

Diane Henningfeld

SNATCHES

1.

Adrienne, you dove into your wreck
too soon. We need your sturdy voice
to rise above the clamor and the stink
of politics and greed. In Michigan the boys
in Lansing try to ban a woman's right
to speak because she dares to say vagina
in the chambers of the House. The fight
goes on. The Speaker's brief reminder
that decorum is required in the House
rings false. Instead the message reads: Unruly
women have no place outside a house;
or, women should be seen, not heard. Truly,
either way, it still comes out the same:
Shut your mouth and your vagina, dame.

2.

mouth
above
and below:
beware of teeth

3.

(Warning: Caution is advised. The following
may contain images and language not
suitable for children.)

(though last year two million
girl children endured female circumcision)

How to Circumcise a Girl

First: Find a girl.

Second: Confirm that she has reached puberty,
but is still a virgin. If she is not a virgin, skip
step three. Consider running over her with a car.¹

Third: Make a choice. Remove the tip of her clitoris
or
remove the entire clitoris and labia
or
remove the clitoris and labia and sew up the vagina.

It all depends on how serious you are
about shutting her up.²

4.

Back cover praise for *The Medieval Chastity Belt: A Myth Making Process*,
by Albrecht Classen, Palgrave MacMillan, 2007:

“What a delight! With humor, erudition, and a fine sense of history’s
changing mind-sets, Classen takes the reader on a wonderful and
surprising journey into a realm where academics often fear to tread.
Many a modern scholar may be a bit chagrined by Classen’s research
and results, but wholly captivated; and the medievalist will surely
smile.” —G. Ronald Murphy, SJ, Georgetown University

5.

You know the film, it's black and white, a cheeky
mouthy woman spouting off, it could
be Hepburn, or Bacall, she's always lovely,
smart, and tall, all movie long a drawn-out
battle, wits and words, until the moment
when the hero kisses her full on the mouth
while she's midsentence

¹ Philip Caulfield and Michael Sheridan write in the February 23, 2011, *Daily News*, "An Iraqi man in Arizona accused of killing his daughter because she had become too westernized was convicted on Tuesday of second-degree murder. Faleh Hassan Almaleki was found guilty of running over his daughter, Noor Faleh Almaleki, with his SUV in October 2009."

² Dr. Trisha McNair notes in "Genital Mutilation," *BBC Health*, January 2011, www.bbc.co.uk, "So drastic is the mutilation involved in the latter operation that young brides have to be cut open to allow penetration on their wedding night and are customarily sewn up afterwards."

Diane Henningfeld is a professor at Adrian College in Southeast Michigan, where she teaches literature. She has edited or authored more than 25 books of young adult nonfiction and has placed poems in *The Michigan Poet* and *The Penwood Review*. In her dreams, she is a young and edgy poet.