



The "F" Word

Keep in mind: February is **Black History Month**! See page two for an excerpt from "**Still Stirring**," a poem composed for the MLK Celebration by UMaine student, Antonia Carroll.

V-Day: A Global Movement to End Violence Against Women

Sarah Elizabeth Dean

When you think of Valentine's Day, do you start to feel all warm and fuzzy inside, or do you get a little chill down your spine? For many, this lovely holiday is the bane of their existence--an ode to heteronormative capitalist institutions that insist the only way to show someone you love them is to spend vast amounts of money. For others, Valentine's Day is just cute and fun... After all, what's to hate about a holiday created for love?

However, in the midst of the sickening/adorable (you decide) events on the fourteenth of February, don't forget about another incredibly important event happening on that same day! It's called V-Day, and it is defined as "a global movement of grassroots activists dedicated to generating broader attention and funds to stop violence against women and girls, including rape, battery, incest, female genital mutilation (FGM) and sex slavery."

It all started in 1994 when playwright and activist Eve Ensler wrote *The Vagina Monologues*, a collection of pieces about women's sexuality, including their experiences with rape and abuse. The play ran for five years Off-Broadway, performing both in New York and around the United States. By 1998, Ensler and a group of women had realized that *The Vagina Monologues* was more than an artistic expression of the female experience, but also a beacon of hope and understanding for thousands of women.

V-Day was then turned into a nonprofit organization devoted to the eradication of violence against women, not just in the U.S., but worldwide. It is a grassroots movement for which women all over the globe have organized public performances of *The Vagina Monologues* in order to raise money for the cause. In a world where an overwhelming majority of women have faced sexual violence and gender-based discrimination, V-Day claims Valentine's Day as its own in order to celebrate women, raise awareness, and

end all violence. This February, the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department will be hosting a public showing of *V-Day: Until the Violence Stops*, a documentary about Eve Ensler's grassroots V-Day movement, on February 9th at 5pm in Fernald Hall 101.

In conjunction with V-Day, the Student Women's Association will be performing *The Vagina Monologues* on Friday, February 12th at 7pm in Neville 101 and on Saturday, February 13th at 3pm and 7 pm in the Cyrus Pavilion Theatre. Admission is \$5, and all proceeds go to Spruce Run Womancare Alliance, Mabel Wadsworth Women's Health Center, and Rape Response Services.

To learn more about violence against women, you can visit www.unwomen.org and to learn more about V-Day, go to www.vday.org.

VDAY
UNTIL THE VIOLENCE STOPS



“Still Stirring”

An excerpt printed with permission from Antonia Carroll in honor of Black History Month

Why do we have to keep stirring,

I ask myself.

Because this is the status quo,

I answer.

Because 39 students out of 52 students do not believe that racism is a problem on this campus.

Because 7 students out of 52 students can wake up in the morning, watch TV, go online, go to school, and say with confidence

“racism is not a problem in this country”

Because 40 students out of 53 students have *never talked about racism at UMaine*.

While my friend is traumatized in the middle of the night.

Why do we have to keep stirring?

Because this is the status quo

And the status quo must change

And because an object at rest stays at rest unless acted upon by an outside force.

But when we start to stir

47 out of 52 students will tell us *“All Lives Matter”*

So, we will ask,

Then, why

Why, will 1 in 3 African American men be imprisoned?

Why, is the poverty rate doubled for black people, for Native Americans, for Hispanic people?

Why, is your cause of death twice as likely to be police violence if you are born black?

We will ask them again,

Really?

Are all lives really equal?

General Upcoming Events:

Feb. 9th – Feminist Film Series showing *V-Day: Until the Violence Stops*. 5-7 PM in [101 Fernald Hall](#).

Feb. 12th – *The Vagina Monologues*. 7 PM in [101 Neville Hall](#).

Feb. 13th – *The Vagina Monologues*. 3 PM and 7 PM in the [Cyrus Pavilion Theatre](#). Admission is \$5. All proceeds go to Spruce Run Womancare Alliance, Mabel Wadsworth Women’s Health Center, and Rape Response Services.

Feb. 19th – #CondomWeek Dance Party. 7-10 PM at [58 Main Street, Bangor](#). Put on by the Mabel Wadsworth Women’s Health Center.

Feb. 23rd – Feminist Film Series showing *María in Nobody’s Land*. 5-7 PM in [101 Fernald Hall](#). Admission is \$5. All proceeds go to Spruce Run Womancare Alliance, Mabel Wadsworth Women’s Health Center, and Rape Response Services.

How Valentine’s Day is
Heteronormative and Problematic
Kyra Rickett

Valentine’s Day: a single day out of the 365 in which Americans decide to spend \$18.9 billion to prove how much we care for the person that we’re with (or how much we need to make up for faults over the past year). Gifts labeled for “him” and “her,” along with “his and her” sets take over your favorite retail stores, clearly divided and marked. For a heterosexual couple, seeing what’s hot on the market may be consumerist heaven, but what about LGBTQ+ couples?

Rummage through the cards at Hallmark, Papyrus, or even a local grocery store. Sure, there now exists cards for a majority of people’s sexual preferences...but the same old styles don’t necessarily correspond. For example, just because two women are dating each other doesn’t mean they love flowers and frilly cursive writing with glitter accents. The same goes for two men (in which the assumption is a man who is gay loses all masculinity).

In this day and age, same sex couples are more accepted than ever. So why isn’t it showcased? Well, that’s because big companies know well enough not to press the buttons of the stubborn handful of people who are still strongly against this way of life (don’t bite the hand that feeds you). If they’re not losing money, why change what’s been working for all of these years?

Therein lies the issue. We’re living in the past without looking at the present. Same-sex marriage was just legalized in every state, yet the only standardized Valentine’s Day event readily available is going out to dinner. If we’re going to accept something as drastic as marriage, let’s at least give them something to celebrate their love with.

“Synonyms” For Woman

U O X T N B H O E W
U V H U E X X G F K
R B A L S R G D E M
S G I S J P P I X V
K M O T I U B Y O D
A C M C C R D E U D
N H U Q A H R C D P
K M W B N O E B J C
K E G K H Z O F E H
L W C W E D K E L O

Without a word bank, see how quickly you can find the five most commonly used words to refer to a woman. If you tend to find yourself revealing the words with ease, take a moment to reflect on when you use these words most, and how it could negatively affect whomever you say them to.



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STAY TUNED FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE!

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