. Ensler seems oblivious to this issue, but has modified the Monologues in some subsequent productions to have the child be 16, and delete the alcohol. A “good rape, as it was originally depicted? I think not. Furthermore, I would have loved more on, as Ensler wrote in one piece: “Discovering the key, unlocking the vagina’s mouth, unlocking this voice, this wild song. A better more positive balance would have gotten more men into that theater. And where does it stand today? About 30% of this Kindle version are letters and testimonials from women in the main and how the play changed their lives. They were now full supporters of “V-Day, a sincere effort to utilize Valentine’s Day as an effort to also stop violence against women. A couple of letters were from individuals at the University of New Mexico. Today, “V-day, as depicted on UNM’s website, has been

“moved, and is still awaiting an update. Alas. Great idea, reasonably edgy execution, with some serious conceptual flaws. 3-stars.

So I don't really know how to fairly put the review of this book because the first part is introduction and the "play" starts at page 38... The first part is kind of boring and more or less sums up what is coming but fine, I can accept that. The next 150-ish pages are really great and would be 5 stars right away because how mind-opening they are and how powerful they are. The strength of the whole book is here. After that we have about 50-ish pages of what people think about the book, V-days history, then another V-day history and it all gets boring and feels like it is more "filling" to make the book thicker but it is also boring and this part makes the book lose stars. I absolutely think there should be information about V-day and the movement but it is too much.

This book is, quite honestly, one of the most moving things I have ever read. It is packed full of vulnerability, honesty, education, and anecdotes all centering around vaginas. The Vagina Monologues is taking major strides in breaking down the "taboo" that surrounds discussing and - God forbid - finding pleasure in your own body. I would highly recommend this book to anyone that asks (and even those that don't) as this should be at the very top of any feminist's reading list.

Discusses the human condition that includes essential knowledge for both men and women to understand. Extremely primal, extremely real, purely human. Also discusses human rights infringements around the world (in our own backyard and across the globe). Women's rights are human rights! This is a MUST READ for EVERYONE.

A very very interesting read. It captured my attention.

Beautifully written. Inspired me to search for and watch the televised performance.

Essential! The book is great but try to find a performance if you can (usually around Valentine's Day).

I ordered this book for one of my college courses. I received it before its estimated arrival date. When I opened the package I realized it was an older version, not the same cover either as the one shown. As I thumbed through it I saw that this was a gift for someone at one point as there was a

handwritten note to the recipient of the book originally 13 years ago. I get to the end of the book and realized there was the original receipt for the purchase of the book back in 2000. I found this interesting and tacky. None the less it is in decent shape, old but will do for what I need.

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