



King Kong Theory

By Virginie Despentes

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With humor, rage, and confessional detail, Virginie Despentes—in her own words “more King Kong than Kate Moss”—delivers a highly charged account of women’s lives today. She explodes common attitudes about sex and gender, and shows how modern beauty myths are ripe for rebelling against. Using her own experiences of rape, prostitution, and working in the porn industry as a jumping-off point, she creates a new space for all those who can’t or won’t obey the rules.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In the newest from Despentes, author of the controversial 1991 novel *Baise-Moi* (and co-director of the controversial movie adaptation), the feminist provocateur examines key questions of sexuality, male and female roles, and her own awakening to action. Having been raped at 17, and served as unwilling confidante to many women since *Baise-Moi*'s publication, Despentes struggles mightily with a society that taught her, as a woman, not to fight back against a man attempting to rape her "when that same society has taught me that this is a crime from which I will never recover." She also, thankfully, finds some measure of relief; three years after being attacked, she discovered feminist writer Camille Paglia, whose words first inflamed and then emancipated her. Elsewhere in this short book, Despentes discusses sex, pornography, and prostitution. That she spent several years as a prostitute isn't notable, Despentes says; what's notable is that she's willing to speak about it. While Despentes wades boldly into some murky waters ("who is the victim in porn?"), she ultimately settles on a single, low note: "femininity is the same as boot-licking—the act of servility." Coming nearly 20 years after *Baise-Moi*, Despentes's manifesto feels flat and a bit in thrall to her earlier work.

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Review

"*King Kong Theory* is essential reading!" —**Dorothy Allison, author of *Bastard Out of Carolina***

"*King Kong Theory* brings to mind Solanas's *SCUM Manifesto*, Muscio's *Cunt*, and Plath's *The Bell Jar*—feminist eloquence without restraint. You will love it." —**Susie Bright, author of *Big Sex Little Death***

"Finally someone has done it! The feminist movement needs *King Kong Theory* now more than ever. A must read for every sex worker, tranny, punk, queer, john, academic, pornographer—and for all those people who dislike them too." —**Annie Sprinkle**

"The part that isn't sassily justifying her art, vision, and situated mode of thinking is half theoretical expansion and half memoir—fusing it all into one book that's accessible, entertaining and chock full of analysis of the type of -isms that can make the heart of this feminist melt. Don't get me wrong, there are plenty of pop culture moments for those of us who need that fix, but right alongside them is the nitty-gritty analysis that most commercially successful pop-feminism books tend to leave out. . . a risky, though engrossing, read." —**Bitch Media**

"Enjoyed it thoroughly. It is an urgent and overdue assessment of gender and culture. . . . An excellent book." —**3:AM Magazine**

"Part memoir, part political pamphlet, [*King Kong Theory*] is a furious condemnation of the 'servility' of enforced femininity." —**The Observer**

"[Virginie Despentes] sets her sights on saving us all from the demeaning, idiotic 'icons' we're sold on a daily basis, and she does it here in a thought-provoking and cleverly written way." —**The List**

About the Author

Virginie Despentes is an award-winning author and filmmaker, and a noted French feminist and cultural critic. She is the author of many award-winning books, including *Apocalypse Baby* (winner of the 2010 Prix Renaudot) and *Vernon Subutex* (winner of the Anaïs-Nin Prize 2015, Prix Landerneau 2015, Prix La Coupole 2015). She also co-directed the screen adaptations of her controversial novels *Baise-Moi* and *Bye Bye Blondie*.

Users Review

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Joshua White:

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