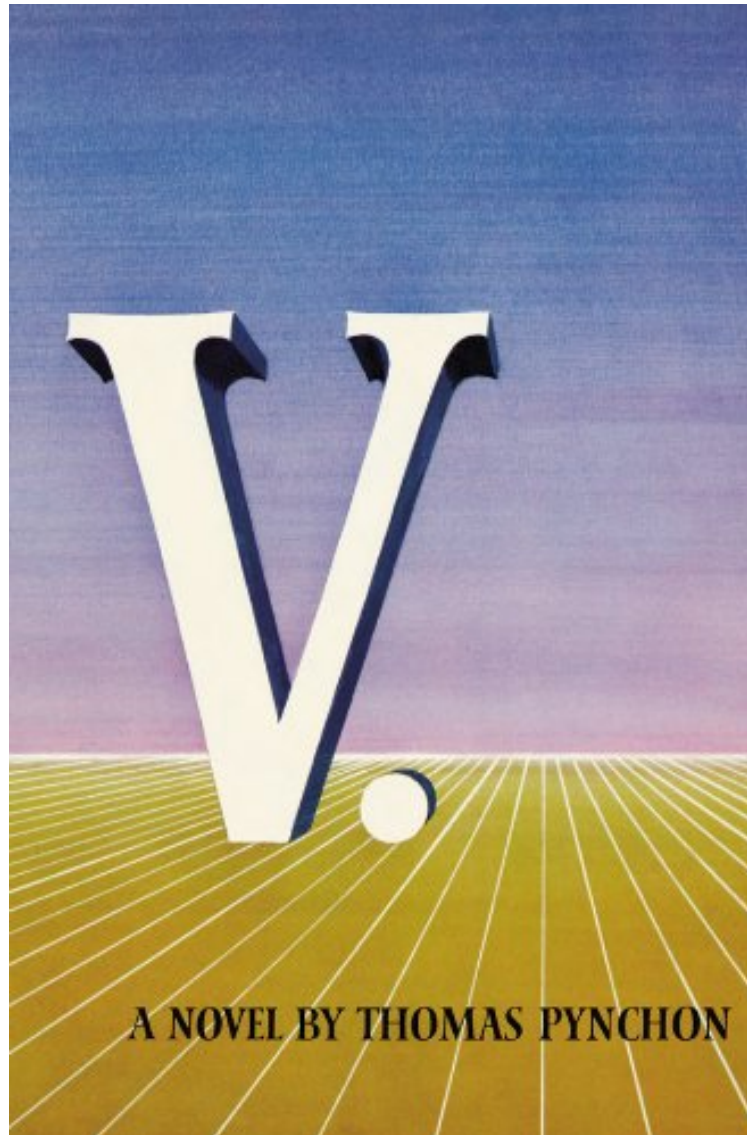


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V.

Von Thomas Pynchon
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2012-06-13File Name: B005CRQ2V2 | File size: 70.Mb

Von Thomas Pynchon : V. before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised V.:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen4 von 4 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Deceiving MasterpieceVon Ein KundeThis was my first exposure to Pynchon and it was a bit surprising, well aware of his infamous reputation as a difficult read I found myself having no trouble at all reading this book. With the exception of a few passages, it reads rather quickly. It reminded me more of "On the Road" than "Ulysses" in terms of prose.

However what is difficult about this book is not the actual text of it but the symbolism, the metaphors, the allegory. Also, it is one of those books where a character is mentioned but may not appear again for another hundred pages, making it difficult to remember all of them. It was an extremely enjoyable book though, much funnier than I expected and is one of the few books that had me wanting to re-read it as soon as I was finished, convinced there was more to pick up from it. While I do not think that this book is as symbolically significant as some previous reviews would have you believe, it certainly does "leave the imagination spent and the mind reeling." Most impressive of all is the fact that Pynchon was in his early twenties when he wrote this, a testament to his staggering ability. This is a book (and an author) well deserving of its reputation!

3 von 3 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Being and Nothingness

Von Jonald G. Morales

Pynchon's colossal first novel is a vast array of metaphoric dimensions. The quest for V takes on various meanings operating on different levels of consciousness, social strata and commentary, archetypal memory of mythic scope, and subconscious enlightened paranoia. Pynchon's stream-of-consciousness writing marks a very dense but liquid composition. Dealing with the various absurdities of life Benny Profane the initial character goes thru post war wayward derelict adventures with a bunch of misfits - the sick crew. From there on the novel takes on multiple personalities, viewpoints being passed around like a hot potato on onion skinned palms. Ending up mostly in Stencil's (Benny's friend) convoluted mysterious filial past, searching for his father's woman V who wrecked a series incalculable effects on pre and post world war 2 pandemonia. You'll sometimes get lost in the multiplicity of characters, but the narrative energy carries you thru with magnanimous ambivalence and resonance. The question of V is compounded with a multiplicity of meanings, Veronica, Vheissu, Valleta, Victoria ... Vater (father), a romance with Malta and Valleta, a city of inanimate and animate animosity, darkly pervading, a terrible reality of love lost in absurdity and existential angst... A sample passage in V: "Were there in her the same memories of azaleas, or any sense that this city is a mockery, a promise always unfulfilled? Did we share anything? The deeper we sank into twilight, the less I knew. I did - so I argued - loved this woman with all there was in me to expadite, or make secure any love: but here it was love in a growing dark: giving out with no clear knowledge of how much was being lost, how much would ever be returned. Was she even seeing the same pavillion? Hearing the same children at the frontiers of our park: was she here in fact or like Paola - dear God, not even our child but Valleta's - out alone, vibrating like a shadow in some street where the light is too clear, the horizon too sharp to be anything but a street created out of the sickness of the past, for the Malta that was and can never be again!" Always prevalent in the tale was the question of animateness and inanimateness. 20th century existential thought unquestionably suffuses the novel. It's Pynchon's equivalence of Sartre's 'for-itself' and 'in-itself' respectively, the benevolent 'nothing' and the cruel 'thing'- being and nothingness; in which people turn in to things and things and places are more alive than people. A changing of the guards that consummates the present century's alienation with itself. Absolutely, one staggering monument of dense moral and absurd parables, endlessly armed with symbolic philter to 'poison' the imagination to burst and wax brightly and darkly, a decadence of pure fury, a mirror of our times and sometimes convoluted minds. Simply awesome.

2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Concept Book

Von Peter Marcus

Mark Twain defined a classic as a book nobody had read but one everybody wanted to have had read - in other words, to have it out of the way. By this reckoning "V" is definitely a classic. It is a book that has to be read for anyone to understand the concept of V, or to understand the philosophy behind most of Pynchon's work; but reading the book won't necessarily help you get any nearer the "concept" - I read "V" six months ago and only now, having digested and ruminated for all this time, do I think I am anywhere near knowing what V really "is". The blurb on the back of my copy asks "who, where or what is V?" Good question, because V is all of these things - a who, a where and a what. So who is V? In the book she is Victoria Wren, British diplomat's daughter; she is also Veronica, a rat who had a relationship with a vicar in a New York sewer. V is, essentially, protean, she can morph, between human, animal or merely spirit. She can deconstruct and reappear. But the basic idea is that she is present at (and forming) important events in history (as I shall explain later). As previous reviewers have noted, Benny Profane's name echoes the first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth - Benny Pro-fane - five being, in Roman numerals, V. V is different people, different models of people. V is the women present at these great historic events, so she is a Venus to these great men she is controlling (read "Under the Rose" in "Slow Learner" for more on that). But ironically the greatest Venus of all is the Virgin, the sexless mother who is cultishly worshipped by men. V is also VI Lenin, linking the letter in with the sort of anarchism and conspiracies we shall see more of later. V is also the aristocratic "Van"s and "Von"s of Europe who, in Pynchon's mind and in stories such as CL49, control our world even today. For America, V is Vespucci, its namesake. What is V? V is for Vheissus, the mythical place that is merely a metaphor for the sort of scholarly challenge Stencil at one stage thinks V is. V, as I said before, is a concept present at moments of history - the V rockets, Churchill's V for victory, V for peace in the 60s, the Saturn V rockets that went to the moon, Verdun in WWI, Vietnam - and so on. And where does the swearing "V-sign" come from? Agincourt, where English archers showed they still had their fingers to the French. And who led the English at Agincourt? Henry V. As other reviewers have noted, V is a fuzzy and cloudy concept that is everything and nothing, and is all the fuzzier for its presence in foreign languages. V is German for "vater" (Stencil's father), "volk", "verboten"; French "verite" (truth); Italian "vita" (life); Latin "verbum" (the word). In English is it predominately a word linked with aggression (perhaps not surprisingly as every spear and knife has the V tip) and so

stands for violence, vengeance, vendetta, vile, vicious, versus. V is an uncertain symbol for dehumanisation, the atmosphere of doom before WWI, ideas of identity and journey. Pynchon seems to be saying that we are only at the top of the V, heading eventually toward the point (armageddon?). The metaphor of Kilroy that Pynchon brings up near the end exemplifies this - a fuzzy symbol that has changed and been dehumanised through time - perhaps it is all the more Pynchonian for being linked with "Kill the king" or "Kill the queen". Finally, where is V? V is Vheissus, Veinna (a link with 19th century European conspiracies), Nouva York (a reminder that for some languages "newness" and revolution are always linked with V), Virginia (where we first find Profane), Valletta, and Vineland (America). I know I may have wandered on a bit, but this shows how diverse an idea V is. I have by no means exhausted everything. V is a difficult concept to get your head round but is worth the effort. The only trouble is that it pops up everywhere and you can't stop seeing it - like at the bottom of the spine of my copy, published by Vintage, where there lies the publisher's single initial: "V".

Kurzbeschreibung The wild, macabre tale of the twentieth century and of two men one looking for something he has lost, the other with nothing much to lose and V., the unknown woman of the title. Having just been released from the Navy, Benny Profane is content to lead a slothful existence with his friends, where the only real ambition is to perfect the art of "schlemihlhood," or being a dupe, and where "responsibility" is a dirty word. Among his pals--called the Whole Sick Crew--is Slab, an artist who can't seem to paint anything other than cheese danishes. But Profane's life changes dramatically when he befriends Stencil, an active ambitious young man with an intriguing mission--to find out the identity of a woman named V., who knew Stencil's father during the war, but who suddenly and mysteriously disappeared. **Pressestimmen** "This work may well stand as one of the very best works of the century." -- "Atlantic" "Filled with wild humor, inventive wordplay and a darkly imaginative power."-- "Philadelphia Inquirer" "[A] brilliant and turbulent first novel." -- George Plimpton, "New York Times Book Review" "[L]eaves the imagination spent and the mind reeling." -- "New York Herald Tribune"