

What Being a Woman Means to Me

by Brad DEIGHAN



The Vagina Monologues shows dumb men what being a woman means.

She moves her soft hand down to unfasten her dark brown belt. She slips out of her faded blue-jeans and slides her hand underneath her wet panties, and she begins to enter her vagina with long female fingers, faster and faster and faster and, yes, she's very much enjoying it. Is this an immoral act? Is this despicable? disgusting? wrong? Why is it that a guy can masturbate and admit to it, when a woman will repeatedly *refuse* to admit to masturbating?

Why *would* someone masturbate? One obvious reason for this is that it feels good, does it not? But the real question, raised by the women who took part in *The Vagina Monologues* seems to be "Why wouldn't someone masturbate?" or more specifically "Why wouldn't a woman masturbate?—or at least not *admit* to it?" This seemed to be the underlying question that ran through nearly all of the monologues. "The Flood" was one of them. An old lady is asked to talk about her vagina and answers that she *cannot* do that, "It's not right" she says, but she ends up talking anyway. She explains that her "down there" is like a dungeon that floods and smells like fish. "Things get stuck down there," she says.

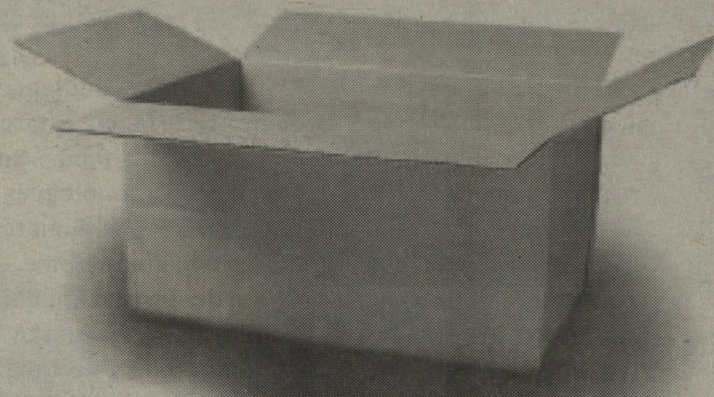
Though each topic was different, the idea behind each was the same; It is not because of anything "real" or "true" that women feel nervous when talking about their vaginas or vaginal issues. It is because women

have been psychologically conditioned or brought up in some way so as to believe that talking, thinking, acting, etc... in such a way as to break these old stereotypes is improper and unbecoming of what a woman is "supposed" to be, or what a woman is expected to be. It is the old fashioned stereotyped view of women.

The stereotype that men are the ones with the sex drive suggests that there is nothing wrong with a man showing his desire for sex, but women are not like this and therefore ought not show it. She who does shall not be seen as very "lady-like." Women being proper and acting according to what these old-fashioned rules prescribe is the main problem that *The Vagina Monologues* grapples with; however, there are other problems like rape and sexual harassment, the way the individual's first menstruation may be handled, etc... and anything related to the psychology of being a woman.

Women have typically been made to feel uncomfortable when talking about these common issues. The stereotype of the submissive woman, and all the extras that come with it, have added up to create the problem of women not being able to be open when dealing with issues that concern their womanhood. Anyway, that was my understanding of it all, maybe I'm wrong. After all, I'm just a big dumb guy that only knows how to chop down trees to make barns for livin'.

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