



Sexual Liberation: The Scandal of Christendom (Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality)

Raymond J. Lawrence Jr.

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Sex sells, they say, but even today, it is considered forbidden, wrong, or sinful by many in the Western world. This book is an account of the strange ways sexual pleasure has been devalued, even demonized, in the West by the forces of Christendom and its legacy in the modern world. It tells the story of how sex came to be regarded by societies throughout the ages as perverse, sinful, and wrong, and how the motivations of a few have lasted centuries and colored our view of sex and sexuality even today.

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For good or ill, Christianity has been, since before the ebbing of the Roman Empire, the principal bearer of public values in the western world. This book traces the changes that have shaped and reshaped what is considered moral sexual behavior (and immoral sexual behavior) by Christians and non-Christians alike. Lawrence's account of the perversion of sexual values begins with the intersection of the early Jesus movement and the morality of the Greco-Roman culture and empire. He goes on to point out the ways Christianity and its moral code were reshaped under the impact of Constantine's adoption of Christianity as the imperial religion, and how key figures of the Middle Ages generally succeeded in promoting a religion whose chief goal was the obliteration of sexual pleasure. The story continues on through the ages until now. This controversial look at sex and Christianity sheds new light on our views of pornography, homosexuality, adultery, and other issues of sex and sexuality.

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