

# Vox

By Nicholson Baker



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#### NATIONAL BESTSELLER

*Vox* is a novel that remaps the territory of sex—sex solitary and telephonic, lyrical and profane, comfortable and dangerous. It is an erotic classic that places Nicholson Baker firmly in the first rank of major American writers.



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# Vox By Nicholson Baker Bibliography

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• Dimensions: 8.00" h x .50" w x 5.20" l,

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• 176 pages



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#### **Editorial Review**

#### From Publishers Weekly

Baker's self-indulgent novel, a 14-week PW bestseller in cloth, transcribes a long telephone conversation between two people who meet over a phone-sex call-in line. Author tour.

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#### From Library Journal

Jim and Abby meet over the phone when they both dial one of those 976 party lines that are advertised in adult magazines. After some exploratory small talk, they retire to the electronic "back room" for a more intimate chat. Their long conversation makes up the entire book. If the premise sounds a bit thin, remember that Nicholson Baker's brilliant first novel The Mezzanine (LJ 11/1/88) was about an office worker's lunch-hour expedition to buy new shoelaces. Like all great artists, Baker has the ability to make familiar objects and everyday events seem new and strange. Centerfolds, lingerie catalogs, and X-rated videos will never look the same. Indeed, Vox transforms the genre itself: this is eroticism for the safe-sex Nineties. Not only is there no physical contact, the participants never leave the privacy of their own homes. Recommended, with the caveat that some readers may find the subject matter offensive. Baker's Room Temperature (LJ 3/15/90) was one of LJ 's "Best Books of 1990" (LJ 1/91).--Ed.

- Edward B. St. John, Loyola Law Sch. Lib., Los Angeles Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

#### From Kirkus Reviews

On a private adult phone-sex line, Jim, a West Coaster in his late 20s, connects with East Coast Abby. Birds of a feather--both of them witty, obsessive, yuppie masturbators--they're off, trading stories and fantasies and the psychopathologies of everyday life. Baker (The Mezzanine, Room Temperature), heretofore more a monologist, a literary performance artist, than much of a novelist, folds his deadpan honesty and funny fussiness double--and though Jim and Abby finally seem so much like the same voice that they don't really qualify as characters, they don't have to: Baker has found a conceptual format, the phone sex, perfectly tailored to his talents. This is a mini-epic of Big Chill--ed safe-sex: rambling stories that start out as aids to titillation but dry and crumble into homely and self-satisfied details that challenge eroticism; the overturning of classical seduction theory (here, both the man and woman, unseen to each other, know that the other has his/her hand on his/her self); lots of little snappy apercus and joshings establish intellectual coziness. The tropes of modern sex--olive oil, VCRs, copying machines, the letters in Penthouse Forum--are traded breezily, sometimes hilariously, but are nothing compared to the main technological thrill; after Abby tells him exactly how she masturbates in the shower, Jim (in the book's best and most concentrated moment) declares it a miracle, "a telephone conversation I want to have. I love the telephone." And Baker does expose a strange kind of dignity, in that Jim and Abby aren't using each other for very much more than as instruments of exemption from embarrassment. Quite a literary season for self-relief! First Harold Brodkey as the Mahler, the Liszt, of the hand-job, now Nicholson Baker as its David Letterman. -- Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

#### **Users Review**

#### From reader reviews:

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