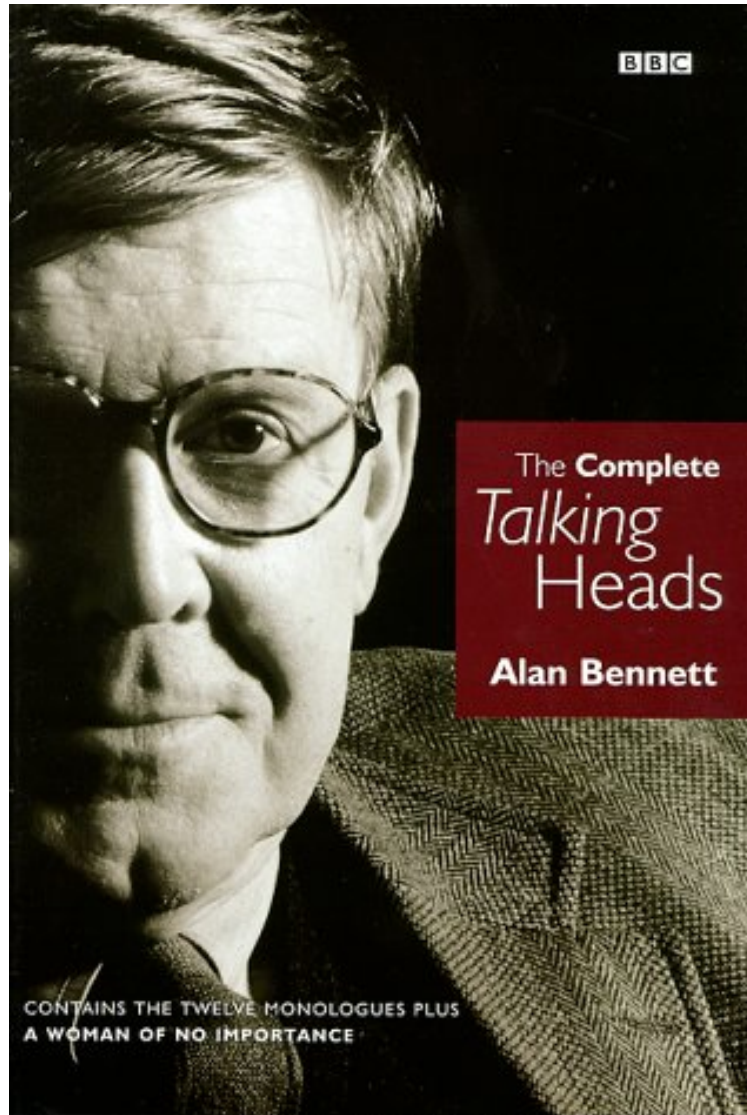


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The Complete "Talking Heads"

Alan Bennett

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Alan Bennett : The Complete "Talking Heads" before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Complete "Talking Heads":

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. And talk they do By M. A Newman There are few things that are more enjoyable than a rainy afternoon and this collection of character sketches on the IP. It is very easy to draw a picture of a person in crisis in the context of a two hour play; it is another thing entirely to carry out the same within the space of 30 minutes. These radio programs feature, for the most part soliloquies by people facing any number of personal crises from ill relations (in both senses of the word), trouble with the law and realization that their spouses

were not quite what they might have been on first inspection. I have to confess to a few favorites. "Bed Among the Lentils" is the story of a bored vicar's wife who finds the satisfaction that her life with a man of God has not provided in dry sherry and an the Indian owner of the off license. God is a business much like anything else. Ultimately she is disappointed by both and has to go through life as a prop in her husband's rise in the clerical hierarchy as he shamelessly exploits his wife's problems to show he has the compassion he clearly lacks. God is a business, just like agricultural machinery. "Soldiering On" is the story of an upper-class woman whose husband dies and by inches her world dissolves. Curiously she manages to keep up a brave front, finding solace in television and a walkman. This ultimately makes her story far more compelling than had Bennett allowed her to dissolve into histrionics. "Her Big Chance" is the story of an actress who, as the reader gradually learns, has taken work in a soft core pornographic film. The fact that she insists on maintaining a certain air of professionalism and dedication to her "craft" makes this all the more hilarious. These stories are, like most of Bennett's work, inspired compositions. One can only look forward to future efforts from this quarter.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. **TRULY CLASSIC BENNETT!** By Avery Gordon Alan Bennett is one of the finest writers of contemporary literature, and this collection of monologues is a classic, and wonderful fodder for actors! Bennett appears at first, like many Brits of the old stereotype, to be very understated and bland. But **DON'T STOP AT THE SURFACE**. Bennett has an incisive, razor-sharp wit that cuts like the keenest of weapons. He can have you laughing out loud one minute, and gasping at a sharp cut the next. I've never read a thing of his that I didn't love, and this one is a classic.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. **Psychological Character Studies** by a first rate writer By Cassandra An interesting set of one-man stories with a huge amount going on in the background, and you can tell how important what's not said can be. It helps to have seen the actual tv series, but I had only seen the first one, and was able to get a clear picture of what was going on in the second. The second set is much darker than the first I found, but anything by Alan Bennet is worth reading to me.

A volume which contains all the 12 monologues from both the television series of "Talking Heads", of 1987 and 1998, respectively, together with "A Woman of No Importance". The pieces are characterized by Alan Bennett's understatement, observation and knowing irony.

"Bennett's genius is his ability to satirize humanely. [His] prose is like stained glass: if you stare at it, you see things you missed."-- The New York Times Book "In the hands of Alan Bennett, the tragic and painful are close bedfellow with the funny and the sexual....We laugh at the situations presented and then feel a twinge of guilt."-- Los Angeles Times "Few write sharper dialogue or probe more tellingly into the frailties and occasional strengths of the human psyche than Alan Bennett. No one knows more about getting each scene just right or as consistently."-- William Trevor "Bennett's genius is for the imploding situation in which a cleverly made house of cards shudders and comes down; the comments of his characters as they nimbly pick their way around the wreckage verge on aphorism."-- The New Yorker