



## v.: ebook with audio

*Tony Harrison*

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The Star: 'A plan to televise a poem packed with obscenities caused outrage last night. ITV chiefs intend to screen a reading of Tony Harrison's verse v. which is full of four-letter words.' Daily Mail: A torrent of four-letter words... the most explicitly sexual language yet beamed into the nation's living rooms... the crudest, most offensive word is used 17 times.' Gerald Howarth, MP: 'It is full of expletives and I can't see that it serves any artistic purpose whatsoever.' Mary Whitehouse: 'This work of singular nastiness.' Harold Pinter: 'The criticism against the poem has been offensive, juvenile and, of course, philistine. It should certainly be broadcast.' Tony Harrison's v. was written during the Miners' Strike of 1984-85 when he visited his parents' grave in a Leeds cemetery and found it vandalised by obscene graffiti. In the book-length poem, he confronts the foul-mouthed skinhead thug responsible, who becomes a foil for his own anger and alienation. The political and media reaction to v. would make a book in itself. This is that book. As well as Tony Harrison's poem and Graham Sykes's photographs, this new edition of v. includes press articles, letters, reviews, a defence of the poem and a film by director Richard Eyre, and a transcript of the phone calls logged by Channel Four on the night of the broadcast. 'If I had the slightest influence over educational policy in this country, I'd see that v. was a set text in every school in the country, but of course if we lived in that sort of country, the poem wouldn't have needed to be written' – Richard Eyre. Channel Four's film of v. won the Royal Television Society's Best Original Programme Award. This ebook with audio uses a new recording of Tony Harrison reading v. made by Thistle-down Productions and first broadcast on BBC Radio 4 on 18 February 2013.

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