

# Reclaiming the word: return of 'The Vagina Monologues'

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Executive Editors

Vagina. Why does the word make people squirm? Eve Ensler wrote and performed the original "The Vagina Monologues" in 1996, as a way to celebrate the body part that makes every woman a woman - the vagina. The play is composed of monologues that relate to the body part through many ways, such as sex, birth and masturbation.

"Vagina is not a curse word," said chemistry professor Lisa Ponton. "But it often is treated as one. Hopefully, this starts to break through that."

"This play is an exploration of what it is to be a woman, to a certain extent," said creative writing professor Tita Ramirez. "It's about the diversity of voices that makes up the female gender and about the fact that, historically, those voices have been silenced to varying degrees. It's about speaking up."

The voices of the women in the monologues are an eclectic mix, covering different races, ages and orientations.

Instead of traditional casting, this production of "The Vagina Monologues" does not just feature actresses. The casting call was extended to women from every part of the school, whether they had acting experience or not. The monologues are taken from real women's experiences that have covered all walks of life, so the actresses should naturally be just as diverse.

"It's an intimate show," senior Jordan Frederick, the program director, said. "It's about the words, the stories - it's not just about us."

The last time "The Vagina Monologues" took place on Elon's campus was three years ago. The members of the Women's and Gender Studies Program and EFFECT decided a reprise was long overdue and asked students from every major to take part in the program.

The monologues will be performed 4 p.m. Feb. 14 at Yeager Recital Hall. There is no cost for admission, although donations will benefit Stop Raping our Greatest Resource: Power to Women in the Dominican Republic of the Congo.

The monologues are a celebration of the female being. The problem is that some people might decide to skip the event because they are intimidated by the "f" word - feminism.

Don't be. "The word 'feminism' is still considered to be a bad word, a loaded word," Ramirez said.

But truth is this: feminism - and "The Vagina Monologues" - is about celebrating every voice and acknowledging that everyone is equal.



Junior Sabrina Bradley rehearses her part in the monologue Tuesday night in Yeager Recital Hall.

"It's women talking about women," Frederick said. "It's not anti-men. College is all about defining oneself. Therefore, college is one of the best times to see a show like 'The Vagina Monologues,'" Frederick said.

"The monologues are about respecting not only the female body but the female self: to love yourself, you have to love all of yourself, and that includes your vagina," Fredrick said. "To fail to respect the entirety of your being, inside and out, is to leave yourself open to the corrupting influence of those who would tell you that you aren't good enough. As women, this is an infinitely important work to see, and one that our male counterparts shouldn't shy away from, either."

"I am still amazed that students today are shocked to see the flyer for the performance hanging on my door," Ponton said. "That shock means we still need to talk about these issues."

Those who helped put the monologues together hope the performance will have a lasting effect on the campus and get students talking about gender, sex and sexuality.

"What I hope we get out of this event is more open conversation on campus about topics covered during the show such as rape, abuse, stereotypes, sex, language and, of course, vaginas," said senior Betsy Donovan.

## Grab and Go: Quick, easy style

Picking out an outfit in the morning takes the backseat to the stress that accompanies the beginning of any semester. Rather than reaching for the



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sweatpants off the floor and the first T-shirt in the drawer, try these tips for getting out the door quickly, comfortably and fashionably. **Sort and organize:** While the

closets on campus aren't luxurious by any means, organization can go a long way to helping pair outfits. Instead of throwing items into drawers after they come out of the washing machine, sort out each garment by type. Put jackets and blazers together, casual shirts together and dressy shirts together. This organization helps you in the morning because it is easier to see what options are available for each occasion.

**Avoiding the slum:** There are comfy clothes in every person's closet, but wearing these clothes every day can make you appear indifferent. There are other ways to stay comfortable. Start by choosing articles of clothing with natural fibers, cotton, wool, silk and linen. Avoid blends with high percentages of polyester, acrylic and nylon. Natural fibers breathe better, are less prone to irritate skin and keep the body cool in hot weather and warm in cool. Simple natural tees and sweaters can be a great option to pair with the best old worn-in jeans, warm socks and boots.

Another option for maintaining comfort is to pick items that have a little stretch to them. Jeans or dresses with a spandex can add extra comfort while still allowing the natural fibers to dominate. Not too keen on jeans for comfort? Leggings with long tunics and sweaters can be just as comfortable as sweats, but actually give shape to the body.

**Have a fallback:** When applying for jobs, schools, housing or other life-changing decisions, most people find they have a fallback, or backup decision should the first option not work as planned. Fashion can work similarly. Go through your closet and find outfits that will look good no matter what. Some popular choices are pairing a basic white blouse with dark denim and boots or popping a menswear inspired blazer over a great dress. By finding outfits that work, it is easier to climb out of bed 10 minutes before class, grab something quick and still look fashionable.

**Put on a façade:** If all else fails, there are certain ways to trick bystanders into believing an effort was actually made.

While in class, keep a coat on, covering an old shirt and sending the message that the classroom is just really cold. No one will know that the shirt happens to be pajamas and everyone only sees how adorable and warm the coat must be. Or, dress in athletic wear, tennis shoes, T-shirts and running shorts or pants and bring along a big bag. This gives the impression the person is probably just going to the gym right after class. Actually, why not even do one better and try to go.

Fashion shouldn't be a chore, and it doesn't have to take time. By pre-planning outfits and figuring out what looks good, pairing together a wardrobe is just as simple as pulling sweatpants off the floor.

# Man of the Year: Mr. Delta Sigma Theta 2010

Brittany Washington  
Reporter

Hollywood: Lights, Camera, Action. Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. hosted the second annual Mr. DST pageant on Feb. 5 in McKinnon Hall. Freshmen Daniel Bass, Derricus Spear, Ben Poole and juniors Justin Berger and David Rogerson competed for the title of Mr. DST.

Music played as the men made their appearance on stage. Dressed in red button-down shirts, black dress pants

and black shoes, they performed a dance and stated their names, major, platform and hometown. Their platforms covered a wide variety of topics, such as education in youth, open-source information and preserving the environment.

The men returned in their casual wear. Freshmen Jess-Mara Jordan, Whitley Dozier, Janae Fraizer, Deanna Fox, Raven Manigault and sophomore Alicia Johnson escorted the men to the top of the runway.

As the men were escorted off stage, black history facts were shared: Shirley

Caesar, a gospel choir singer and pastor, and Hazel Johnson Brown, the first black female general in the U.S. Army, are both members of Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

Following the fashion portion, each contestant performed a talent. The men had diverse interests such as bata drumming, stand-up comedy, and origami. After the men's talents were showcased, a 15-minute intermission followed featuring music performed by Twisted Measure.

After the intermission, the contestants returned to the stage in formal wear. Once again strutting their stuff.

The night then transitioned into the question-and-answer portion of the evening. Each man was asked why he should be the next Mr. DST. Each of them mentioned they supported Delta Sigma Theta's principles and programs and thought these goals were beneficial to the men's platforms.

After the question-and-answer round, the audience voted on their favorite man.

Bass received the Most Improved award and Poole received Mr. Congeniality. The People's Choice went to Berger. The third place winner was Spear and the second place winner was Rogerson. Johnson was crowned Mr. DST 2010. He received a \$250 scholarship and will host an assisted chapter program about his platform on healthy black relationships.

"It makes me want to compete next year," freshman Sheldon Faison said.

Rogerson took home the main prize.

"The pageant allows males from Elon University to show their talents and true character. I enjoyed this experience and will never forget the bonds I built with these men," he said.

Proceeds from the tickets went to the African-American Alumni Scholarship, which will be available to future black students who demonstrate financial need. Funds also went to the American Red Cross for continuing relief efforts in Haiti.



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