

The Purity Myth How Americas Obsession With Virginity Is Hurting Young Women Jessica Valenti

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The Purity Myth Atria Books

From the bestselling author of *Sex Object*, a searing investigation into American culture's obsession with virginity, and the argument for creating a future where women and girls are valued for more than sexuality The United States is obsessed with virginity--from the media to schools to government agencies. In *The Purity Myth*, Jessica Valenti argues that the country's intense focus on chastity is damaging to young women. Through in-depth cultural and social analysis, Valenti reveals that powerful messaging on both extremes--ranging from abstinence-only curriculum to "Girls Gone Wild" infomercials--place a young woman's worth entirely on her sexuality. Morals are therefore linked purely to sexual behavior, rather than values like honesty, kindness, and altruism. Valenti sheds light on the value--and hypocrisy--around the notion that girls remain virgins until they're married by putting into context the historical question of purity, modern abstinence-only education, pornography, and public punishments for those who dare to have sex. *The Purity Myth* presents a revolutionary argument that girls and women are overly valued for their sexuality, as well as solutions for a future without a damaging emphasis on virginity.

Virgin Seal Press

The United States is obsessed with virginity - from the media to schools to government agencies. This panic is ensuring that young women's ability to be moral agents is absolutely dependent on their sexuality. Jessica Valenti, executive editor of *Feministing.com* and author of *Full Frontal Feminism* and *Yes Means Yes*, addresses this poignant issue in her latest book, *The Purity Myth*. Valenti argues that the country's intense focus on chastity is extremely damaging to young women. Through in depth analysis of cultural stereotypes and media messages, Valenti reveals that

powerful messages - ranging from abstinence curriculum to "'Girls Gone Wild'" commercials - place a young woman's worth entirely on her sexuality. Morals are therefore linked purely to sexual behavior, as opposed to values like honesty, kindness, and altruism. Valenti approaches the topic head-on, shedding light on chastity in a historical context, abstinence-only education, pornography, and public punishments for those who dare to have sex, among other critical issues. She also offers solutions that pave the way for a future without a damaging emphasis on virginity, including a call to rethink male sexuality and reframing the idea of "'losing it.'" With Valenti's usual balance of intelligence and wit, *The Purity Myth* presents a powerful and revolutionary argument that girls and women, even in this day and age, are overly valued for their sexuality, and that this needs to stop.

The Purity Myth Seal Press

The Purity Myth Seal Press

In *Food We Trust* HarperCollins

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER The "paradigm-influencing" book (*Christianity Today*) that is fundamentally transforming our understanding of white evangelicalism in America. Jesus and John Wayne is a sweeping, revisionist history of the last seventy-five years of white evangelicalism, revealing how evangelicals have worked to replace the Jesus of the Gospels with an idol of rugged masculinity and Christian nationalism—or in the words of one modern chaplain, with "a spiritual badass." As acclaimed scholar Kristin Du Mez explains, the key to understanding this transformation is to recognize the centrality of popular culture in contemporary American evangelicalism. Many of today's evangelicals might not be theologically astute, but they know their VeggieTales, they've read John Eldredge's *Wild at Heart*, and they learned about purity before they learned about sex—and they have a silver ring to prove it. Evangelical books, films, music, clothing, and merchandise shape the beliefs of millions. And evangelical culture is teeming with muscular heroes—mythical warriors and rugged soldiers, men like Oliver North, Ronald Reagan, Mel Gibson, and the Duck Dynasty clan, who assert white masculine power in defense of "Christian America." Chief among these evangelical legends is John Wayne, an icon of a lost time when men were uncowed by political correctness, unafraid to tell it like it was, and did what needed to be done. Challenging the commonly held assumption that the "moral majority" backed Donald Trump in 2016 and 2020 for purely pragmatic reasons, Du Mez reveals that Trump in fact represented the fulfillment, rather

than the betrayal, of white evangelicals' most deeply held values: patriarchy, authoritarian rule, aggressive foreign policy, fear of Islam, ambivalence toward #MeToo, and opposition to Black Lives Matter and the LGBTQ community. A much-needed reexamination of perhaps the most influential subculture in this country, Jesus and John Wayne shows that, far from adhering to biblical principles, modern white evangelicals have remade their faith, with enduring consequences for all Americans.

White Evangelical Racism Simon and Schuster

The United States is obsessed with virginity — from the media to schools to government agencies. In *The Purity Myth*, Jessica Valenti argues that the country's intense focus on chastity is damaging to young women. Through in-depth cultural and social analysis, Valenti reveals that powerful messaging on both extremes — ranging from abstinence-only curriculum to "Girls Gone Wild" infomercials — place a young woman's worth entirely on her sexuality. Morals are therefore linked purely to sexual behavior, rather than values like honesty, kindness, and altruism. Valenti sheds light on the value — and hypocrisy — around the notion that girls remain virgins until they're married by putting into context the historical question of purity, modern abstinence-only education, pornography, and public punishments for those who dare to have sex. *The Purity Myth* presents a revolutionary argument that girls and women are overly valued for their sexuality, as well as solutions for a future without a damaging emphasis on virginity.

Virginity Lost Grand Central Publishing

A REESE'S BOOK CLUB PICK and INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER WINNER OF THE 2021 NEW AMERICAN VOICES AWARD, LONGLISTED FOR THE 2022 ANDREW CARNEGIE MEDAL, A 2022 DAYTON LITERARY PEACE PRIZE FINALIST, AND A NATIONAL ENDOWMENT OF THE ARTS "BIG READS" SELECTION "A profound, beautiful novel." —People * "Poignant." —BuzzFeed * "A breathtaking story of the unimaginable prices paid for a better life." —Esquire This "heartbreaking portrait of a family dealing with the realities of migration and separation" (Time) is "a sweeping love story and tragic drama [and] an authentic vision of what the American Dream looks like in a nationalistic country" (Elle). I often wonder if we are living the wrong life in the wrong country. Talia is being held at a correctional facility for adolescent girls in the forested mountains of Colombia after committing an impulsive act of violence that may or may not have been warranted. She urgently needs to get out and get back home to Bogotá, where her father and a plane ticket to the United States are waiting for her. If she misses her flight, she might also miss her chance to finally be reunited with her family. How this family came to occupy two different countries, two different worlds, comes into focus like twists of a kaleidoscope. We see Talia's parents, Mauro and Elena, fall in love in a market stall as teenagers against a backdrop of civil war and social unrest. We see them leave Bogotá with their firstborn, Karina, in pursuit of safety and opportunity in the United States on a temporary visa, and we see the births of two more children, Nando and Talia, on American soil. We witness the decisions and indecisions that lead to Mauro's deportation and the family's splintering—the costs they've all been living with ever since. Award-winning, internationally acclaimed author Patricia Engel, herself a dual citizen and the daughter of Colombian immigrants, gives voice to all five family members as they navigate the particulars of their respective circumstances. Rich with Bogotá urban life, steeped in Andean myth, and tense with the daily reality of the undocumented in America, *Infinite Country* "is as much an all-American story as it is a global one" (Booklist, starred review).

Forget "Having It All" Penguin

A Marriage Made in Hell Where did they come from, these furiously self-righteous "social justice warriors"? The growing radicalism and intolerance on the American left is the result of the strange union of Nietzsche's "will to power" and a secularized Puritan moralism. In this penetrating study, Mark T. Mitchell explains how this marriage made in hell gave birth to a powerful and destructive political and social movement. Having declared that "God is dead," Friedrich Nietzsche identified the "will to power" as the fundamental force of human life. There is no good or evil in a Nietzschean world—only the interests of the strong. Reason and the common good have no place there. The Puritan, by contrast, is morally rigorous, zealous to promote virtue and punish vice. America's Puritan tradition, now thoroughly de-Christianized, has been reduced to a self-righteous moral absolutism that focuses on the faults of others, intent on avenging the sins of society, institutions, and the

past in pursuit of the secularized ideals of equality, diversity, and social justice. As Nietzsche's ideas have permeated our culture, a new generation of radicals has embraced the rhetoric and tactics of the will to power. But the strength of America's residual Puritanism keeps them only half-baked Nietzscheans. More Christian than they care to admit, they cling to a moralism that Nietzsche would despise. The incoherence of their mixed creed dooms social justice warriors to perpetual frustration. Their identity politics generates ever more radical demands that can never be satisfied, further fracturing a society in desperate need of a unifying myth. We seem to be left with only two options, Mitchell concludes—Nietzsche or Christ, the will to power or the will to truth. The choice is bracingly simple.

Caste (Oprah's Book Club) Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

In *Pure*, Linda Kay Klein uses a potent combination of journalism, cultural commentary, and memoir to take us "inside religious purity culture as only one who grew up in it can" (Gloria Steinem) and reveals the devastating effects evangelical Christianity's views on female sexuality has had on a generation of young women. In the 1990s, a "purity industry" emerged out of the white evangelical Christian culture. Purity rings, purity pledges, and purity balls came with a dangerous message: girls are potential sexual "stumbling blocks" for boys and men, and any expression of a girl's sexuality could reflect the corruption of her character. This message traumatized many girls—resulting in anxiety, fear, and experiences that mimicked the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder—and trapped them in a cycle of shame. This is the sex education Linda Kay Klein grew up with. Fearing being marked a Jezebel, Klein broke up with her high school boyfriend because she thought God told her to and took pregnancy tests despite being a virgin, terrified that any sexual activity would be punished with an out-of-wedlock pregnancy. When the youth pastor of her church was convicted of sexual enticement of a twelve-year-old girl, Klein began to question purity-based sexual ethics. She contacted young women she knew, asking if they were coping with the same shame-induced issues she was. These intimate conversations developed into a twelve-year quest that took her across the country and into the lives of women raised in similar religious communities—a journey that facilitated her own healing and led her to churches that are seeking a new way to reconcile sexuality and spirituality. *Pure* is "a revelation... Part memoir and part journalism, *Pure* is a horrendous, granular, relentless, emotionally true account" (The Cut) of society's larger subjugation of women and the role the purity industry played in maintaining it. Offering a prevailing message of resounding hope and encouragement, "Pure emboldens us to escape toxic misogyny and experience a fresh breath of freedom" (Glennon Doyle, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Love Warrior* and founder of *Together Rising*).

Believe Me Hachette UK

New York Times Bestseller - An NPR Best Book of the Year "Sharp and prescient... The appeal of Valenti's memoir lies in her ability to trace objectification through her own life, and to trace what was for a long time her own obliviousness to it... Sex Object is an antidote to the fun and flirty feminism of selfies and self-help." —New Republic Author and Guardian US columnist Jessica Valenti has been leading the national conversation on gender and politics for over a decade. Now, in a darkly funny and bracing memoir, Valenti explores the toll that sexism takes from the every day to the existential. *Sex Object* explores the painful, funny, embarrassing, and sometimes illegal moments that shaped Valenti's adolescence and young adulthood in New York City, revealing a much shakier inner life than the confident persona she has cultivated as one of the most recognizable feminists of her generation. In the tradition of writers like Joan Didion and Mary Karr, this literary memoir is sure to shock those already familiar with Valenti's work and enthrall those who are just finding it.

Promised Land Oxford University Press

Cultural Complexes and the Soul of America explores many of the cultural complexes that comprise the collective psychic-filtering system of emotions, ideas, and beliefs that possess the United States today. With chapters by an international selection of leading authors, the book covers ideas both broad and specific, and presents unique insight into the current state of the nation. The voices included in this volume amplify contemporary concerns, linking them to themes which have existed in the American psyche for decades while also looking to the future. Part One examines meta themes, including history, purity, dominion, and democracy in the age of Trump. Part Two looks at key complexes including race, gender, the environment, immigration, national character, and medicine. The overall message is that it is in wrestling with these complexes that the soul of America is forged or undone. This highly relevant book will be essential reading for academics and students of Jungian and post-Jungian ideas, politics, sociology, and American studies. It will also be of great interest to Jungian analysts in practice and in training, and anyone interested in the current state of the US.

Rape Culture, Purity Culture, and Coercive Control in Teen Girl Bibles Hachette UK

What would happen if we believed women? A groundbreaking anthology offers a potent rallying cry and theory of change Harvey Weinstein. Brett Kavanaugh. Jeffrey Epstein. Donald Trump. The most infamous abusers in modern American history are being outed as women speak up to publicly expose behavior that was previously only whispered about -- and it's both making an impact, and sparking a backlash. From the leading, agenda-setting feminist editors of Yes Means Yes, Believe Me brings readers into the evolving landscape of the movement against sexual violence, and outlines how trusting women is the critical foundation for future progress. In Believe Me, contributors ask and answer the crucial question: What would happen if we didn't just believe women, but acted as though they matter? If we take women's experiences of online harassment seriously, it will transform the internet. If we listen to and center survivors, we could revolutionize our systems of justice. If we believe Black women when they talk about pain, we will save countless lives. With contributions from many of the most important voices in feminism today, Believe Me is an essential roadmap for the #MeToo era and beyond.

Jesus and John Wayne: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation Seal Press
Double standards are nothing new. Women deal with them every day. Take the common truism that women who sleep around are sluts while men are studs. Why is it that men grow distinguished and sexily gray as they age while women just get saggy and haggard? Have you ever wondered how a young woman is supposed to both virginal and provocatively enticing at the same time? Isn't it unfair that working moms are labeled "bad" for focusing on their careers while we shake our heads in disbelief when we hear about the occasional stay-at-home dad? In 50 Double Standards Every Woman Should Know, Jessica Valenti, author of Full Frontal Feminism, calls out the double standards that affect every woman. Whether Jessica is pointing out the wage earning discrepancies between men and women or revealing all of the places that women still aren't equal to their male counterparts—be it in the workplace, courtroom, bedroom, or home—she maintains her signature wittily sarcastic tone. With sass, humor, and in-your-face facts, this book informs and equips women with the tools they need to combat sexist comments, topple ridiculous stereotypes (girls aren't good at math?), and end the promotion of lame double standards.

Power and Purity NYU Press

Selected as One of the Village Voice's Favorite 25 Books of 2001 In this landmark work, historian Vijay Prashad refuses to engage the typical racial discussion that matches people of color against each other while institutionalizing the primacy of the white majority. Instead he examines more than five centuries of remarkable historical evidence of cultural and political interaction between Blacks and Asians around the world, in which they have exchanged cultural

and religious symbols, appropriated personas and lifestyles, and worked together to achieve political change.

Why Have Kids? Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Six myths lie at the heart of the American experience. Taken as aspirational, four of those myths remind us of our noblest ideals, challenging us to realize our nation's promise while galvanizing the sense of hope and unity we need to reach our goals. Misused, these myths allow for illusions of innocence that fly in the face of white supremacy, the primal American myth that stands at the heart of all the others.

Yes Means Yes! Routledge

Nervous, inexperienced, confused. For most, losing your virginity is one of life's most significant moments, always to be remembered. Of course, experiences vary, but Laura Carpenter asks: Is there an ideal way to lose it? What would constitute a "positive" experience? What often compels the big step? And, further, what does "going all the way" really mean for young gays and lesbians? In this first comprehensive study of virginity loss, Carpenter teases out the complexities of all things virgin by drawing on interviews with both young men and women who are straight, gay or bisexual. Virginity Lost offers a rare window into one of life's most intimate and significant sexual moments. The stories here are frank, poignant and fascinating as Carpenter presents an array of experiences that run the gamut from triumphant to devastating. Importantly, Carpenter argues that one's experience of virginity loss can have a powerful impact on one's later sexual experiences. Especially at a time of increased debate about sexual abstinence versus safe sex education in public schools, this important volume will provide essential information about the sex lives of young people.

An American Bible Temple University Press

In this fascinating book, Caroline Blyth takes a close look at Bibles marketed to teen girls and asks how these might perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes that lie at the heart of rape culture. The author considers the devotionals, commentaries, and advice sections placed throughout these Bibles, which offer teen girl readers life advice on topics such as friendships, body image, and how to navigate romantic relationships. Within these discussions, there is a strong emphasis on modesty, purity, and sexual passivity as markers of young women's "godliness". Yet, as the author argues, these gendered ideals are prescribed to readers using rape-supportive discourses and the tactics of coercive control. Moreover, the placement of these various editorial inserts within the pages of sacred scripture gives them considerable power to reinforce deeply harmful ideologies about gender, sexuality, and sexual violence. Given the seeming popularity of these Bibles among Christian teen girls, the need to dismantle their damaging rhetoric is especially urgent. This book will be of particular interest to those studying the Bible, religion, gender, and theology, as well as the general reader.

Translating Desire UNC Press Books

While plenty can be said about the dysfunction of our health care system, rarely do business and private players in health care innovation get a good rap. This book takes on skeptics of the partnership between the medical community, political groups, and private businesses, by illustrating how such cooperation can result in world-class innovation and health care delivery.

Myths America Lives By NYU Press

One of the great myths of contemporary American culture is that the United States' food supply is the safest in the world because the government works to guarantee food safety and enforce certain standards on food producers, processors, and distributors. In reality U.S. food safety administration and oversight have remained essentially the same for more than a century, with the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Federal Meat Inspection Act of 1906 continuing to frame national policy despite dramatic changes in production, processing, and distribution throughout the twentieth century. In Food We Trust is the first comprehensive examination of the history of food safety policy in the United States, analyzing critical moments in food safety history from Upton Sinclair's publication of The Jungle to Congress's passage of the 2010

Food Safety Modernization Act. With five case studies of significant food safety crises ranging from the 1959 chemical contamination of cranberries to the 2009 outbreak of salmonella in peanut butter, *In Food We Trust* contextualizes a changing food regulatory regime and explains how federal agencies are fundamentally limited in their power to safeguard the food supply.

In Search of the City on a Hill Univ of California Press

A provocative social history examines the history of virginity and of noted virgins in Western culture, describing the unique fascination civilization has had for virginity from a social, political, economic, philosophical, medical, and legal standpoint. Reprint.

Making Chastity Sexy University of Illinois Press

Even though they are immersed in sex-saturated society, millions of teens are pledging to remain virgins until their wedding night. How are evangelical Christians persuading young people to wait until marriage? Christine J. Gardner looks closely at the language of the chastity movement and discovers a savvy campaign that uses sex to "sell" abstinence. Drawing from interviews with evangelical leaders and teenagers, she examines the strategy to shift from a negative "just say no" approach to a positive one: "just say yes" to great sex within marriage. *Making Chastity Sexy* sheds new light on an abstinence campaign that has successfully recast a traditionally feminist idea—"my body, my choice"—into a powerful message, but one that Gardner suggests may ultimately reduce evangelicalism's transformative power. Focusing on the United States, her study also includes a comparative dimension by examining the export of this evangelical agenda to sub-Saharan Africa.