"It is mandatory that you watch a production of the 'Vagina Monologues.'" This is the statement that began my journey into what was eventually going to be a life changing experience. My initial response was "Are you serious? It is mandatory that I need to watch a bunch of lesbian feminists talking about their vaginas?" I had heard of the play before, but never really understood exactly what it was about. Just like any other man, or woman for that matter, I figured that it would just be women talking about their vaginas. I have never heard a man talking about the "Vagina Monologues". Come to think about it, I never heard any man really mention vaginas, aside from people calling each other "pussies." This was really going to be an experience.

The first thing that I needed to do was to find someone to watch it with me. After all, there was no way that I was going to watch the play by myself. I was a man. What kind of real man was going to watch the Vagina Monologues by himself? I felt that I needed to get another man to watch it with me so we could both suffer through it. But that was not as easy as I expected. Well, what kind of response was I supposed to expect from another guy after asking him if he wanted to watch the "Vagina Monologues" with me? "Bro, are you serious?" was the most common response. Coming in at a close second was, "Are you a faggot?" Of course I needed to defend my manhood. "No, I'm forced to see it for my class. Come on, do you think I actually want to see this?" Despite my efforts, no man was going to watch the "Vagina Monologues" with me. But I needed to go to the "Vagina Monologues," and I was not going there by myself.

"Brittany, do you want to come see the 'Vagina Monologues' with me?" I had to go to the female gender to get someone to accompany me. So I asked a few female friends along with my girlfriend and my sister to come with me. I asked a total of five females. The next day I
purchased five extra tickets aside from my own. Just for the record, there was absolutely no hesitation when I asked them. They also did not know what the play was about, so we all went in with no expectations.

So the five of us walked into the theater, I saw a few women’s gender studies majors that I knew. This did not surprise me at all. The first thing I did was browse through the program. After seeing titles such as “The Flood” and “My Angry Vagina” I started to get really interested in what kind of production this was. A brief introduction explaining what the play was about still did not give me any idea of what was to come.

The first act consisted of women talking about the different names for vaginas around the world. “Wow, I wonder how many names there are for penis that I can come up with,” I thought to myself and wondered what else was in store for me. Next up, they talked about hair. “Are they seriously going to talk about pubic hair?” I thought. Well they did, and although it had somewhat of a comedic theme, I picked up on a serious matter. They talked vaguely about infidelity. The girl blamed it all on the hair on her vagina, but I still believed that there was a secret message behind all the “hair.” There were still some serious matters that were about to get mentioned.

The next topic was all about what your vagina would wear. Again, I thought that it was a bit ridiculous and mainly geared towards the females in the audience. Ok, I did picture a vagina wearing a red bow and a silk kimono. But combat boots? What else would they have in store for me? “If your vagina could talk, what would it say, in two words?” Alright, I will admit that “enter at your own risk” was clever. But this was still not a play that I would recommend to anyone.
A few more monologues followed, and still I could not really relate to anything they were saying. I had no vagina. Where are the Penis Monologues? This was not for me. Then came a vagina fact. “Genital mutilation has been inflicted on 80 to 100 million girls and young women.” “Holy shit,” I said to myself, “this just got serious.” Sure, I had heard of different kind of mutilations. But the number they mentioned was very alarming. The resulting effects were graphic, and for the first time during the play, I began to pay very close attention. My attention was amplified, when I heard the next monologue, “My Angry Vagina.”

“Don’t believe him when he tells you it smells like rose petals when it’s supposed to smell like pussy.” Alright, I was cracking up with the rest of the audience. That was actually kind of funny. Guys could relate to that one, because who is seriously going to say, “Well, quite honestly honey, it smells like pussy.” Fine, I had a fun time listening to that one, just that one. I still had a penis and was not about to become a Vagina Warrior. Go on with the show.

“The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy,” was next. Once everyone stood up, I had a feeling that this was about to get good. Ok ok, I was excited. “There’s the clit moan…” Yes, I was cracking up. “That’s great!” I told my girlfriend next to me. After receiving a smirk that clearly stated, “How the hell do you know?” I looked straight ahead and anxiously awaited the other moans. I reacted to each and every one with the same way. I could not stop laughing. This play was great.

I could summarize my reaction to the grand finale with one word, speechless. After hearing the director talk about the seriousness of gender violence, I was already listening intently and was very touched. Following the lecture, those that had been victims of gender violence along with those that knew victims were asked to stand up. I could not believe the amount of people that had been victims of such a serious issue. Yes, as a man, I actually felt very
sympathetic. Then, there was somewhat of a call to action. Although I am still unsure whether or not it was in good taste, there is no arguing that it grabbed the attention of every single member in the audience. The play that I was so hesitant to see and was struggling to find other men to watch, helped me realize that I, as a man, may have been one of the most important people in that audience. Although I had never taken any part in gender violence, I needed to take part in reaching a solution. From that point on, I realized that, as a man, I needed to take part in lessening the number of victims of gender violence. As far as the “Vagina Monologues,” I would recommend it to anyone.