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# Vagina: A New Biography

*Vagina*

A New Biography



Naomi Wolf

Bestselling author of  
*The Beauty Myth*



## Synopsis

An astonishing work of cutting-edge science and cultural history that radically reframes how we understand the vagina - and consequently, how we understand women - from one of our most respected cultural critics and thinkers, Naomi Wolf, author of the modern classic *The Beauty Myth*. When an unexpected medical crisis sends Naomi Wolf on a deeply personal journey to tease out the intersections between sexuality and creativity, she discovers, much to her own astonishment, an increasing body of scientific evidence that suggests that the vagina is not merely flesh, but an intrinsic component of the female brain - and thus has a fundamental connection to female consciousness itself. Utterly enthralling and totally fascinating, *Vagina: A New Biography* draws on this set of insights about "the mind-vagina connection" to reveal new information about what women really need, and considers what a sexual relationship - and a relationship to the self - transformed by these insights could look like. Exhilarating and groundbreaking, *Vagina: A New Biography* combines rigorous science, explained for lay listeners, with cultural history and deeply personal considerations of the role of female desire in female identity, creativity, and confidence, from interviewees of all walks of life. Heralded by *Publishers Weekly* as one of the best science books of the year, it is a provocative and deeply engaging book that elucidates the ties between a woman's experience of her vagina and her sense of self; her impulses, dreams, and courage; and her role in love and in society in completely new and revelatory ways sure to provoke impassioned conversation. A brilliant and nuanced synthesis of physiology, history, and cultural criticism, *Vagina: A New Biography* explores the physical, political, and spiritual implications of this startling series of new scientific breakthroughs for women and for society as a whole, from a writer whose conviction and keen intelligence have propelled her works to the tops of bestseller lists, and firmly into the realms of modern classics.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've read some reviews of this book on that were written by men who are, it is obvious, deathly afraid of the requirements of the art of intimacy. Some tend to focus on and take personally, one small experiential part of the book, as if it were an affront to be taken personally as an insult. I find such criticisms indicate a man who is insecure, threatened and afraid of women and their own feminine side. However, NW is quite clear about what kind of touch and behavior by or from men or other women, and the effect those behaviors are likely to have on target or witness of these acts. She goes into what some have called too much detail. Believe me, she could have been FAR more specific and detailed should she have so chosen. One point she does make unequivocally clear from the start is that this book is written about WOMEN, the woman's body, and the effect that those (described in delicious or frightening detail) behaviors and touches are likely have on women. She makes it clear, by saying so, that in certain areas she is writing about women and their over-all situation and that it may well be that men need their own book, their own research about how their bodies work. However, this is a great book and it is an important book. I think it is required reading for anyone with a vagina and/or has a relationship with someone who does. This book's importance is NOT in its description of just what a man or woman can do to truly open up and deepen what I will call a "vaginally populated relationship" (it's a clumsy phrase but I like it so I am keeping it.) This book's importance is the scientific evidence regarding female and male interactions. I'm sixty three and I thought I was pretty well informed.

most authors, even good scientists overstate their case these days. It seems to me like she struck a raw nerve with certain people and she's getting slammed, not just critically reviewed. Wolf is a journalist, not a scientist and she makes a typical layman's mistakes when looking at scientific data. she consulted scientists and clinicians whom she trusted, looked at the facts they gave her, and drew some conclusions based on those facts. She has constructed a convincing and plausible theory based on the information she was given. Her mistake was to promote a good theory as fact, rather than as speculation for further research. In my view (I'm a psychotherapist with an MS in psychology), she draws logical conclusions from her data, but, as most non-scientists do, she

forgets that even logically consistent propositions still need to be proven true. I would guess that many of hers will be, if anybody cares enough to do the work. Assuming her conclusions are true, they have important consequences for many women and their partners as well. Theories aside, the information she presents is vital in its own right, and needs to be more widely disseminated. She presents compelling evidence from multiple sources on how trauma to the vagina impacts the brain far more than other kinds of non-sexual trauma do. She presents good evidence that this is because of the extensive neural connections between the vagina and the brain, with each one giving feedback to, and influencing the functioning of, the other.

When I was in my early 20s, I had two friends who were on a quest to achieve the ultimate Reichian orgasm. A "Reichian" orgasm wasn't just any orgasm. It was a full-on, loss of control, mutual orgasm that tapped into the cosmic orgone coursing through the universe. That is, according to the gospel of Freud's disciple, Wilhelm Reich. I don't know if they ever achieved that goal, but for them it was all-consuming. Now along comes Naomi Wolf's *Vagina*, and a new generation of women and men may go in search of her well-described and tantalizing "ultimate" orgasm. I wish them luck. It could be a lot of fun. Though "fun" is not a word that Wolf herself would use. A "Wolfian" orgasm is much more than fun. It is bliss itself. She terms it the "high orgasm" and describes it as "that kind of orgasm that most intensely induces the most complete possible trance state and that most involves all the body systems, so that afterward the woman feels the most replete...." Like Reich, Wolf asserts that the high orgasm links the female to the transcendent, and thus has a spiritual dimension. Unlike Reich, Wolf has the benefit of 75 years of scientific sexual research, including modern brain research in which willing participants are wired and scanned while experiencing an orgasm. The "vagina" in *Vagina* is not just the vagina. Technically, the vagina is the introitus, the vaginal opening. But Wolf expands it to mean "the entire female sex organ, from labia to clitoris, to introitus to mouth of the cervix." Soon she adds other sexually sensitive areas, including the perineum, the anal area, and the G Spot (which, if you don't know, is the back of the clitoris).

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