

# Medieval Virginities (Religion & Culture in the Middle Ages)



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From Joan of Arc to Britney Spears, the figure of the virgin has been the subject of considerable scholarly and popular interest. Yet virginity itself is a paradoxical condition, both perfect and monstrous, present and absent, often visible only insofar as it is under threat. Medieval Virginities traces some of the specific manifestations of virginity in late medieval culture. It shows how virginity is represented in medical, legal, hagiographical and historical texts, as well as how the seductive but dangerous figure of the virgin affects the aims and objectives of these texts. Because virginity is so often thought of as self-identical and ahistorical, Medieval Virginities aims to theorize and historicize its various manifestations and to demonstrate how representations and discussions of virginity continuously shift and change. The variety of subjects and disciplines represented here testify both to the elusiveness of virginity and to its lasting appeal and importance. Medieval Virginities shows how virginity's inherent ambiguity

highlights the problems, contradictions and discontinuities lurking within medieval ideologies. It will be essential reading for anyone interested in questions of gender identity, conceptions of the body, subjectivity, truth and representation in medieval culture.

作者介绍:

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