



Violation: Collected Essays by Sallie Tisdale

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Sallie Tisdale is the author of seven books on such varied subjects as medical technology, her pioneer ancestors, and Buddhist women teachers. Her many essays have appeared in *Harper's*, *Conjunctions*, *The New Yorker*, *Antioch Review*, *The Threepenny Review*, and many other journals. This first collection of work spans 30 years and includes an introduction and brief epilogues to each essay. Tisdale's questing curiosity pursues subjects from the biology of flies to the experience of working in an abortion clinic, why it is so difficult to play sports with men, and whether it's possible for writers to tell the truth. She restlessly returns to themes of the body, the family, and how we try to explain ourselves to each other. She is unwilling to settle for easy answers, and she finds the ambiguity and wonder underneath ordinary events. The collection includes a recent essay never before published, about the mystery of how we present ourselves to each other and whether it is possible to know our own inner lives.

Violation: Collected Essays by Sallie Tisdale Details

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Author : Sallie Tisdale

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From Reader Review Violation: Collected Essays by Sallie Tisdale for online ebook

Prima Seadiva says

This is one of the best essay collections I have read in a long time. Crossing a wide range of topics and written over several decades, virtually every essay hit home for me in some way. I can see going back and rereading a number of them.

She addresses and articulates from her perspective the questions we ask ourselves.

"Life is just following a trail around a mountain....."

"So I return again and again to questions about the nature of the self, what it means to live in a body, why we are all lonely, how to use language to say what can't be said. These are questions of intimacy and separation, and the answers are ambiguous at best."

My favorite essay was the Sutra of Maggots and Blowflies

Taube says

Holy mackerel, this is a motherlode of awesome.

Book Riot Community says

I'm always here for a good personal essay, and this collection was an exciting find. I love Tisdale's writing. She does the thing I look for in an essayist, which is to show her thought process on the page. She gives us a peek into her mind, and it's a fascinating place. She's a fabulous writer too — her sentences sometimes made my jaw drop with their inventiveness and audacity. Tisdale gets a spot on my list of favorite essayists.

– Rebecca Hussey

from The Best Books We Read in April: <http://bookriot.com/2016/04/29/riot-r...>

Branwen Sedai *of the White Ajah* says

Definitely the best collection of essays I have ever read!

Mary Beth says

An essayist's essayist, Tisdale lays out her thinking with elegant, empathetic reasoning, beautifully human in

exploring some fraught subjects (her work as an oncology-ward nurse, for example) without being morose, more playful in lighter topics (like a trip to Disneyland) without being flip. This collection covers several decades of her career, but the earliest essays are just as beautifully polished as the later ones.

Book Riot's 2016 Read Harder Challenge—Retro! (undertaken in 2017)

3. Read a collection of essays.

Jerrod says

This is a heavy, meaty tome. Not merely in the sense of its heft, but also in terms of its subject matter, which is wide-ranging but defined by preoccupation with life beyond surfaces and the essential questions that have come to define the author's life.

Tisdale is a writer of the body. She is obsessed with our physical presence in the world--how we are born, how we move, how we decay, how we die. In these processes, and our states in between them, she finds manifestation of the ideas that fill her work. Moreover, she counterpoints them with the other organic beings that share our planet. Her essays on elephants, in particular, demonstrate her ability to tease out great meaning from the small rituals that bodies enact, consciously or otherwise.

She writes elliptically, shifting between gradations of tone and register, and attentive to the way time is experienced on the page and in life. These pieces accumulate meaning, becoming stranger and more expansive as they progress. And yet, they never conclude with a bang. She writes neither to dazzle nor to explain. She writes to complicate. There is little in the way of conclusion to be found here, but the writing is all the better for this. It frees this writer to roam and her liberation becomes ours too.

The stone is turned over. Put down. Turned over again. There will always be more to know, even in a frame so small.

Cynthia says

"We Do Abortions Here," which appeared in *Harpers* and was Tisdale's most well-known work, is an astounding look at what it is like in an abortion clinic. Tisdale is a nurse and her essays often have to do with aspects of doing caring work.

Heather says

An impressive collection of thoughtful, beautifully-written essays. The ones on writing were my favorites, but I also enjoyed the author's essays on an elephant breeding program, Zen Buddhism (and flies!), her work as a nurse, scuba diving with eels, and her complex relationships with various family members. Tisdale makes connections between seemingly disparate topics with ease, and she leaves you thinking about her essays long after you've put them down.

Mark Mulvey says

Couldn't put this down. The writing (perfect), the range of fascinating subject matter (from elephants to oncology wards to flies to high school classrooms...), and the fact that somehow there emerged a subtle but consistent thread linking them all (The nuances of caring and the difficulties of empathy) blew me away. I wasn't familiar with Sallie Tisdale before picking this up, but now I probably won't stop recommending her.

Sorayya Khan says

Sallie Tisdale's essay collection is profound. Her list of topics is large and varied--from motherhood to sports, but each is treated with beautiful care and shows us the workings of her mind. Her essay Chemo World broke my heart the first time I read it and then all over again when I returned to it again. Sometimes there's a book that's too beautiful to swallow in one go and this is one. I read the book over a few months, reading an essay here and there, each opening my mind to a different way of seeing.

Pamela says

I loved this essay collection. It touches on so many topics (death, family, parenthood, abortion, nature, writing, truth...) with such honesty. Her essays make the reader want to be more observant and self-aware.

I believe book clubs would enjoy talking about the book as a whole and about the individual essays within it.

Josephine Ensign says

Eludent: That eludes the gaze (OED). An adjective that came to me last night in a semi-sleep state after I finished reading this collection of essays. Tisdale writes as if she is slipping away through some side door: just as you, the reader, think you have her, the author, in sight, you realize she is gone. Elusive, elliptical, evasive, with flashes of elegance. That's how I would describe the essays in this book. As a nurse, I appreciate her two essays that have to do with her work as a nurse. The now almost classic 'Fetus Dreams' and the more recent 'Chemo World.' But the essay that packs the biggest punch for me is the title essay, 'Violation.' There is this passage: "Families are dreadlocked worlds; they tangle together one cannot always get through. It is not easy to have a writer in the family; I understand this. Nor is it easy to be the writer in the family; writers charge themselves with the burden of a family's unspoken story." p. 190

Jessica Knauss says

Some of the best essays be one of the best writers. A wide variety with no disappointments.

Rebecca H. says

Read this book, people.
