



It's a Slippery Slope

Spalding Gray

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Within a year, the familiar boundaries of Spalding Gray's existence have been altered by betrayal, love, lust and loss. He suddenly marries his longtime companion, and divorces her just as quickly; he moves in with his girlfriend, Kathie, who bears him a son; and he learns, against all odds, to ski. But not even his mastery of the much-feared right turn can prepare him for the exhilarating experience of fatherhood. A brilliant improvisation with as many twists and turns as a double-diamond course, *It's a Slippery Slope* explores how one man survives a mid-life crisis by finding his balance on skis.

It's a Slippery Slope Details

Date : Published September 30th 1997 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux

ISBN : 9780374525231

Author : Spalding Gray

Format : Paperback 112 pages

Genre : Plays, Writing, Essays, Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Drama, Humor, Theatre

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From Reader Review It's a Slippery Slope for online ebook

Rebecca says

Read in one sitting on a plane, this book was...fine. It made me want to go skiing, or make a return to winter, so it must have been doing something right. It also goes into my growing file of evidence that being an author, or even an artist, makes you kind of a dick. Sad. Gossip Note: Did Spalding Gray used to be involved with Elizabeth LeCompte?!?

Erica Tuggle says

Slippery Slope is a narrative by the late Spalding Gray. The work is meant to be read aloud in an auditorium during one of Gray's traveling tours. As such, the print version lacks what an author reading would give to it.

The story is about Gray's attempts to learn to ski coupled with the rocky time he is having as one end of a love triangle between a long-time girlfriend and a mistress. When the mistress becomes pregnant, the real-world shenanigans ensue. Gray was having health problems as he wrote this one, and concludes the work with hopes for his health to be on the upswing. Unfortunately, this was not the case and this is one of the last things he wrote.

The work didn't do much for me, but it may appeal to an older age range or maybe just those into skiing?

#2StarRead

Blair Hatch says

Saw this monologue in 1997 and thought it was amazing...felt good to read it after stumbling on it at library.. He is a masterful mixer of the funny and pathetic...so raw. The book was cool but no match for his live descriptions of the exhilaration of skiing and the awesome analogy of balancing oneself down the mountain...falling and recovering, losing it and finding it.

So sad but not surprising that he could only keep his balance for four more years...

The story of going from 160's to 195's is among the best. So glad he shared his tortured genius.

Amy says

Ok- here's the deal. this book left me incredibly sad. In fact, despite the humorous moments and interesting way of recounting his life in a monologue, I still was sad through most of the book. I can appreciate dark humor with the best of 'em, but this just wasn't the time for me, I guess. Last week, while boyczuk and I were driving home, we were stuck on one of the bridges here as the police, unsuccessfully, tried to talk a jumper down. She survived the plunge, but is obviously undergoing some intensive psycho-care right now. So, knowing that Gray offed himself in a river was just a bit too close to home, literally. I'm glad I read this book though.

(From my May 2005 BookCrossing entry. Read the book as part of a bookring.)

Willem says

I have a tough rating Spalding Gray. I'm addicted and re-read and re-read. Sometimes, it feels like looking at a train wreck.

Peggy says

I'm actually not sure if I read this already, or if I'm just remembering his performance of the piece at the Kennedy Center back in the 90s. I felt a little voyeuristic at times, reading about Gray's self-destructive tendencies and knowing how he ultimately met his end. It was a quick and bittersweet read, made all the more so by the fairly uplifting ending. I have Impossible Vacation, but I think I'll put some time (and maybe some lighthearted fiction?) in between that and this piece.

Andy says

like most of his, it has great parts about doing things alone when you're neurotic. Also, some hilarious parts (like the conversation w/ his dad) and his voice and timing are really on. It kind of goes all over the place but is way worth reading.

Michelle Freeland says

Ugh. So disappointing since I've loved Spalding Gray's monologue performances, but this was terrible. Even at only 105 pages, it felt long. Glad to be done with it.

RandomAnthony says

I've read everything Mr. Gray released and I have to say, "It's A Slippery Slope" is perhaps the least funny and most honest of his monologues. He perhaps lets himself off a bit easy for cheating on his girlfriend and hooking up with a new woman. He addresses his fears of fatherhood head-on even if he turns them into spots of humor that seem designed to promote reader sympathy. The skiing metaphor is overused. Mr. Gray pretty much bangs you over the head with this. I suppose "It's A Slippery Slope" could be best described as an apology/memoir from a guy who f--ked up and is trying to make the best of it; it's a quick, easy read but not particularly enjoyable.

Brandon Barnes says

I've always meant to check out Spaulding Gray, and now I have. I will do so again.

Kye Alfred Hillig says

Spalding Gray's writing is equally as entertaining as his monologues. In this book he learns to ski, gets a divorce and tries to talk his mistress into an abortion; and he does it all in way that you still love him at the end of it. The more I really pay attention to his work the more I see his inevitable path to suicide. He references it often throughout his entire body of work. His writing is digestable and strong. Here lies one of the greatest story tellers of our time.

Nicole says

Couple of days ago, I read Spalding Gray's book It's A Slippery Slope before work. A lot of moments framed in nuerotic hilarity of a mind that dwells. Can I just quote a couple of beautifully put sentences?

"I remember her waking me in the middle of the night with the deepest sobs I have ever heard. I had heard nothing like them, nor do I want to again."

"And I say, "To tell the truth, I don't know if I'm having a good time or trying to kill myself. He says, "When you're in that place that's when you know you're alive."

I know, I know. Not so hilarious eh? That's the rest of the book; read it yerself. It's not long. But these beautifully put sentences struck my emotional center.

Gerard says

goodreads emailed me saying "You started reading It's a Slippery Slope 199 days ago". Given that it's only 112 pages I figured I should announce I finished. I think i finished 198 days ago.

The problem with writing a review is Spalding Gray isn't just another author. He's really more like a friend you only know through books and monologues. You're either his friend or somethings wrong with you. There are plenty of things wrong with Spalding, so there, you already have something in common. I really like Spalding and try to go left as much as possible.

Phoebe says

I give this only three stars because it's so sad. It probably deserves more. Spalding Gray commits suicide a decade later, and you can really see him coming undone in this monologue, which is hard to deal with.

Kate says

Ol' Spalding had me thinking after this one, about falling in love again -- with his new family and with skiing -- that he was gonna be okay. RIP.
