

# WHEN CUNTS TALK



like...what would it wear if it got dressed...what are its nicknames...what would it say if it could talk...and she turned their answers into a manuscript. Some of the more compelling narratives became soliloquies with titles such as "Reclaiming Cunt," "My Short Skirt," and "My Angry Vagina."

According to a press release for the show, "the play brazenly explores the humor, power, pain, wisdom, outrage, mystery and excitement hidden in vaginas." Those must be some BIG vaginas to hide all that stuff in there!

"We live in a penis world," Ensler griped to a reviewer for *Metro Times Detroit*. "Everything about this world is phallic." The reviewer added, "Ensler wrote the play because she heard women talking about their vaginas and what they said surprised her. What she found out was that women were really 'hungry' to talk about them."

All those hungry vaginas have led to successful runs of the *Monologues* in London, Paris, Rome, LA, New York, Chicago, and Beaverton (just kidding). The play was also transformed into a best-selling book and HBO special. It has become a cultural phenom in which women—from most appearances, wealthy white women—pay \$30 for the privilege of chanting the word CUNT in a crowd of other women.

Since its premiere in 1996, the play has been performed by a rotating cast that has given solace to those who might have wondered whatever happened to Teri Garr...and Marla Gibbs...and Swosie Kurtz...and Rue McLanahan...and Hayley Mills...and Marcia Wallace...and Loretta Swit...and Peggy Lipton...and Nell Carter...why, they're up there onstage in *The Vagina Monologues*, talkin' 'bout their furry little wet *verjingeys!* Reading from cue cards, the actresses adopt the voices of a Bosnian rape-camp survivor; a seventy-year-old woman who's never had an orgasm because of an embarrassing problem of over-lubrication; a Southern Negress who finds love and sex in the arms of another woman; and many other vaginal vignettes straight from the mouths of cunts.

**MY BRAIN FELT LIKE A ROASTED CASHEW** on this blazingly hot midsummer day, the sort of day I don't want to hear *anyone* yabbering, much less a cunt. My girlfriend and I slipped out of the sweltering downtown sidewalk sauna into the cushy, carpeted Newmark Theater to see the Portland leg (labia?) of a *Vagina Monologues* touring company. This particular cast's marquee name was Karen Black, a great actress whose eyes remained crossed throughout *Easy Rider* and *Five Easy Pieces* thirty years ago and who now must bear the relative ignominy of being a traveling vaginal monologist.

There were two other actresses, a dreadlocked black one and a blonde white one. The programs listed their names as Starla Benford and Kristen Lee Kelly. I'm guessing Starla is the black one, because I don't think I've ever seen a black Kristen. All three actresses were topnotch. They showed lotsa spunk 'n' sass, making for a spunky, sassy, spunkily-sassafrassy show. And they were all very good at doing different accents, although Karen Black's Bosnian rape victim sounded a bit like Bela Lugosi doing Dracula.

Although the tickets cost thirty dollars, we were treated to no real set design beyond the three chairs from which the actresses, all of them wearing red T-shirts, never budge. Thirty bucks a ticket apparently isn't enough to make the actresses memorize their lines, either—instead, they read from cards just to keep reminding you that these are the *real* words of *real* women, but to me it just seems like a lazy way to get out of learnin' yer lines.

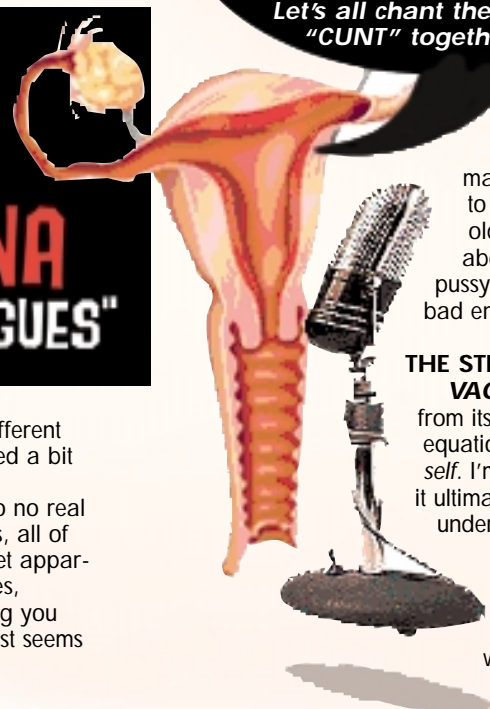
## Three cunts sit on stage, talking about cunts, while a thousand cunts—and about a dozen men—sit in the audience, listening.

It's OK if I use the word "cunt," because one of the cunts onstage—the black cunt, as opposed to the two white cunts sitting next to her—just led the audience in a rousing chant of "CUNT! CUNT! CUNT!"...We learned that the "C" stands for things such as "cute"...the "U" stands for "urge"...the "N" for "nice"...and the "T" for "tangy," so we've **reclaimed** the word "cunt," and now it's a nice word rather than a bad one.

As is "vagina," because the three vagina-bearing actresses onstage have helped us to reclaim that word, too. Sure, I used to think that "vagina" was a rather distasteful, malodorous, gamy, sticky, sweaty, pissy, moldy, bloody, slimy word myself, and the play *The Vagina Monologues* seems to imply that our culture finds the word repellent due to some sort of patriarchal conspiracy to make the ladies feel ashamed of their hoochie-noo-noos.

Much of the play's outrage...and be assured that it's a protected, suburban, abstract, *safe* sorta outrage...seems based in the idea that the sheer ugliness of the word "vagina" itself is part of a deliberate male plot to "rob women of our language," or some such nonsense, as if walking around with a "penis" and a "scrotum" is a real treat.

*Vagina Monologues* playwright Eve Ensler—may Goddess bless her *and* her vagina—has clocked phat bank by exploiting what is little more than a mildly clever Women's Studies project—she interviewed a coupla hundred women 'bout their vaginas, asking them stock questions, many of them goofy...*describe what it smells*



**I just flew in from Vegas, and boy, are my fallopian tubes tired! So...how many vaginas does it take to screw in a light bulb? Only one, but it has to do it VERY CAREFULLY...No, seriously, it's good to see so many vaginas out there in the audience tonight! I love all you cunts! Let's all chant the word "CUNT" together...**

## "If you want to stop violence against women, why don't you buy us all earplugs so we don't have to listen to you complain?"

Our tickets were for seats way in the back, and we found ourselves surrounded by giant mastodons and woolly mammoths. We were sandwiched between two women who must have weighed three hundred pounds each. Some lard-assed bitch behind me cackled at every joke in the show, and believe me, there were a *lot* of jokes.

Men don't fare very well in the *Monologues*. One woman tells of how her meanie of a husband forced her to shave her bush and still cheated on her anyway. Throughout the show's ninety minutes, from testimonial to testimonial, the only man who is apparently able to give any of these chicks an orgasm is some submissive doofus who insists on staring worshipfully at her spread-eagled snatch and slobbering over it. We also learn that lesbian relationships are much more likely to provide women with sexual and emotional fulfillment, existing as they do apart from the evil clutches of MEN, who are so penis-obsessed that they rarely know their way around a cunt.

**THE PLAY MIXED COMICAL, LIGHTHEARTED** 'giney-related material with atrocity stories about clitoral mutilation and Bosnian rape camps. And it didn't mix well, either. Vagina jokes found themselves crashing headlong into rants against clit-snippin' (which, interestingly, they claim is primarily an African phenomenon, and I wonder how that made the black actress feel). Truth be told, the only ones in the audience likely to have undergone systematic genital mutilation were the circumcised males...such as I, dear reader, such as I.

Women don't suffer more...they just cry louder. After a while, I had a Tourette's-like compulsion to start screaming out obscenities at the top of my lungs and possibly jumping toward the stage à la John Wilkes Booth. I wanted to shout out the most degrading racial, sexist, and homophobic remarks I could summon. I wanted to shout at these bitches to be grateful for what they have. *That*

would've been my version of chanting the word "cunt."

And while you're reclaiming "cunt" and "vagina," ladies, here are some more terms for you to reclaim: twat, snatch, gash, slit, hole, slimepit, and cumbucket. Try that one one for size, all you grandmas in Peoria who titter at *The Vagina Monologues*—reclaim the word "cumbucket" for me, will you? I wanna hear you chant the word "cumbucket," Granny!

I scanned the audience for the few male attendees, all of whom looked unhappy to be there, these poor, hunched-over cuckolds being dragged to this play. I wondered about their lives...I pondered the level of their pussy-whippification. I felt bad for them, but not bad enough to help.

**THE STRANGEST THING ABOUT THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES** for me, apart from its all-consuming silliness, is its constant equation of a woman's *vagina* with a woman's *self*. I'm not sure what they're getting at there, but it ultimately sounds sort of...objectifying. I was under the impression that for years, feminists have fought against the idea of equating a woman's body with her self. And *I* fight against that idea, too. I *love* the vagina. It's the *monologues* I have a problem with. It's not the cunt...it's the *talking*. The

self-absorption. The automatic presumption of innocence and victimization. The inability to confront your own potential for malice and hurtful behavior. And the eternal double standards, which you never seem to oppose so long as they benefit you.

I can separate the vagina from the person, and it's usually the person I wind up hating.

## EVE ENSLER HAS USED SOME OF THE MUCHO DINERO

she's earned from *Vagina Monologues* to launch an organization called "V-Day," which is described as "a movement to end violence towards [sic] women." One website boldly claims that *The Vagina Monologues* "gave birth to a global movement to stop violence against women and girls."

What about violence toward men and boys? Is that somehow better? Is that somehow less prevalent? Is that more acceptable? Are your vaginas more precious than our penises? Saying we should end violence against women and girls reminds me of a conversation I once had with a rock star...the only rock star I've ever known...where he noted that the movement to "stop black-on-black violence" somehow implied that it was preferable to be violent against white people.

Not once, through all my 'net-surfing about V-Day, did I get an inkling of what they were actually DOING to end violence against women, apart from raising money. And what evidence did they provide to support the idea that they know *why* violence against women happens and what can be done to stop it?

Maybe it has something to do with the fact that mothers hit their little boys more often than daddy does, and that mommy hits those boys more frequently than she hits her little girls. That's what the statistics say, anyway.

Oh, sorry—didn't want to complicate the story.

If you want to stop violence against women, why don't you buy us all earplugs so we don't have to listen to you complain?

## FOR \$30, I WANNA SEE

a chick shooting ping-pong balls out of her pussy. I want to see her mop a floor with the mop handle shoved up her twat. I want to see her blow out candles with the force of her vaginal muscles. I want to see her play the flute with that cunt. I want to see her make disturbingly loud duck sounds with her vagina. In fact, I want to see **Honeysuckle Divine** rather than *The Vagina Monologues*. Honeysuckle did all those things in a poorly reproduced video that was originally filmed at a San Francisco grindhouse in the early 70s. I still have the video somewhere in storage. Honeysuckle Divine—now *there's* a talking cunt I can get behind. The other twats are just blowing hot air.



**I tell ya, us twats don't get no respect! I want respect, and I won't shut up until I gets me some!**



**THE REAL TALKING VAGINA:** Photos of HONEYSUCKLE DIVINE, displaying her amazingly versatile snatch and shooting a ping-pong ball from her twat.

# Portland... Land of DUMB Band Names



Indie rock is the greatest threat to Western Civilization since the bubonic plague. Indie rock is the worst thing that white civilization has ever produced, and that includes racism, imperialism, and mayonnaise. Indie rock encapsulates all that is effete, sickly, and self-hating about the dead, immoral, apathetic West. Especially West Burnside.

Portland is a magnet for ugly, pimply, malnourished, disaffected youth who possess sufficient drive and trust-fund money to rent cheap houses with moldy basements wherein they live a rock-star fantasy that employs roughly five percent of the creativity as the band they're imitating, which in turn had only five percent of the creativity of the band *they* were imitating, etc. Rock and roll continues to gnaw on its own entrails, forever arrested, forever self-referential, forever doomed to be a paler and paler imitation of what it was when it started.

Since all of the good band names dried up years ago, the hapless rocker-come-lately has been forced onto fallow ground in search of

**THE DUMB BANDS:**  
**Wapeka, Coil Pac, and Punching Festus**

**THE VENUE:** Mt. Tabor Pub

**WHEN:** A hot June evening

**Wapeka**...wow, that's an *astonishingly* bad name. Conjures images of dreadlocked hippies blazing on acid setting their crusty ass hairs on fire while small naked African children sing their joyous tribal songs. Just a bad trip all around, buckaroo. **Punching Festus** is saddled with the dishonor of being a "Gerund Rock" band in the sad, sorry tradition of **Throwing Muses**, **Craving Theo**, and **Dissing Flatch**. And **Coil Pac** is irksome in its own right, especially the way they spell it without the "k." This triple bill of atrocious band names beat out another triple bill at **Berbaty's** featuring such bad-name stalwarts as **Machine That Flashes**.

As I already mentioned but am going to mention again, it was a hot June evening, and when we arrived at the ratty, poorly

ventilated **Mt. Tabor Pub**, the doorman informed us that **Wapeka** had broken up and wouldn't be performing. All my hopes and dreams were dashed! He added that **Punching Festus** hadn't shown up yet and probably weren't going to, which left only **Coil Pac** to entertain us. *Fuck Coil Pac!* Their name was really starting to get me steamed! We decided that **Coil Pac** weren't worth the \$3 and walked across the street to the **Space Room**, where my girlfriend's girl friend's boyfriend discussed home-refurbishing tips with the girls while I sat there silently.

**THE DUMB BANDS:** Science of Yabra, Wet Confetti, Other Men My Age

**THE VENUE:** The Blackbird

**WHEN:** A hot July evening

Inconveniently located near an overpass on Sandy Boulevard, **The Blackbird** hosts possibly more dumb bands than any other place in the universe, and for that I believe it deserves to be punished in some way.

As a perhaps-unconscious reflection of how truly shitty their aesthetic is, the indie rocker's fashion color of choice is **BROWN**. Dull, shit-colored brown. The infantile color of smeared doodie-doo. And **The Blackbird** is where the indie satchels and nerd glasses and bird chests all congregate in their brown T-shirts and brown slacks and ironic sneakers and ironic puffball ski caps to embrace the sort of physical and character defects which caused them so much social pain in high school a few years ago.

We arrived just after **Wet Confetti** finished what I'm sure was a blistering, seminal, watershed set. The doorman, who was the only other male besides myself in the bar who possessed anything properly resembling biceps, assured us that **Wet Confetti** had been "really good."

After swimming through Nerd Ocean up to the bar, I told my lady friend, "I wanna beat up everyone in this place...and I think I could!"

**Science of Yabra** spent about fifteen minutes setting up their equipment and doing a sound check right in front of us. This is an essential flaw of indie rock—its utter disdain for anything resembling drama or showmanship. Can't they afford a curtain here? I believe Charlie Chaplin was the one who said showbiz is all about entrances and exits, and watching a bunch of bored-looking, scraggly indie-boy shlubs set up their own equipment and twiddle aimlessly with their instruments was a less-than-compelling entrance.

Then they played a generic, indecipherable set of screeching post-hardcore so fucking **LOUD** that half of the audience was either holding their fingers in their ears or wearing impromptu earplugs made from cocktail napkins. All I remember about their music is that it was loud. Otherwise, it had the personality of corrugated paper.

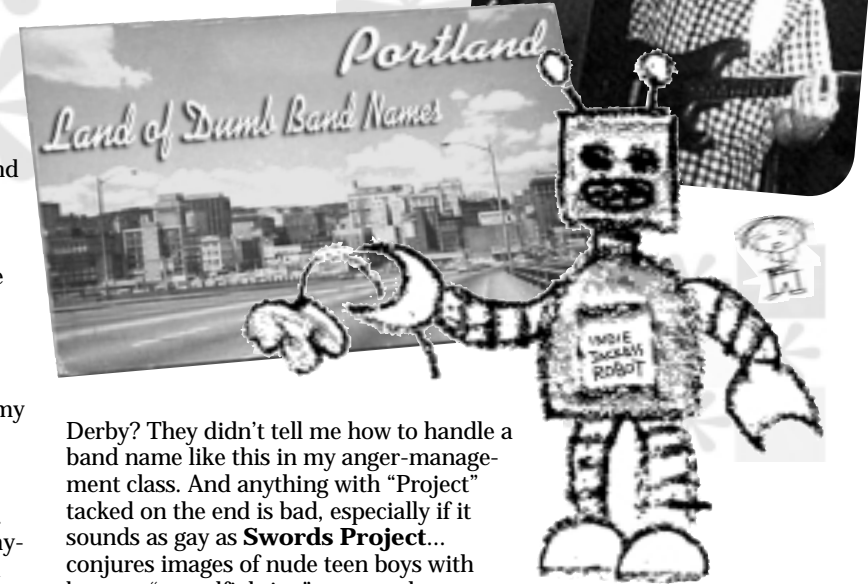
We decided that one band was enough and rushed out of the **Blackturd** before giving **Other Men My Age** a chance. We hailed a bus downtown, our ears ringing, our moods soured, vowing that vengeance would one day be ours.

**THE DUMB BANDS:** Avenue of the Strongest, Rock IV, Swords Project, & Windsor for the Derby

**THE VENUE:** Berbaty's Pan

**WHEN:** Another hot July evening

Just when you think the names can't get any worse, they do. **Rock IV** is the least offensive name amid this foul foursome of stupidly named bands...sort of dull and generic. But those other three bands—where do you start? **Windsor for the Derby?** **Windsor for the FUCKING**



**Derby?** They didn't tell me how to handle a band name like this in my anger-management class. And anything with "Project" tacked on the end is bad, especially if it sounds as gay as **Swords Project**... conjures images of nude teen boys with boners, "swordfighting" one another.

We initially balked at the \$7 cover price, but that short guy with the big head from **Thrasher** kicked us down a 2-for-1 deal. My sparkling lassie ordered a beer, I ordered a fake beer, and we sat at a small table about forty feet from the stage as the PA bled with some raja sitar clanky collegiate bullshit.

**Avenue of the Strongest** took the stage without much fanfare and without any sort of introduction whatsoever (I hate that). They featured a red-haired, big-nosed singer with a tiny guitar who resembled **Reuben Kincaid** from the **Partridge Family**. Their first song was an instrumental that started all moody and slow, then suddenly **ROCKED OUT**. When **Reuben Kincaid** started herky-jerkin' and poppin' blood vessels with his strident, uptight-guy, makes-ya-ashamed-to-be-white-just-watchin'-it dance moves, both me and my gal couldn't help but laugh. This band blew elephant cock, and we couldn't wait to get out of that place! Before leaving, we watched the next band (they, too, weren't identified) setting up their equipment. Every band member was wearing something brown.

We flushed the lifesized turds out of our consciousness and left **Indieland** once and for all. X

**"Indie Rock is the worst thing that white civilization has ever produced, and that includes racism, imperialism, and mayonnaise."**

a band name to call his own. The band names get worse and worse, and the bands get worse and worse, until, according to some projections, all possible band-name combinations will have been used by the year 2013, signaling the silent, shameful, overdue death of a musical genre which has been dying for decades.

I decided to comb Portland's local free weeklies in search of the band with the **WORST NAME** on any given night and to then go witness whether they can possibly be as bad as their name. I was not disappointed. In every case, they were at least as bad as their name...no, they were worse.

## PORTLAND'S DUMBEST:

The Dumb Band Names that follow were all taken from a single issue of the *Portland Mercury*, a publication uniquely devoted to the propagation of Dumb Band Name Culture. I'm sure there are dumber band names out there, but these should be more than sufficient to spoil your appetite to hear any more...that is, if you're a person of discriminating tastes like I am. These clumsy monikers serve as a stark, horrifying reminder of the infamy and public ridicule that will befall anyone stupid enough to

transgress the **Eight Golden Rules of Band-Naming:**

**1) WHEN YOU NAME YOUR BAND AFTER A FAMOUS PERSON, MOVIE, OR SONG... EVEN IF YOU GIVE IT A "CLEVER" TWIST... YOU DECLARE TO ALL THE WORLD THAT YOU ARE INFERIOR TO THE ORIGINAL:**

Mars Needs Women ★ Colonel Knowledge ★ Velvida Underground ★ Koufax ★ Soilent [sic] Green ★ Onry Ozzborne ★ White Line Fever ★ The Jeffersons ★ Brian Jonestown Massacre ★ Jackie-O Motherfucker ★ MisterClean

**2) THERE IS HARDLY ANYTHING ON EARTH LESS EXCITING THAN HAVING A NUMBER IN YOUR BAND NAME:**

10¢ ★ Reserve 34 ★ The Forty First ★ Twenty-Four Hours ★ 46 ★ No. 3 Breakdown

**3) PRETENTIOUS BAND NAMES REVEAL YOU TO BE DUMBER THAN YOU THINK:**

From Autumn to Ashes ★ Coheed to Cambria ★ Inner ★ A New Land of Me ★ Pangaea ★ Abstraktion ★ Rudement ★ Denote the Apex ★ Fiery Cubist ★ Hidden Under the Hidden Under ★ American Analog Set ★ Her Space

Holiday ★ Dance Imperative ★ Point Line Plane ★ The Planet The ★ The North Magnetic ★ Alter Echo ★ Water ★ Life After Liftoff

**4) LET'S OUTLAW GERUNDS ONCE AND FOR ALL!:**

Naming Asher ★ Dying Californian ★ Woke Up Falling

**5) USING AN "EXOTIC"-SOUNDING FOREIGN NAME ONLY GOES TO SHOW HOW WHITE-BREAD YOU REALLY ARE:**

Chango Malo ★ Nada Brahma ★ Tem Eyos Ki ★ Yume Bitsu ★ Hochenkeit ★ Zao ★ Shai Halud ★ Zuppa

**6) IF YOUR REAL NAME IS TOO BORING TO NAME A BAND AFTER IT, DON'T NAME A BAND AFTER IT:**

Stan McMahon Band ★ Charles Crosman Duo ★ Jay Purvis Trio ★ Mel Brown Quintet ★ Mel Brown Septet ★ Bobby Torres Ensemble ★ Caleb Klauder Band ★ June Bunton Trio ★ Lee Blake Band ★ Jane Wright Band ★ The Stephen Ashbrook Band ★ John Gross Duo

**7) MAKE SURE THAT YOUR BAND NAME ISN'T SO BORING THAT PEOPLE FALL ASLEEP**

**IMMEDIATELY AFTER HEARING IT:** Mindframe ★ Under Oath ★ Strongbox ★ Search Engine ★ Greenstar ★ Nice Nice ★ Varsity Finish Line ★ Mel

**8) WHEN YOU TRY TOO HARD, YOU INEVITABLY FAIL:**

Woozy Helmet ★ The Runnamucks ★ Full Moon BBQ ★ Monitgrrrl Bats ★ High on Fire ★ Cajun Gems ★ Hey Mercedes ★ Captain vs. Crew ★ Sleetmute ★ Our Lady Peace ★ Precursor ★ Hookah Stew ★ Charm Particles ★ Kung Pao Chickens ★ Boy Skout ★ Public Groovement ★ Rexsole ★ Dr. Yellow Swans ★ Buds of May ★ RoMarkable