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“The Vagina Monologues” is a theatrical production that focuses on the way society views women’s bodies. Many view it as revolutionary production.

The Women’s Studies Department brought this production to Radford University six years ago. Lucinda McDermott has been directing the production for five years and Dr. Michelle Ren has been the producer for the past five years as well.

Now, “The Vagina Monologues” is presented every spring, and has gone on to impact many women in various ways.

When asked how “The Vagina Monologues” has impacted the way we view the female body, McDermott reflected positively on her experience. “When I first started directing ‘The Vagina Monologues’ I was teaching a Theater 101 class. Some of the girls would blush, and the boys wouldn’t even talk about it . . . ‘The Vagina Monologues’ brings these ideas out into the open.”

The monologues definitely succeed in doing so.

RU shows ‘The Vagina Monologues’ every spring semester, usually in March. It never fails to provide an emotional result from both audience members and participants.

Many of the monologues drove audience members to tears. For once, women are allowed to watch something that does not portray them as a prize to be won.

The participants looked exuberant after the performance ended. Many of them, perhaps all of them, stayed behind afterwards. A few hung out in the lobby outside the auditorium, presumably there so they could greet audience members as they exited the building.

However, one thing I noticed was that there was not any drudgery in their faces — none of them looked like they wanted to be somewhere else, or like they hated being onstage for everyone to see. They looked like they believed in what they were doing.

They probably did.

90 percent of the donations went to organizations that benefit women in the community where the performance is being held. The other 10 percent of the donations go to V-Day, an organization that has worked to eliminate violence against women and girls since 1998.

Hand-sewn vagina pins were sold before and after the performance for \$8-10 a piece and surprisingly, for a charitable production, about half the pins had been bought by the end of the night.

A few of the audience members looked on the performance with an expression of practiced boredom and others with anger, sadness or joy.

Some monologues produced gasps and sobs from members of the audience, myself included.

It is easy to see why; in a culture where the word “vagina” is seen dirtier than its obvious male analog.

Even the slightest reference to it becomes uncomfortable, shameful or something to be hidden away in hopes that it will never be noticed.

If even the anatomical parts cause such discomfort, what about female sexuality? What about the topic of assault? Where does it become appropriate to start this conversation?

Up until now, the answer has been simple: It does not.

“The Vagina Monologues” has become a fixture in RU culture; it is held every spring, has been for six years, and is not likely to go anywhere anytime soon. Although, it is not just a musical.

None of it is fictional, though many of the monologues have been fictionalized for the sake of protecting the innocent.

It stands for something I really believe in.