

DEVELOPING A MEASURE OF PURITY CULTURE: SEXUAL MESSAGES IN
EVANGELICAL CHRISTIAN CULTURE

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by
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ABSTRACT**DEVELOPING A MEASURE OF PURITY CULTURE: SEXUAL MESSAGES IN
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Amanda M. Ortiz

Worthington et al. (2002) proposed a model of sexual identity development in which sexual identity development is influenced by social and cultural factors. One important cultural factor that has not been previously studied is the concept of “purity culture,” which is an important piece of the evangelical Christian subculture. The purpose of the present study was to define the construct of purity culture and develop a measure of purity culture that can be used to further study experiences of sexuality in evangelical Christianity. A survey of popular sources referencing purity culture determined that purity culture contains the following messages: the sexual double standard, women as sexual gatekeepers, men as unable to control their sexual desire, extreme modesty, virginity as a gift, benevolent sexism, and an “all or nothing” mentality as it relates to sexual activity. These messages of the purity culture, while upholding Christian teachings on abstinence, are distinct from traditional Christian teaching. Specifically, purity culture places even greater restrictions upon sexual behavior, and in legalistic ways focuses on external standards to the exclusion of internal motivations. The measure of purity culture, called the Purity Culture Beliefs Scale (PCBS) was developed following the best practice recommendations proposed by Wright et al. (2017). The PCBS, along with nine other measures to establish initial convergent and discriminant validity, were administered to 218 undergraduate students from a private evangelical liberal arts university. A principal components analysis was

conducted and revealed three components of the PCBS. The components were named “Shame and Guilt,” “Gender Roles,” and “Idealization.” Additionally, adequate internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were initially established for the PCBS. Future research should be conducted in order to further validate the PCBS and its subscales. This research helps to establish an initial theory of purity culture that may be used in future research on sexual identity development in evangelical Christian culture.

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CHAPTER 1

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The Christian religion has long restricted sexual behavior to certain relational contexts. While sexuality has been a focus of much psychological research, it has not been well studied within a Christian population. A person's religious upbringing can have a strong effect on development. In particular, most religions morally regulate sexual behavior. Consequently, religious orientation has an important influence on sexual identity development. Within contemporary evangelical Christianity, there is a so-called "purity culture," which places even more strict regulations on sexual beliefs and behavior. This purity culture first arose during the 1970s as a reaction against the sexual revolution of the 1960s (Anderson, 2015). Purity culture began to grow in popularity during the 1990s, and its beliefs were taught to adolescents in youth ministries across the United States. However, it is important to note here that while the movement was popular, not all Christian adolescents grew up in this purity culture, and thus the messages taught within purity culture are not universal.

There has been a recent backlash against this purity culture, and many Christians have written blogs about their experience of their sexuality in the context of this culture. These blogs describe shame and guilt associated with sexuality and virginity loss for Christians that grew up in this purity culture (Barbee, 2014; Collins, 2015; Darnall, 2017; Field, 2016; Gregoire, 2016). The purpose of the present study is to define the construct of purity culture and develop a measure of purity culture that can be used in further research on sexuality in evangelical Christianity.

First, the available literature on sexual development will be presented, with an emphasis on ways in which cultural messages shape sexuality. Second, some of the predominant cultural messages studied in psychological literature will be discussed, including sexual scripts and ambivalent sexism. Third, messages about sexuality specifically from religious sources will be presented, contrasting traditional messages from Christianity and those from purity culture. Finally, relevant psychological literature will be discussed, as well as attention to popular sources on purity culture.

Sexual Identity Development

When trying to further understand purity culture, it is important to first understand the impact of cultural and social factors on sexual identity development. The messages of purity culture are often heard first in adolescence, which is an important time in development. Several models of sexual identity development are based on Erikson's (1950) psychosocial stages and Marcia's (1987) ego identity statuses. Erikson's theory of identity development consists of eight psychosocial stages. In each

stage, a crisis emerges between the conflicting needs of society and the psychological needs of the individual. When the crisis is resolved, the person moves toward healthier psychological functioning. Expanding Erikson's view of the adolescent stage of identity, Marcia viewed identity development along two continua: commitment and exploration. He proposed four identity statuses: diffusion (low exploration, low commitment), foreclosure (low exploration, high commitment), moratorium (high exploration, low commitment), and achievement (high exploration, high commitment).

While other researchers applied these identity statuses to sexual identity development, they tended to focus solely on sexual orientation as the main component of sexual identity (Eliason, 1995). The model proposed by Worthington, Savoy, and Vernaglia (2002), on the other hand, is much more robust and helpful in understanding sexual identity development. They propose that heterosexual identity development is "the individual and social processes by which heterosexually identified persons acknowledge and define their sexual needs, values, sexual orientation and preferences for sexual activities, modes of sexual expression, and characteristics of sexual partners" (p. 510). As stated above, sexual identity development is both an individual and a social process. The individual process involves identifying and accepting one's sexual needs, values, etc., while the social process involves recognizing oneself as a member of a group with similar sexual identities. These processes are influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors. Social factors include the person's microsocial contexts (immediate family and peers), gender norms and socialization, culture, and religious orientation. According to this theory, the outcome of the two processes is one

of five identity development statuses: unexplored commitment, active exploration, diffusion, deepening and commitment, or synthesis. However, these statuses are fluid and may change over time. While this theory of sexual identity development may not fit perfectly with Christian notions of sexuality, it highlights various important factors that contribute to development. In particular, social contexts such as religious orientation, family, and peers, have a strong influence on sexual identity development.

Cultural and Social Factors Influencing Sexual Identity Development

As stated above, Worthington et al. (2002) posit that sexual identity is influenced by cultural factors, including socialization. In the following sections, various cultural and social factors that influence sexual identity development will be discussed. This includes various sexual scripts, such as the sexual double standard and women as the gatekeepers of sexual activity. Additionally, the topic of ambivalent sexism will be reviewed.

Sexual Script Theory

One aspect of this socialization is described in sexual script theory. “Scripts” are cognitive devices that guide people’s actions and help them make sense of their behavior (Jones & Holster, 2001). They outline the typical sequence of appropriate social behavior (McCormick, 2010). Gagnon and Simon (1973) propose that sexual scripts are shaped by external, interpersonal elements, as well as internal, intrapsychic elements. The external dimension of sexual scripts is mainly based in culture and social

convention. This includes verbal and nonverbal gestures, such as commonly used language and establishing the sequence of sexual behaviors. McCormick (2010) suggests that there is a continuum of sexual scripts, the least permissive being that sex and intimacy are acceptable only within heterosexual marriage. Traditionally, Christians have endorsed these less permissive sexual scripts. This is because religious beliefs help shape and govern sexual scripts. Purity culture significantly influences the development of sexual scripts, particularly for Christian adolescents. This includes the ideas mentioned above, that women should not be as sexual as men, and that women are responsible for maintaining the boundary on sexual activity. In psychological research, these have been labeled as the sexual scripts known as the sexual double standard and women as the “gatekeepers” of sexual activity.

Sexual double standard. McCormick (2010) describes the sexual double standard as a predominant sexual script that dictates that female sexual behavior should be more regulated and constrained than male sexual behavior. The sexual double standard has also been described as men chasing sex and being driven by lust, while women chase relationships and are driven by love (Reid, Elliott, & Webber, 2011). In a review of 30 studies, Crawford and Popp (2003) found evidence for the continued existence of the sexual double standard, but that it has evolved over time and is heavily influenced by situational and interpersonal factors. They found that some groups continue to enforce an absolute sexual double standard, and that it is even evident within groups of people who are abstinent. Specifically, a study found that those who were abstinent endorsed scripts that allowed men, but not women, to engage in kissing and

petting without relational commitment. An additional study found that men find a woman more desirable for marriage if she was not sexually permissive.

While Crawford and Popp (2003) found that many endorse a sexual double standard, they also explained it has changed over time and become a less rigid sexual script. A study by Reid et al. (2011) found similar results. In their study, 273 undergraduate students were asked to interpret a vignette that described a heterosexual hookup, followed by a sexless first date. In this study, they defined hookup as having sexual intercourse. Participants were asked to interpret the vignette from either the man's perspective or the woman's perspective. Results found mixed evidence for the sexual double standard. Specifically, there was greater evidence for the sexual double standard in the sexless date part of the vignette. Participants described that the woman was likely withholding sex during the date as a way to redeem her reputation, while the man was described as only interested in sex and going out with the woman on a "pity date." However, during the hookup portion of the vignette, participants generally described the woman as having sexual agency and desire, and the man as being interested in a relationship post-hookup. The results of this study demonstrate the continued existence of the sexual double standard, although it has evolved over time.

Another study by Sakaluk, Todd, Milhausen, Lachowsky, and URGiS (2014) used qualitative focus groups to develop a measure of sexual scripts in heterosexual emerging adults. Three focus groups of men and four focus groups of women led to the development of several dominant sexual scripts. One script that emerged was similar to the sexual double standard, which stated, "men are always ready for sex," and "women

inhibit their sexual expression” (p. 519-520). An additional script that emerged was that single women who appear sexual tend to be judged more negatively. These scripts were additionally supported in the quantitative measure developed as part of the study, demonstrating the prevalence of the sexual double standard.

Women as sexual gatekeepers. The script that women are sexual gatekeepers is defined as women having the responsibility to limit their own and their partners’ sexual expression (Schleicher & Gilbert, 2005). The above-mentioned study by Sakaluk et al. (2014) also demonstrated evidence for this sexual script. Within the focus groups, the script emerged that men tend to initiate sex, while women are gatekeepers, setting limits on sexual activity. However, after exploratory factor analysis of the quantitative measure developed, this script did not emerge as its own factor.

In contrast, a study by Schleicher and Gilbert (2005) examined dating experiences and dating preferences in 162 upper-division college students. Results showed that the script that women are gatekeepers may be diminishing. Participants endorsed that men and women expressing sexual desire is positive, and that men tend to initiate greater intimacy. However, participants did not significantly endorse that women are supposed to set limits on sex, both in dating experience and dating preference.

Overall, there appears to be evidence within psychological research for the sexual double standard and women as gatekeepers scripts. These two scripts also appear to be integral to the teachings of purity culture. While these scripts have changed somewhat over time, they are likely prevalent in the more conservative sexual teachings of the evangelical church.

Ambivalent Sexism

Another cultural message about sexuality and gender that is often taught is that women are the weaker sex. In psychological research, this type of attitude is conceptualized as benevolent sexism. Glick and Fiske (1996) describe a theory of ambivalent sexism, which consists of hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. While hostile sexism consists of overtly contemptuous attitudes toward women, benevolent sexism characterizes women as pure creatures that need to be protected, adored, and supported by men (Glick & Fiske, 2001). In this view, it is implied that women are weak and best suited for traditional gender roles.

Within benevolent sexism, there are three components: paternalism, gender differentiation, and heterosexuality (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Protective paternalism is the belief that women are to be loved, protected, and cherished. Because women are viewed as weaker, men must protect and provide for women. Complementary gender differentiation is the belief that women have positive traits that complement men's traits, and heterosexual intimacy is the belief that men are incomplete without women, and highlights the psychological desire for closeness. Benevolent sexism, though more subtle than hostile sexism, is a form of prejudice, and has been shown to promote gender inequality in over 19 nations (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

Benevolent sexism in evangelical contexts. In addition, a few studies have shown the prevalence of benevolent sexism in evangelical Christian samples. A study by Maltby, Hall, Anderson, and Edwards (2010) examined the relationships between gender, religious belief, and ambivalent sexism in an evangelical sample. Three hundred

thirty-seven undergraduate students from an evangelical university were administered the Christian Orthodoxy Scale (COS; Fullerton & Hunsberger, 1982) and the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 1996). Results demonstrated that men were more likely than women to endorse benevolent sexism in general, and protective paternalism in particular. In addition, results showed that gender moderated the relationship between Christian orthodoxy and protective paternalism. Specifically, for men, as the endorsement of Christian orthodoxy increased, endorsement of protective paternalism also increased; this relationship was not found for women. These findings suggest that the aspect protective paternalism may be associated with Christian orthodoxy, particularly for Christian men.

Another study by Eliason, Hall, Anderson, and Willingham (2017) examined gender role ideology and benevolent sexism in an evangelical Christian sample. Participants consisted of 340 female undergraduate students at an evangelical university. Participants were asked to complete the ASI, as well as measures of sex role ideology, biblical beliefs about gender roles, body objectification, self-silencing, and career aspirations. Results showed a significant positive correlation between biblical beliefs about gender roles and protective paternalism, as well as a significant positive correlation with hostile sexism. This research suggests that as gender roles become more traditional, endorsement of hostile sexism and protective paternalism increase in evangelical contexts. The above-mentioned studies (Eliason et al., 2017; Maltby et al., 2010) suggest that endorsement of traditional gender roles and Christian orthodoxy may be associated with greater endorsement of benevolent sexism—particularly the

protective paternalism aspect of benevolent sexism—in evangelical subculture. These findings are particularly relevant to purity culture.

The most obvious aspect of benevolent sexism seen within purity culture is protective paternalism. Despite the above-mentioned notion that women are sexual gatekeepers, purity culture operates within a patriarchal system. Many in the evangelical church believe in traditional gender roles, and this is evident in the teachings of purity culture. In more extreme cases, fathers are charged with upholding their daughters' purity, until the time when she is married, and the responsibility is passed to her husband. This upholds the idea that women are inherently weaker and need a man to protect them.

The above section discussed relevant psychological literature on cultural and social messages about sexuality. Traditional sexual scripts have dictated that sexual thoughts and behaviors are more acceptable for men than for women (Crawford & Popp, 2003; McCormick, 2010; Reid et al., 2011; Sakaluk et al., 2014), and that women should be held responsible for placing limits their own and their partners' sexual activity (Sakaluk et al., 2014; Schleicher & Gilbert, 2005). Additionally, social messages have included benevolent sexism, which is a subtler form of prejudice than hostile sexism, and has played an important role in gender inequality (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Glick & Fiske, 2001). Research also suggests that benevolent sexism and hostile sexism may be prevalent in evangelical subculture (Eliason et al., 2017; Maltby et al., 2010). These various messages are influential within purity culture.

Christian Messages About Sexuality

In addition to the other social messages about sexuality, religious messages are particularly important for sexual identity development. It is important here to examine the research on Christian messages about sexuality. As stated above, religions in general, and Christianity in particular, have long placed certain restrictions on sexual behavior. Christians' beliefs about sexuality are based upon the Bible, which states that sex is only to be had within the bond of marriage. For example, Genesis 2:24 states, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." The words "become one flesh" refer to sexual intercourse (Lawton, 1986). Christians then take this verse to mean that sexual intercourse is to be had only within the bounds of marriage. Other passages in the Bible indicate this lesson as well, including Deuteronomy 22:13-28, Galatians 5:19, Hebrews 13:4, and 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Therefore, many Christians believe strictly in abstinence before marriage, and thus sex before marriage is viewed as a sin. Many Christians adhere to these restrictions because they want to live in accordance with what they believe is God's design for their lives. As such, they believe that abstaining from sexual activity before marriage will lead to greater flourishing. The messages proposed by traditional Christianity have been linked to positive outcomes, such as lower risky sexual behavior and increased sexual satisfaction (Hardy & Willoughby, 2017; Hernandez, Mahoney, & Pargament 2011; Murray-Swank, Pargament, & Mahoney, 2005).

A qualitative study by Claney, Hall, Anderson, and Canada (2017) proposed a process model of emerging adult sexuality in a female Christian population. The

researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with 24 undergraduate women at a private evangelical liberal arts university. Using grounded theory data analysis, Clancy et al. developed a three-stage model of sexuality. This model can be used to better understand those who choose to abstain from sex, and may therefore fall into Worthington et al.'s (2002) category of unexplored commitment. Additionally, while the model was specifically developed to understand Christian female sexuality, it can likely be used to better understand Christian men as well. The first stage of the model emphasizes the messages young women receive about sexuality. These messages come from various sources, including religion, social groups, and cultural norms, and include ideas about the nature of sexuality and how sexuality impacts one's worth. Participants emphasized the importance of the messages they received from religious contexts. In particular, these messages included the context in which sexual experiences are permitted. Many participants explained that they were taught that sexuality is only permissible within the relational context of marriage. Sex can be experienced positively in a permissible context and negatively outside of this context. Some explained that their religious messages were even more strict, indicating that even kissing should be reserved for marriage. Additionally, participants endorsed that they were taught that sexuality is sacred and should be cherished. Overall, participants in this study emphasized the contrasting messages about sexuality received from popular culture and from their religious contexts. These messages are consistent with traditional Christian ideas about sexuality.

Conservative Sexual Values

As stated above, Christianity places certain restrictions on sexual activity. Specifically, it is expected that all sexual activity should be reserved for heterosexual marriage. Within this belief system, sex is meant to create intimacy between husband and wife, and for procreation. This has traditionally been deemed as conservative sexual values, and has been linked in psychological research to positive outcomes. A study by Hardy and Willoughby (2017) examined religiosity, chastity values, and various outcomes in over 4,000 young adults. Participants came from various religious backgrounds, including Protestant, Catholic, and Mormon. Results showed that religiosity positively predicted abstinence beliefs. In turn, abstinence beliefs negatively predicted risky sexual behaviors, risk taking (i.e., drinking alcohol, using illicit drugs), and unhappiness. Though this relationship was the strongest in the Mormon sample, it was still significant for the Protestant and Catholic samples.

Sex as Sacred

In addition to conservative sexual values, Christianity proposes the belief that sexuality is sacred and holy. This has also been linked to positive outcomes in psychological research. One concept, entitled sanctification of sexuality has been linked to greater marital satisfaction (Hernandez et al., 2011). Sanctification of sexuality is defined as believing that one's sexuality and sexual relationships have "divine character and significance" (p. 775). Within the construct of sanctification, there are two indexes. The first is explicitly theistic, and involves the belief that a higher power is actively

involved and influential in an aspect of one's life. The second index is nontheistic in nature, and involves ascribing spiritual value and purpose to an aspect of life.

In the study by Hernandez et al. (2011), one spouse each from 83 newlywed couples was administered a survey. The majority of couples that participated in the survey were White and Christian. Using a mean score for sanctification of sexuality, the researchers found that couples who reported higher levels of theistic and nontheistic sanctification reported higher sexual and marital satisfaction in addition to greater sexual and spiritual closeness.

Additionally, Murray-Swank et al. (2005) examined sanctification of sex in 151 never married college students from a Midwestern university. Of those participants, 65 were involved in sexual relationships and were therefore asked to complete additional measures on sanctification of sex in their current relationship. The researchers discovered that higher theistic and nontheistic sanctification of sex were linked with increased sexual satisfaction in their current relationships. For the total sample, higher nontheistic sanctification was also related to increased frequency of current and past sexual activity. However, more traditional global religiousness, as measured by frequency of prayer and church attendance, as well as self-reported religiousness and spirituality, was negatively correlated with sexual behavior for the total sample. Additionally, the researchers found that both theistic and nontheistic sanctification were linked to more positive affective reactions about intercourse. This study shows that nontheistic sanctification of sex was linked with more frequent sexual activity, and traditional religiousness was correlated with less sexual activity.

A study by Yip and Page (2014) did not explicitly examine sanctification, but instead looked at the role of religious beliefs in shaping heterosexual identity. Participants consisted of 515 adults, 298 of which identified as Christian. A mixed-methods approach was used to collect data, including online questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and video diaries. Results showed that one of most important beliefs shaping sexual identity was the idea that sexuality is divinely bestowed. This belief then led to a desire to remain sexually abstinent until marriage, in order to honor God, themselves, and their future sexual partner. Similarly, a study by Mbotho, Cilliers, and Akintola (2013) examined motivations for maintaining abstinence. The researchers conducted a qualitative study of South African Christians ranging from 16-24 years old. Results showed that one of the main motivations for abstinence was to obey God's instruction for sexuality. In doing so, they believed that they would receive psychological and spiritual benefits.

Overall, the above studies highlight the main messages about sexuality within Christianity. These include the belief that sex should be reserved for marriage and that sexuality is sacred and a blessing. These values have been linked to lower risky sexual behavior (Hardy & Willoughby, 2017) and higher sexual and marital satisfaction (Hernandez et al., 2011; Murray-Swank et al., 2005). In contrast, purity culture appears to place further restrictions on sexual behavior and focuses on external standards. However, purity culture has not adequately been studied as a separate construct, and is possibly a confounding factor in studies on Christianity and sexuality.

Purity Culture Messages About Sexuality

The messages of purity culture, while upholding Christian teaching on abstinence, also go beyond it in placing even greater restrictions upon sexual behavior, focusing in legalistic ways on external standards of behavior to the exclusion of internal motivations. In the paragraphs that follow, the messages of purity culture are described.

Many people attribute the prevalence of purity culture in evangelicalism to various curricula taught to adolescents at church, the most popular of which is entitled “True Love Waits” (Barbee, 2014; Deneson, 2017). As part of this curriculum, adolescents are separated into gendered groups and told about the importance of maintaining “sexual purity” until marriage. After completing the curriculum, there is often a ceremony where the adolescents sign a pledge. The pledge states, “Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my future mate and my future children to be sexually abstinent from this day until the day I enter a biblical marriage relationship” (Pugsley, 2014; “True Love Waits,” n.d.). Families are encouraged to attend these ceremonies, and often fathers will give their daughters “purity rings” to wear as a tangible reminder of the purity pledge. Similarly, some young women and their fathers will attend purity balls, which are formal dances where the daughter makes a commitment to her father to remain a virgin until her marriage. Fathers will also pledge at these events to guard their daughters’ sexual purity. These purity balls often contain marriage imagery, with the daughters wearing formal white dresses, and the father-daughter pairs making vows to each other.

An additional source of purity culture is a book called *I Kissed Dating Goodbye* by Joshua Harris. In this book, Harris suggested that Christians should practice courtship over casual dating. Practicing courtship entails only dating when one is ready for marriage. It also usually involves including parents in the dating process, specifically the woman's parents. Another popular book within purity culture is *When God Writes Your Love Story* by Eric and Leslie Ludy, which proposes rejecting popular messages about dating and sexuality, and instead waiting for a "God-scripted romance."

There are several implicit and explicit messages about sexuality within the teachings of "True Love Waits," *I Kissed Dating Goodbye* (Harris, 1997), and *When God Writes Your Love Story* (Ludy & Ludy, 1999), as well as additional teachings received from churches, parents, and peers in a Christian context. Those who have spoken out about their experience of purity culture note that it emphasizes that men have stronger sexual desire than women—something that has some support in the psychological literature (Hyde, 2005). However, purity culture goes beyond these documented gender differences to teach that women should not have any sexual desire (Anderson, 2015; Barbee, 2014; Clancy et al., 2017; Collins, 2015; Darnall, 2017; Field, 2016; Gregoire, 2016). This belief is similar to a well-researched sexual script in the psychological literature: the sexual double standard, which was discussed above. Within purity culture, the sexual double standard is taken one step further with respect to responsibility. Purity culture teaches, not only that men have inherently higher sex drives, but that they are unable to control their sexual desire. Because women have little-

to-no sex drive (according to this ideology), they are held responsible for maintaining abstinence and purity both for themselves and for their partners.

This idea that women are the sexual gatekeepers extends even further, in that women are told to dress modestly, so that they will not be a temptation or desirable object to men (Anderson, 2015; Claney et al., 2017; Field, 2016). This sends an implicit message that women's bodies are inherently bad and should be covered up. Young men also receive the implicit message that their bodies are somehow bad. Men are taught that any sexual activity outside of marriage is bad, but that they will also not be able to control themselves sexually. As such, sexual arousal becomes inherently associated with "lust" and therefore, shame (Schell, 2014).

The teachings of purity culture also endorse traditional gender roles, and more specifically, that men are the protectors of women. This is particularly notable at the above-mentioned purity balls, where fathers pledge to guard and protect their daughters' purity (Anderson, 2015). This is additionally seen in the concept of courting, where the woman's father is involved in her dating decisions.

Finally, purity culture teaches an "all or nothing" mentality when it comes to sexuality and particularly, sexual behaviors. Within purity culture, adolescents are taught that they will no longer be worthy of love and affection if they have sex outside of marriage. Images such as a "broken teacup" or a "dirty piece of tape" are used to describe those that engage in sexual activity prior to marriage (Calhoun, 2017). As such, those who engage in premarital sexual activity view themselves as damaged and irreparable (Anderson, 2015). On the other hand, purity culture teaches that waiting to

have sex until marriage will make sex better (Anderson, 2015; Darnall, 2017). Virginity is held up as a “gift” to give to one’s spouse on the wedding night. This mentality can lead to unrealistic expectations of sexual activity within marriage.

It is important here to distinguish sexual expectations set up in purity culture and the above-mentioned sanctification of sexuality. In the studies by Hernandez et al. (2011) and Murray-Swank et al. (2005), sanctification of sexuality is defined as believing one’s sexuality and sexual experiences are holy and blessed by God. In these studies, higher sanctification was associated with higher marital and sexual satisfaction. It is likely that these internally held beliefs are different from the external standards imposed by purity culture. In purity culture, being able to have a “better” sex life is seen as a reward for adhering to the rules. This may lead to unrealistic expectations of sexual activity within marriage, and disappointment if one does not receive the reward that was promised. In contrast, if one truly believes that sexuality and sexual activity is holy and blessed, it follows that this belief would enhance sexual experiences.

Overall, purity culture can be viewed as a distortion of Christian beliefs. Traditional Christian restrictions on sexuality are motivated by love of God and a desire for flourishing. Jones and Hostler (2001) present this more positive view of Christian sexuality. They propose that Christianity should affirm the fact that human beings are made with bodies that are explicitly sexual. Sexual intercourse was created for a good purpose, for reproduction and for pleasure. It is meant to create a lasting bond between husband and wife. However, they state that these beliefs must be qualified by the fact that humans are sinful and that sinful nature negatively affects sexuality.

In contrast, sexual beliefs espoused in purity culture are motivated by fear of punishment and shame. For example, many Christians believe that modesty is an important virtue. However, in purity culture, modesty is used as a way to shame the female body, to the point where young women feel self-conscious and are hyper-aware of their bodies and how they dress. Additionally, the idea that one is irreparably damaged after engaging in premarital sexual activity can lead to intense feelings of shame and guilt. The messages of purity culture seem to have had a generally negative impact on those who grew up in it, but there has been no psychological research on this construct to date. However, some of the negative values within purity culture have been studied in psychological literature, and will be discussed in the following sections.

Bodies as Bad

As stated above, women are taught to dress modestly, so they do not sexually tempt the men around them. This puts the responsibility on women, and can make them feel that their bodies are inherently bad (Anderson, 2015; Collins, 2015; Darnall, 2017; Gregoire, 2016). In a qualitative study by Daniluk (1993), this theme was prevalent. Daniluk conducted 11 group sessions, each of which met for two-and-a-half to three hours. Participants consisted of 10 women, including the researcher, who attended all 11 sessions. Most of the participants identified as Caucasian and heterosexual. The influence of religious beliefs on sexual experiences was a primary topic of interest in the interviews. Participants endorsed that their religious beliefs were a primary source of

their feelings of accountability for the actions of men. Additionally, they identified a religious belief that the female body was dirty and shameful.

Sexual Activity as Contamination

Another important message espoused by purity culture is that sexual activity outside of marriage is sinful. While many Christians adhere to this belief, purity culture takes this belief one step further. In purity culture, sexual activity outside marriage is viewed as one of the worst sins one can commit (Anderson, 2015; Beck, 2006). As such, this can lead to extreme feelings of guilt and shame. Additionally, having sex with someone else besides one's spouse means that a person is somehow damaged, or not as worthy as someone who has not had sex before marriage (Anderson, 2015; Collins, 2015).

Beck (2006) explained some of the underlying mechanisms associated with this belief. He proposed that while sins are viewed equally from a theological standpoint, they do not carry the same psychological weight. Beck elaborated that Christians, specifically in North America, have long used contamination metaphors to understand sexual sin. In particular, sexual sin is seen as dirty or contaminated, and is viewed in contrast to salvation, which is pure and clean. Other sins, such as lying or gossiping, do not carry the same feeling of pollution or contamination, and can therefore be easily dismissed. However, when a person commits a sexual sin, he views himself as polluted or dirty. This can have lasting effects of prolonged guilt and self-loathing.

Garceau and Scott (2017) conducted 50 semi-structured interviews with Canadian undergraduate students who had sexual experiences before age 16. Thirteen of

the participants reported that religious values played an important role in their understanding of those early sexual experiences. Specifically, many of them reported experiencing guilt or fear over their sexual experiences. Those who felt guilt expressed that it was due to feeling that they had sinned or disobeyed their religious authority figure. Those who felt fear expressed that it was due to fear of punishment. Notably, several participants who reported fear also reported same-sex sexual experiences. Additionally, participants reported various resolutions to the discrepancies they experienced between their religious beliefs and sexual experiences. These resolutions generally fell into three categories: leaving or disengaging from their religions, turning to their religion for support, or choosing to incorporate some teachings of their religion and rejecting others. A study by Mahoney (2008) identified similar ways of coping with this cognitive dissonance, including denial, repression, and seeking consonance with peer groups. Additionally, in the study by Claney et al. (2017), participants reported these conflicting messages, including that sex is either a “gift” or something “gross.” This study reiterated the view that sex outside of marriage is bad and gross.

Virginity as a Gift

Additional beliefs posited by purity culture center on virginity itself. Purity culture teaches that virginity should be reserved as a gift to give to one’s spouse on the wedding night. The idea of viewing virginity as a gift is also seen in psychological research. Carpenter (2002) conducted a qualitative study that examined the meaning of virginity loss in over 60 men and women. Carpenter proposed virginity frameworks, one

of which was viewing virginity as a gift. The study showed that those who regarded virginity as a gift were more likely to delay sexual debut. They were also more likely to have their first intercourse within a committed relationship. Additionally, in the above-mentioned study by Clancy et al. (2017) participants endorsed the idea that sex is a gift. Furthermore, purity culture proposes that waiting to have sex until marriage will make sex more enjoyable. Along with this, the woman's sexual desire (which should not exist before marriage) will almost magically appear on the wedding night (Anderson, 2015; Darnall, 2017; Gregoire, 2016). All of these beliefs can lead to a negative experience of sexuality.

The above-mentioned studies emphasized certain aspects of purity culture, including the idea that female bodies are dirty or bad (Daniluk, 1993), sexual activity is contaminating (Beck, 2006; Garceau & Scott, 2017; Mahoney, 2008), and virginity is a gift (Carpenter, 2002). While these studies have looked at certain aspects of purity culture, there is no comprehensive understanding of the construct as a whole that has been studied to date.

The Present Study

Given all of this information, it is clear that sexual identity development is a complex topic. Worthington et al.'s (2002) model of sexual identity development emphasizes the importance of social and cultural messages. Social and cultural messages about sexuality include sexual scripts such as the sexual double standard (Crawford & Popp, 2003; McCormick, 2010; Reid et al., 2011; Sakaluk et al., 2014) and women as

the gatekeepers of sexuality (Sakaluk et al., 2014; Schleicher & Gilbert, 2005).

Additionally, benevolent sexism demonstrates social messages about gender relations and the role of women in society (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Glick & Fiske, 2001). Religious messages about sexuality may be a particularly important cultural factor. Christian messages about sexuality include that sex should be restricted to the marriage relationship, and that sexuality is sacred (Claney et al., 2017; Hardy & Willoughby, 2017; Hernandez et al., 2011; Murray-Swank et al., 2005). Purity culture is a unique cultural factor that puts forth a complex view of sexuality. Those who grew up in this purity culture may have a unique experience of sexual identity development. Thus far, no measure has been created to capture the complex and unique sexual beliefs espoused by purity culture. As such, the purpose of this study is to develop a measure of purity culture that can be used to further study experiences of sexuality in evangelical Christianity.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Participants

Two hundred eighteen undergraduate students from a private evangelical liberal arts university were recruited through an online tool called Sona Systems. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 37, with an average age of 20.23 ($SD = 2.37$). The majority of the sample identified as female (72.5%, $n = 158$), with the rest identifying as male (26.6%, $n = 58$). Participants identified as European American/White (41.3%, $n = 90$), Asian (22.9%, $n = 50$), Hispanic (19.3%, $n = 42$), mixed ethnicity (9.6%, $n = 21$), other (3.7%, $n = 8$), and African American (2.8%, $n = 6$). The majority of the sample was single, never married (96.3%, $n = 210$), with a portion identifying as engaged (1.8%, $n = 4$) and married (0.9%, $n = 2$). The sample consisted of Nondenominational Christians (48.2%, $n = 105$), Evangelical Christians (24.8%, $n = 54$), Presbyterian (7.3%, $n = 16$), Catholics (6.0%, $n = 13$), Pentecostal (4.6%, $n = 10$), Baptists (4.1%, $n = 9$), other (1.4%, $n = 3$), Lutheran (0.9%, $n = 2$), Seventh Day Adventist (0.5%, $n = 1$), Anglican (0.5%, $n = 1$), and Methodist (0.5%, $n = 1$), with a portion of the sample failing to complete the demographics survey (1.4%, $n = 3$). Other religions besides Christianity

were excluded from this study. Participants were also excluded if they were under the age of 18.

Procedures

Before recruiting participants, this study was submitted to the Protection of Human Rights in Research Counsel for ethical approval. After receiving approval, participants were recruited via Sona Systems. As an incentive for participating in the study, participants received course credit or extra credit for one of their classes. During recruitment, participants received a description of the study, information about the incentive for participating in the study, and an online link for where the survey could be taken. They were also given contact information for the primary researchers, in case they had any questions or concerns about the study. The survey for this study was given online via the website Survey Monkey. Before completing the measures, the participants were given a description of the study and possible benefits and risks of participating, and agreed to informed consent. After giving informed consent, the participants first completed the demographics form. They then completed the different measures in a randomized order. Participants were not asked to give their names as part of the study, so as to protect their identities. Measures used in this study can be found in Appendix A.

Materials

The following are the materials that were utilized in this study.

Heterosexual Script Scale

The Heterosexual Script Scale (HSS) consists of 22 items. The HSS consists of four subscales: Courtship and Commitment, Men as Powerful Initiators, Men Value Women's Appearance, and Sex Defines Masculinity; Women Set Sexual Limits (Seabrook et al., 2016). A sample item for the Courtship and Commitment subscale is "No matter what she says, a girl isn't really happy unless she's in a relationship;" a sample item for the Men as Powerful Initiators subscale is "Men should be the ones to ask women out and initiate physical contact;" a sample item for the Men Value Women's Appearance subscale is "Being with an attractive partner gives a guy prestige;" and a sample item for the Sex Defines Masculinity; Women Set Sexual Limits subscale is "It is up to women to keep things from moving too fast sexually." Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with each items on a 6-point Likert scale, with a zero indicating *disagree strongly* and a five indicating *agree strongly*. Items will be averaged, with higher scores indicating higher adherence to heterosexual scripts. Established alpha coefficients ranged from .65 to .76 for the subscales, with an overall alpha of .89, indicating adequate internal consistency. In the present study, alpha coefficients ranged from .66 to .75, with an overall alpha of .87.

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory

The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI) consists of 22 items. The two subscales of the ASI are Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism, which are quantitative measures of the aforementioned constructs (Glick & Fiske, 1996). A sample item of the Hostile Sexism subscale is, “Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.” Alpha coefficients ranged from .80 to .92 for the Hostile Sexism subscale, with an alpha of .87 in the current study, indicating adequate internal consistency. A sample item of the Benevolent Sexism subscale is, “Women should be cherished and protected by men.” Alpha coefficients ranged from .75 to .85 for the Benevolent Sexism subscale, indicating adequate internal consistency. In the current study, alpha coefficients ranged from .47 to .69, with an overall alpha of .76. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with each item on a 6-point Likert scale, with a zero indicating *disagree strongly* and a five indicating *agree strongly*. Items were appropriately reverse scored and averaged, with higher scores indicating higher hostile sexism or benevolent sexism.

Sexual-Spiritual Integration

The Sexual-Spiritual Integration Scale (SSIS) contains 24 items (Wittstock, Piedmont, & Ciarrocchi, 2007). It consists of three subscales, Sexual Attitudes/Beliefs (SA/B), Sexual Congruence/Incongruence (SC/I), and Sexual Awareness/Repression (SA/R). Each subscale asked participants to rate items on a five-point Likert scale from one, indicating *strongly disagree*, to five, indicating *strongly agree*. The SA/B subscale consists of 10 items and will measure participants’ fundamental attitudes and beliefs

regarding human sexuality. A sample item is, “Sexual passion and desire turn us into little more than animals.” A high score on this scale indicates negative attitudes toward sexuality. The SC/I subscale consists of 11 items and measures the degree of congruence between one’s experience of sexuality/sexual behavior and one’s personal/spiritual ideals. A sample item from this subscale is, “My sexual desires are the most dangerous of all my bodily desires.” High scores on this scale indicate lower congruence. The SA/R subscale consists of five items and includes items such as, “I am ashamed of my sexual feelings and fantasies.” A high score on this scale indicates high levels of discomfort with sexual thoughts and feelings. This measure demonstrates adequate internal consistency, with alpha levels for the subscales ranging from .79 to .87 and ranging from .78 to .89 in the current study, with an overall alpha of .92.

Sanctification of Sexuality

Participants’ sanctification of sexuality will be measured by two subscales adapted from Mahoney et al.’s (1999) *Sanctification of Marriage Scale*, Murray-Swank et al.’s (2005) *Sanctification of Sexual Intercourse Scale*, and Hernandez et al.’s (2011) *Sanctification of Sexuality in Marriage Scale*, as developed and validated by Claney et al. (2017). It was necessary to use these adapted measures because previous measures have focused on the sanctification of sexual intercourse, whereas the population that was examined in this study may not have yet engaged in sexual activity. Thus, utilizing the stems from previous sanctification scales, the following subscales were used: Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale and Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale.

Each scale includes 10 items rated on a seven-point Likert scale, with a one indicating *strongly agree* and a seven indicating *strongly disagree*. Manifestation of God measured the participants' perception of God's direct influence in their sexuality. Higher scores on this scale reflect a higher perception of sexuality as a manifestation of a specifically theistic God. A sample item from this scale is, "God is glorified through my sexuality." The Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale measured the degree to which participants perceive their sexuality to possess qualities typically used to define divine entities (e.g. "sacred"). Higher scores reflect a greater perception of sexuality as having divine significance. A sample item from this scale is, "I view my sexuality as an aspect of my spirituality." In the sample from Clancy et al., the alpha coefficients of each of these scales was .93, and ranged from .92 to .94 in the current study, indicating adequate internal consistency.

Christian Orthodoxy Scale

The Christian Orthodoxy Scale (COS) contains 24 items (Fullerton & Hunsberger, 1982). Each item asked participants to rate items on a 6-point Likert scale from negative three, indicating *strongly disagree*, to three, indicating *strongly agree*. A sample item is, "God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Items were appropriately reverse scored and averaged. A high score on this scale indicates strong belief in the central tenets of Christian religion. This measure demonstrates adequate internal consistency, with an established alpha level of .97 and .94 in the current study.

Religious Fundamentalism Scale

The Religious Fundamentalism Scale (RFS) contains 24 items (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004). Each item asked participants to rate items on a nine-point Likert scale from negative four, indicating *very strongly disagree*, to four, indicating *very strongly agree*. A sample item is, “When you get right down to it, there are basically only two kinds of people in the world: the Righteous, who will be rewarded by God; and the rest, who will not.” Items were appropriately reverse scored and averaged. A high score on this scale indicates belief that there is one set of religious teachings that contains fundamental, inerrant truth about humanity and deity. This measure demonstrates adequate internal consistency, with an established alpha level of .91 and .71 in the current study.

Objectified Body Consciousness Scale

The current study will utilize two subscales of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS), the Surveillance subscale and the Shame subscale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996). Each subscale asked participants to rate items on a 6-point Likert scale from one, indicating *strongly disagree*, to six, indicating *strongly agree*. The Surveillance subscale consists of eight items and will measure the degree to which a person watches her/his body and thinks of the body in terms of how it looks. A sample item is, “I often worry about whether the clothes I am wearing make me look good.” High scores indicate high body surveillance. The Shame subscale consists of eight items and measures internalization of cultural body standards. A sample item from this

subscale is, “I would be ashamed for people to know what I really weigh.” High scores on this scale indicate higher shame about one’s body and appearance. This measure demonstrates adequate internal consistency, with alpha levels for the subscales ranging from .75 to .89 and ranging from .81 to .82 in the current study.

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

The Positive and Negative Affective Schedule (PANAS) contains 20 items (Watson, Lee, & Tellegen, 1988). It consists of two subscales, Positive Affect and Negative Affect. Each subscale asked participants to rate the extent to which they felt emotions over the past week on a five-point Likert scale from one, indicating *very slightly or not at all*, to five, indicating *extremely*. The Positive Affect subscale consists of 10 items and measured participants’ experience of positive emotions such as “excited” over the past week. A high score on this scale indicates higher experience of positive emotions. The Negative Affect subscale consists of 10 items and measured participants’ experience of negative emotions such as “hostile” over the past week. A high score on this scale indicates higher experience of negative emotions. This measure demonstrates adequate internal consistency, with alpha levels for the subscales ranging from .85 to .89 and ranging from .85 to .86 in the current study.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Preliminary Analyses

Data were analyzed using SPSS. Before testing the hypotheses, preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure normality of the data. The original non-transformed means and standard deviations for all measures are shown in Table 1. All measures were assessed for skewness and kurtosis. The Courtship and Commitment subscale of the HSS, Sexual Attitudes/Beliefs subscale of the SSIS, and Shame subscale of the OBCS were found to be moderately positively skewed. The Protective Paternalism subscale of the ASI, Manifestation of God in Sexuality scale, and Religious Fundamentalism Scale (RFS) were found to be moderately negatively skewed. A square root transformation was conducted and yielded the final transformed scores. Additionally, the Christian Orthodoxy Scale (COS) was found to be severely negatively skewed, and an inverse transformation was used to yield the final transformed score. The transformed scores for this measure were utilized in all subsequent analyses. Intercorrelations between all of the measures are shown in Table 2.

Principal Components Analysis of the Purity Culture Beliefs Scale

Scale Item Development

The aforementioned review of psychological literature on sexual identity, as well as popular literature around purity culture, serves as the foundation for this conceptualization of purity culture. Additionally, attention was given to recommendations for scale construction. The development of this measure follows the best practice recommendations laid out by Wright, Quick, Hannah, and Hargrove (2017). A deductive approach to item development was utilized. However, due to a lack of available literature on the specific construct of purity culture, items were developed through direct quotes and reported experiences of purity culture from online blogs, interviews, and books. Following the review of both research and popular literature, attention was given to item parsimony and adequate domain sampling. Item parsimony is relevant in minimizing possible response bias, but scales with too few items may lack content and construct validity, as well as internal consistency and test-retest reliability (Wright et al., 2017). An initial item pool of 52 was generated for this study. We felt it was important to consider generating sufficient response variance and the inclusion of reverse-scored items. For this scale, a 5-point Likert scale was chosen to generate response variance. Additionally, seven of the items were included as “control” items, meaning that they encompassed mainstream Christian ideas about sexuality. The factorability of these items was examined in a separate analysis.

The aim of the measure is to capture the various messages of purity culture explained above, including: the sexual double standard, women as sexual gatekeepers,

men as unable to control their sexual desire, extreme modesty, virginity as a gift, benevolent sexism, and the “all or nothing” mentality as it relates to sexual activity. Participants were asked to rate how strongly they feel they received messages from their church or primary religious influence growing up. They indicated how strongly they received this message on a 5-point Likert scale, with a one indicating *strongly disagree*, to five, *strongly agree*. Items for this scale were averaged, with a higher score indicating stronger received messages from purity culture. Participants were asked to fill out the items a second time, asking them to rate how strongly they personally agree with each item on a 5-point Likert scale, with a one indicating *strongly disagree* and a five indicating *strongly agree*. Higher scores indicate stronger endorsement of purity culture beliefs.

Analysis

The present study utilized principal components analysis (PCA) to establish patterns of correlations among the components of purity culture. The purpose of conducting an PCA is to examine a single set of variables to assess their structure and discover which variables form subsets that are relatively independent of one another. PCA was utilized as it is useful as an initial step in factor analysis, because it extracts maximum variance from the data set and reveals the maximum number of factors (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Initially, the factorability of the 45 PCBS endorsement items was examined. The seven “control” items were examined in a separate analysis. Several criteria for the

factorability of a correlation were used. First, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .94, above the commonly recommended value of .6 (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013). Additionally, Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 (1326) = 7344.37, p < .001$), indicating factorability of the item (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were also all over .5. Finally, the communalities for each item were all above .3 (see Table 3), further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

A PCA was conducted using direct oblimin rotation. Oblimin rotation was chosen because the proposed factors in the scale contained similar constructs and were expected to correlate. Examining the initial eigenvalues and scree plot (see Figure 1) showed nine potential components. Eigenvalues of the components ranged from 1.01 to 20.81, and cumulatively explained 66.37% of the variability. However, further examination of the scree plot revealed a change in slope that suggested a three-component solution. As such, a second PCA was conducted with three fixed components. The pattern matrix, which provided factor loadings, was used to examine the three components. A component was considered solid when it included at least four items with loadings $>.30$ (Hinkin, 1995). The initial pattern matrix for the three components can be found in Table 4.

In order to shorten the length of the overall scale, items that had factor loadings $<.50$ were removed from the scale. The remaining items for each component were then analyzed for face validity by the researchers. Further items were removed that seemed redundant, or did not fit well with the other items in the component. The final 20-item

scale and factor loadings can be found in Table 5. Additionally, Pearson's correlations were used to determine intercorrelations among the final three components. Results demonstrated moderate positive correlations between the three components (see Table 6).

The first component encompasses items related to extreme modesty and the "all or nothing" mentality as it relates to sexuality. A central theme from these items is the shame and guilt associated with sexual activity and the female body that is seen in purity culture. As such, the researchers decided to name the first component "Shame and Guilt." Items were removed from the component that had a factor loading $<.50$; additional items were removed that the researchers decided did not fit well with the other items or were redundant. For example, the items "A woman who dresses immodestly causes her brothers to stumble" and "A woman who flaunts her body is hard to respect" were deemed to be too similar, and thus the second item was removed. Additionally, the item "Side hugs are more appropriate than full hugs" did not appear to fit well with the other items in the component.

The second component includes items that focus on the sexual double standard, women as gatekeepers, men are unable to control their sexual desire, and benevolent sexism aspects of purity culture. Throughout these items, there is a focus on differences in gender roles. Thus, the researchers named this component "Gender Roles." Items were removed from the component that had a factor loading $<.50$; additional items were removed that the researchers decided did not fit well with the other items or were redundant.

The third and final component includes items that center on virginity as a gift and additional items related to an “all or nothing” mentality. A common theme throughout these items is idealization of virginity, marriage, and women; as such, the researchers named this component “Idealization.” Items were removed from the component that had a factor loading $<.50$; additional items were removed that the researchers decided did not fit well with the other items or were redundant. For example, the item “Virginity is the most important thing a woman can give her husband” was removed from the scale because it was a gendered statement, making it too similar to items in the Gender Roles component. The final subscale consisted of seven items.

Reliability

Internal consistency for the three components was examined using Cronbach’s alpha. The alphas indicated adequate internal consistency for each component ($\alpha = .83-.85$), with an alpha of .90 for the overall scale. Descriptives, alpha coefficients, skewness, and kurtosis for each component can be found in Table 7. The Gender Roles component was found to be severely positively skewed. An inverse transformation was conducted and scores were then reflected. This yielded the final transformed score that was used in subsequent analyses.

Convergent Validity

In order to establish construct validity, Pearson’s correlation analyses were used to compare the Purity Culture Beliefs Scale (PCBS) with scales that measure similar

constructs. It was hypothesized that all subscales of the Heterosexual Script Scale (HSS), all aspects of the Benevolent Sexism subscale of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI), all subscales of the Sexual-Spiritual Integration Scale (SSIS), and the Surveillance and Shame subscales of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS) would demonstrate convergent validity with endorsement of the PCBS. This hypothesis was partially supported. The PCBS demonstrated significant correlations with all subscales of the HSS, the Complementary Gender Differentiation and Heterosexual Intimacy subscales of the Benevolent Sexism aspect of the ASI, all subscales of the SSIS, and the Shame subscale of the OBCS (see Table 8). Additionally, the PCBS correlated significantly with the Hostile Sexism subscale of the ASI. No hypothesis was offered with respect to this correlation.

Further examination of convergent validity of each component was conducted using Pearson's correlations. The Shame and Guilt component demonstrated significant positive correlations with all subscales of the HSS, the Hostile Sexism subscale of the ASI, the Complementary Gender Differentiation and Heterosexual Intimacy subscales of the Benevolent Sexism aspect of the ASI, all subscales of the SSIS, the Religious Fundamentalism Scale, and the Shame subscale of the OBCS. The Shame and Guilt component also significantly negatively correlated with the Protective Paternalism subscale of the ASI. These correlations can be found in Table 10.

The Gender Roles component significantly positively correlated with all subscales of the HSS, the Hostile Sexism subscale of the ASI, the Complementary Gender Differentiation and Heterosexual Intimacy subscales of the Benevolent Sexism

aspect of the ASI, all subscales of the SSIS, the Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale, and the Shame subscale of the OBCS (see Table 11). Additionally, the Gender Roles component significantly negatively correlated with the Protective Paternalism subscale of the ASI and the Christian Orthodoxy Scale.

The Idealization component significantly positively correlated with all subscales of the HSS, the Hostile Sexism subscale of the ASI, the Complementary Gender Differentiation and Heterosexual Intimacy subscales of the Benevolent Sexism aspect of the ASI, all subscales of the SSIS, and the Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale (see Table 12). Additionally, the Idealization component significantly negatively correlated with the Protective Paternalism subscale of the ASI and the Religious Fundamentalism Scale.

Discriminant Validity

It was hypothesized that the Hostile Sexism subscale of the ASI, Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale, Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale, Christian Orthodoxy Scale, Religious Fundamentalism Scale, and both subscales of the PANAS would demonstrate discriminant validity with endorsement of the PCBS. This hypothesis was partially supported. Pearson's correlations were utilized to compare the PCBS with the above-mentioned measures. The PCBS demonstrated non-significant correlations with Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale, Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale, Christian Orthodoxy Scale, and both subscales of the PANAS (see Table 9). Additionally, the PCBS demonstrated no significant correlations with the Surveillance subscale of the OBCS. No hypothesis was offered with respect to this correlation.

Further examination of discriminant validity of each component was conducted using Pearson's correlations. The Shame and Guilt component demonstrated non-significant correlations with the Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale, the Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale, Christian Orthodoxy Scale, the Surveillance subscale of the OBCS, and both subscales of the PANAS (see Table 10). The Gender Roles component demonstrated non-significant correlations with the Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale, Religious Fundamentalism Scale, the Surveillance subscale of the OBCS, and both subscales of the PANAS (see Table 11). The Idealization component demonstrated non-significant correlations with the Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale, Christian Orthodoxy Scale, the Surveillance and Shame subscales of the OBCS, and both subscales of the PANAS (see Table 12).

Control Items Analysis

A second PCA was conducted using direct oblimin rotation to examine the factorability of the control items. These items represent mainstream Christian ideas about sexuality. The analysis demonstrated that only one component could be extracted. The eigenvalue of the component was 2.55, and it explained 36.41% of the variability. See Table 13 for factor loadings. Internal consistency for the component was examined using Cronbach's alpha. The alpha indicated questionable internal consistency for the component ($\alpha = .68$). Internal consistency did not improve when any items were removed from the analysis. This scale was found to be substantially negatively skewed. A logarithm transformation was conducted and yielded the final transformed score that

was used in subsequent analyses. See Table 14 for correlations of the control items scale and all other measures.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

Summary and Conclusions

Worthington et al. (2002) proposed a model of sexual identity development that emphasizes cultural and social influences. To date, there has been no quantitative measure that captures the unique movement within the Evangelical Christian community regarding sexuality known as purity culture. In addition, no systematic theory of purity culture has been proposed. The purpose of the current study was to define and develop a measure of purity culture in order to further examine sexual identity development in evangelical Christian culture.

The conceptualization of purity culture used to develop this scale was based on a review of popular literature on purity culture and psychological literature. It was proposed that purity culture includes the following aspects: the sexual double standard, women as sexual gatekeepers, men as unable to control their sexual desire, extreme modesty, virginity as a gift, benevolent sexism, and an “all or nothing” mentality as it relates to sexual activity. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted using a principal components analysis (PCA). While the initial PCA revealed nine possible components, examination of the scree plot revealed a three-component solution.

The first component was named “Shame and Guilt.” Because one of the central tenants of purity culture is shame and guilt about sexuality (Anderson, 2015; Collins, 2015; Field, 2016; Schell, 2014), the researchers additionally decided that items

specifically containing the words “shame” and “guilt” should make up the majority of the subscale. The final subscale consisted of seven items. Of the proposed aspects of purity culture, the Shame and Guilt component contained items from the extreme modesty and “all or nothing” mentality as it relates to sexuality aspects.

While many aspects of purity culture overlap, it is likely that these aspects of purity culture fit well with guilt and shame because they set up unrealistic expectations about sexuality. The extreme modesty aspect of purity culture proposes that women’s bodies are inherently tempting and therefore should be covered up. On the other hand, men are taught that they are unable to control themselves sexually. In both cases, sexual arousal becomes associated with lust, and as a result, shame (Schell, 2014). The “all or nothing” mentality as it relates to sexuality also puts forth a view of sexuality that is associated with guilt and shame. The two items from this aspect that loaded onto the final subscale were “Having premarital sex will make you unattractive to your future spouse,” and “Sex outside of marriage will make you damaged goods.” These two items center on the idea that one is irreparably damaged after engaging in premarital sexual activity (Anderson, 2015; Collins, 2015). As Beck (2006) explained, contamination has been used as a metaphor to understand premarital sexual activity. As such, sexual sin holds a particular psychological weight, which can lead to increased levels of guilt and shame. Overall, this subscale appears to capture an underlying theme in purity culture. Many of the proposed aspects of purity culture have an underlying message of guilt and shame that is associated with female bodies, and sexual thoughts and activity.

The second component was named “Gender Roles.” Specifically, one theme that was observed across items was a comparison of men and women. This is something that is often described in purity culture (Anderson, 2015; Barbee, 2014; Collins, 2015; Darnall, 2017; Field, 2016; Gregoire, 2016). The final subscale consisted of six items. Aspects of the originally proposed purity culture scale that were seen in this component were the sexual double standard, women as gatekeepers, men as unable to control sexual desire, and benevolent sexism.

Given the common factor loading of these aspects of purity culture, it would appear that a latent construct in purity culture is contrasting gender roles. Sexual scripts, such as the sexual double standard and women as gatekeepers, inherently prescribe different roles for men and women (Crawford & Popp, 2003; Reid et al., 2011; Schleicher & Gilbert, 2005). In addition, the purity culture message that men are unable to control their sexual desire further prescribes gender expectations. Men are expected to be driven by lust, and women are meant to cover themselves up so as not to be sexually tempting to men (Anderson, 2015; Field, 2016). Finally, purity culture purports the traditional gender roles seen in benevolent sexism. Specifically, women are seen as weaker, and are therefore meant to be protected and cherished by men. Additionally, women are seen as having positive traits that are complementary to men’s traits (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Overall, this subscale captures the gender roles proposed by purity culture.

The third component was named “Idealization.” Of the initially proposed aspects of purity culture, the Idealization component contained items from the virginity as gift, benevolent sexism, and “all or nothing” mentality aspects.

This subscale also appears to capture a theme across various domains of purity culture. While the Shame and Guilt subscale captures a person’s experience when they do not follow the tenants of purity, this subscale showcases what is promised to those who do uphold the tenants of purity culture. Purity culture teaches that those who wait to have sex until marriage will have better sex lives. As such, virginity is seen as a “gift” to give one’s spouse on the wedding night (Carpenter, 2002). This subscale demonstrates the idealization of virginity and sex after marriage that is seen in purity culture. Additionally, this subscale addresses the idealization of women that is seen in benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

Reliability and Validity

Measures of internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were used to initially validate the PCBS. Internal consistency was examined using Cronbach’s alpha. The three subscales and overall scale demonstrated adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .83-.90$). Additionally, Pearson’s correlations were utilized to examine initial construct validity. Though these analyses are generally not utilized until a confirmatory factor analysis, researchers wanted to examine the validity of the initial scale. Results showed that the PCBS demonstrated convergent validity with the subscales of the Heterosexual Script Scale (HSS), the Complementary Gender

Differentiation and Heterosexual Intimacy subscales of the Benevolent Sexism aspect of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI), the Hostile Sexism subscale of the ASI, all subscales of the Sexual-Spiritual Integration Scale (SSIS), and the Shame subscale of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS). This was generally consistent with what the researchers hypothesized. Of note, the PCBS did not demonstrate convergent validity with the Protective Paternalism subscale of the ASI, but did significantly correlate with the Hostile Sexism subscale of the ASI. The alpha coefficient for the Protective Paternalism aspect was .47 for the current study, which may help explain these results. It is possible that the items in the scale did not adequately capture the construct of Protective Paternalism for this specific population. For example, it is possible that participants would indicate higher levels of agreement with the item “Women should be cherished and protected by men,” than with the item “A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.” Those participants who come from a traditionally conservative Christian background would agree that women should be protected by men, but may not necessarily believe that women should be placed on a pedestal. This would elevate women above men, and may also imply that women should be placed higher than God, which participants from this background would take issue with. Additionally, it is possible that the PCBS demonstrated a significant correlation with Hostile Sexism because participants who come from a traditional Christian background may particularly take issue with feminism, and have negative connotations associated with feminism.

In addition, the PCBS demonstrated initial discriminant validity with Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale, Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale, Christian

Orthodoxy Scale (COS), both subscales of the Positive and Negative Affective Scale (PANAS), and the Surveillance subscale of the OBCS. This was generally consistent with the original hypothesis. In particular, it is important to note the discriminant validity of the PCBS with the COS. This highlights that there is a difference between traditional Christian beliefs and those proposed by purity culture. However, the PCBS did not significantly correlate with the Surveillance subscale of the OBCS. It is possible that this subscale did not significantly correlate with the PCBS because several of the items focus on how one looks in clothing and comparing oneself to others based upon physical appearance. This is different from the body surveillance that is described in purity culture. In purity culture, women in particular are taught to monitor their bodies so as not to be a temptation to men; in the OBCS, the focus is on monitoring one's physical appearance to appear attractive to others.

Subscale validity. All three subscales of the PCBS demonstrated similar initial convergent and discriminant validity. Additionally, the Shame and Guilt subscale showed convergent validity with the Religious Fundamentalism Scale (RFS). One hypothesis for these two scales correlating is that they may both tap into the guilt and shame that is experienced if one does not rigidly follow the rules of one's religious teachings (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004). Additionally, the Gender Roles subscale demonstrated convergent validity with the Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale. This finding is contrary to what would be expected. However, it is possible that these scales may have demonstrated a significant correlation because some items of the Manifestation of God scale may tap into the experiences in purity culture (e.g., "My

sexuality is a gift from God,” “God has been a guiding force in the development of my sexual identity”). If someone grows up in a church that teaches purity culture, she may come to believe that the teachings of purity culture align with Christian beliefs, and thus, God. Additionally, because the teachings of purity culture are deeply gendered, beliefs around sexuality and gender may be particularly susceptible to this confusion. Finally, the Idealization subscale of the PCBS demonstrated additional convergent validity with the Sacred Qualities of Sexuality scale. Items from the Sacred Qualities scale such as “My sexuality is part of a larger spiritual plan,” and “My sexual self is blessed” may be similar to parts of the Idealization subscale. The Idealization subscale puts forth that a person will be blessed in the area of sexuality if she follows the rules put forth by purity culture (e.g., “Waiting to have sex until marriage will make the wedding night and future sex life that much better”). This subscale captures the hope that is present in purity culture, and this hope is also seen in the Sacred Qualities scale.

Control items reliability. Additionally, the study rendered a second scale of control items that are representative of Christian beliefs about sexuality. Though the PCA revealed one possible factor, the internal consistency of the items was not sufficient. This indicates that the items do not measure the same construct, and therefore do not make up a psychometrically sound scale. The items in this scale examine marriage, dating, modesty, gender expectations, and sexual thoughts. It is possible that the items measured facets of beliefs about sexuality that were too disparate to make up one single scale. However, because of the importance of further distinguishing between purity culture beliefs and traditional Christian beliefs, the four control items with the

highest factor loadings were included as part of the final PCBS scale (see Appendix for final PCBS).

Limitations

There were several limitations to the current study. The first is that this sample was gathered using a convenience sample, which could have influenced homogeneity within the sample. Specifically, the majority of the sample identified as European American and female. Additionally, the sample consisted of college students age 18 to 37 (average age = 20.23), and the data may therefore not be generalizable. This approach could also have led to a self-selecting bias, as this study explicitly dealt with the topic of sexuality. Because of the sensitive nature of this topic, those that chose to respond to the survey might have been more comfortable and open about their sexuality than those who chose not to participate. Additionally, an error was made when inputting items from the Christian Orthodoxy Scale into the overall survey, and item 14 (“God made man of dust in His own image and breathed life into him.”) was not administered to participants. This may have affected the validity of this scale.

Directions for Future Research

Future research should include a confirmatory factor analysis to further validate the PCBS and its subscales. Additionally, future research should include a detailed analysis of the reliability and validity of the proposed scale. After testing for psychometric soundness, the PCBS might be used in further research to examine the

effects of purity culture. Given purity culture's focus on idealization and shame and guilt, it may be fruitful to examine how purity culture beliefs shape one's sexual experiences and relationships. Additionally, because of the prevalence of "contamination" metaphors in purity culture (Beck, 2006), as well as objectification of women (Anderson, 2015; Field, 2016) further research could focus on the relationship between purity culture and self-objectification. Finally, the PCBS may be used in further research to gain a better understanding of the differences between Christian beliefs about sexuality and purity culture beliefs.

In conclusion, this study explores a construct of sexuality that has not previously been identified or examined empirically. While many women and men have written about purity culture in blogs and books, the concept has not been defined or studied from a psychological perspective. This study adds to the literature by providing a quantitative way to measure and understand purity culture. Additionally, this research expands on the literature regarding sexual identity development in evangelical Christian culture, and provides a theory for understanding the purity culture that is prevalent in evangelical subculture. Additional research should be conducted to refine and validate the proposed measure of purity culture. Further understanding of these concepts might help bring about important change in the way the Christian church teaches adolescents about sexuality.

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Table 1

Original Means and Standard Deviations for all Measures

Measure	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
HSS: Courtship & Commitment	1.11	.79
HSS: Men as Powerful Initiators	2.76	.97
HSS: Men Value Women's Appearance	2.04	1.00
HSS: Sex Defines Masculinity; Women Set Limits	1.76	1.03
ASI: Hostile Sexism	2.19	.97
ASI: Protective Paternalism	2.87	.96
ASI: Complementary Gender Differentiation	1.95	1.05
ASI: Heterosexual Intimacy	2.34	1.05
SSIS: Sexual Attitudes/Beliefs	1.83	.69
SSIS: Sexual Congruence/Incongruence	2.55	.87
SSIS: Sexual Awareness/Repression	2.45	.91
Manifestation of God in Sexuality	5.44	1.31
Sacred Qualities of Sexuality	4.51	1.37
Christian Orthodoxy Scale	2.72	.63
Religious Fundamentalism Scale	1.71	1.13
OBCS: Surveillance	4.01	.94
OBCS: Shame	2.96	1.04
PANAS: Positive Affect	3.37	.77
PANAS: Negative Affect	2.79	.86

Note. HSS = Heterosexual Script Scale; ASI = Ambivalent Sexism Inventory; SSIS = Sexual-Spiritual Integration; OBCS = Objectified Body Consciousness Scale; PANAS = Positive and Negative Affective Scale

Table 2

Intercorrelations for all Measures

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
HSS: Court	—																			
HSS: Initiator	.42**	—																		
HSS: Appear	.46**	.49**	—																	
HSS: Sex	.51**	.56**	.49**	—																
ASI: Hostile	.39**	.51**	.35**	.42**	—															
ASI: Protect	-.31**	-.49**	-.34**	-.34**	-.52**	—														
ASI: Gender	.44**	.36**	.29**	.49**	.29**	-.41**	—													
ASI: Intimacy	.35**	.27**	.19**	.34**	.46**	-.40**	.42**	—												
SSIS: S A/B	.41**	.24**	.12	.31**	.25**	-.20**	.46**	.34**	—											
SSIS: S C/I	.29**	.18**	.17*	.21**	.14*	-.22**	.30**	.14*	.61**	—										
SSIS: S A/R	.25**	.21**	.08	.21**	.23**	-.21**	.34**	.18*	.59**	.58**	—									
Manifestation	-.28**	.00	.00	-.26**	-.02	-.08	-.25**	-.10	-.35**	-.21**	-.11	—								
Sacred Qual	-.16*	.01	.04	-.18**	.07	-.11	-.06	.04	-.13	-.12	-.03	.63**	—							
COS	-.36**	.03	-.09	-.26**	-.10	-.03	-.11	-.13	-.20**	.06	.01	.42**	.23**	—						
RFS	.16*	-.18**	-.01	.06	-.05	.18*	-.04	.10	.04	-.13	-.15*	-.37**	-.25**	-.53**	—					
OBCS: Surv	-.09	.20**	.04	.16*	.02	-.02	.05	.00	.00	.13	.05	.03	-.10	.15*	-.12	—				

OBCS: Sham	.24**	.11	.00	.21**	-.02	.06	.23**	.09	.34**	.31**	.33**	-.20**	-.20**	-.03	-.07	.36**	—		
PANAS: Pos	-.02	.02	.06	-.08	.00	-.14*	-.11	-.11	-.17*	-.15*	-.15*	.14*	.27**	.07	-.02	-.17*	-.27**	—	
PANAS: Neg	.04	.07	.16*	.22**	.01	-.01	.26**	.07	.21**	.21**	.14*	-.03	.00	-.04	.02	.20**	.19**	-.13	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 3

Communalities for PCBS Items

Item	Extraction
Women should dress modestly to avoid sexually tempting men	.71
Virginity is a gift to give your spouse on your wedding night	.65
Having sex outside of marriage is one of the worst sins a person can commit	.65
Waiting to have sex until marriage will make the wedding night and future sex life that much better	.66
You lose a piece of yourself every time you have sex with someone new	.59
Women are responsible for setting sexual boundaries in dating relationships	.55
A woman who dresses immodestly causes her brothers to stumble	.73
Having premarital sex will make you unattractive to your future spouse	.72
Sex outside of marriage will make you damaged goods	.74
A woman who flaunts her body is hard to respect	.63
Virginity is the most important thing a woman can give to her husband	.63
Women should be cherished as pure creatures	.68
It is normal for a man to struggle with pornography, but not normal for a woman	.66
Men have a bigger problem with lust than women do	.64
When sexual boundaries are crossed, you should repent and feel guilty	.62
If you remain a virgin until marriage, God will bless you and your spouse with a great sex life	.75
Since women don't have sexual desire, they do not struggle with pornography	.72

Men cannot be expected to control their sexual desire; women must help them out	.64
You should only date when you are ready to get married	.57
It is more acceptable for a man to not be a virgin on his wedding night than a woman	.74
When a woman gets married, the responsibility of her welfare is transferred from her father to her husband	.61
It will be difficult for your future spouse to forgive you if you have sex with someone else before marriage	.50
You should try to avoid being sexually aroused, as it can lead to sinful behavior	.68
Those who remain virgins until marriage are more righteous than those who don't wait	.67
A woman's father should play an important role in protecting her purity until she is married	.80
Women must be responsible for guarding purity, because men cannot help themselves	.55
All sexual thoughts and feelings must be avoided until marriage	.71
Women are, by nature, more sexually pure than men	.67
Courting is preferable to casual dating	.71
Side hugs are more appropriate than full hugs	.64
A woman who is covered up is more attractive than a woman who dresses immodestly	.69
When dating, sexual purity should be the top priority	.64
You should focus on same-sex friendships until you are ready to get married	.61
A woman's father should be heavily involved in his daughter's dating process	.76

Women should cover themselves up; men can wear whatever clothing they choose	.71
Women should not have sexual desire	.74
You should feel ashamed if you have sex outside of marriage	.70
It is the woman's fault if sexual boundaries are crossed in a dating relationship	.73
If you are patient and sexually pure, God will bring you the perfect spouse	.75
A daughter should commit to her parents that she will remain a virgin until her wedding night	.63
God created us as sexual beings, but that part of ourselves must be reserved for marriage	.61
Once you have sex outside of marriage, you are irreparably damaged	.73
Sexual thoughts and feelings outside of marriage should cause guilt	.68
If you have had sex outside of marriage, you should hide that from others, especially at church	.69
Purity is primarily about my virginity	.54

Table 4

Initial Pattern Matrix for Three Components

	1	2	3
You should feel ashamed if you have sex outside of marriage	.77		
Sexual thoughts and feelings outside of marriage should cause guilt	.75		
A woman who dresses immodestly causes her brothers to stumble	.66		
A woman who flaunts her body is hard to respect	.66		
It will be difficult for your future spouse to forgive you if you have sex with someone else before marriage	.65		
Having premarital sex will make you unattractive to your future spouse	.61		
Side hugs are more appropriate than full hugs	.59		
When sexual boundaries are crossed, you should repent and feel guilty	.59		
Sex outside of marriage will make you damaged goods	.58		
Women should dress modestly to avoid sexually tempting men	.56		

	1	2	3
You should try to avoid being sexually aroused, as it can lead to sinful behavior	.55		
A woman who is covered up is more attractive than a woman who dresses immodestly	.54		
Courting is preferable to casual dating	.52		
All sexual thoughts and feelings must be avoided until marriage	.44		
A woman's father should be heavily involved in his daughter's dating process	.44		
A woman's father should play an important role in protecting her purity until she is married	.43		
You should only date when you are ready to get married	.41		
Having sex outside of marriage is one of the worst sins a person can commit	.40		
You should focus on same-sex friendships until you are ready to get married	.35		
Since women don't have sexual desire, they do not struggle with pornography		-.71	
It is normal for a man to struggle with pornography, but not normal for a woman		-.70	
Women should cover themselves up; men can wear whatever clothing they choose		-.67	
It is the woman's fault if sexual boundaries are crossed in a dating relationship		-.62	

	1	2	3
Women should not have sexual desire		-.60	
It is more acceptable for a man to not be a virgin on his wedding night than a woman		-.58	
Men cannot be expected to control their sexual desire; women must help them out		-.57	
If you have had sex outside of marriage, you should hide that from others, especially at church		-.51	
Women are, by nature, more sexually pure than men		-.51	
Women must be responsible for guarding purity, because men cannot help themselves		-.50	
Once you have sex outside of marriage, you are irreparably damaged		-.46	
Women are responsible for setting sexual boundaries in dating relationships		-.44	
Those who remain virgins until marriage are more righteous than those who don't wait		-.34	
Women should be cherished as pure creatures			.75
Virginity is a gift to give your spouse on your wedding night			.71
Waiting to have sex until marriage will make the wedding night and future sex life that much better			.64
If you are patient and sexually pure, God will bring you the perfect spouse			.63

	1	2	3
If you remain a virgin until marriage, God will bless you and your spouse with a great sex life			.62
Virginity is the most important thing a woman can give her husband			.58
When dating, sexual purity should be the top priority			.55
You lose a piece of yourself every time you have sex with someone new			.52
Purity is primarily about my virginity			.51
A daughter should commit to her parents that she will remain a virgin until her wedding night			.50
When a woman gets married, the responsibility of her welfare is transferred from her father to her husband			.44
God created us as sexual beings, but that part of ourselves must be reserved for marriage			.41

Table 5

Final PCBS and Component Factor Loadings

	1	2	3
You should feel ashamed if you have sex outside of marriage	.77		
Sexual thoughts and feelings outside of marriage should cause guilt	.75		
A woman who dresses immodestly causes her brothers to stumble	.66		
It will be difficult for your future spouse to forgive you if you have sex with someone else before marriage	.65		
Having premarital sex will make you unattractive to your future spouse	.61		
Sex outside of marriage will make you damaged goods	.58		
Women should dress modestly to avoid sexually tempting men	.56		
It is normal for a man to struggle with pornography, but not normal for a woman		-.70	
Women should cover themselves up; men can wear whatever clothing they choose		-.67	
It is the woman's fault if sexual boundaries are crossed in a dating relationship		-.62	
Women should not have sexual desire		-.60	
It is more acceptable for a man to not be a virgin on his wedding night than a woman		-.58	

	1	2	3
Women are, by nature, more sexually pure than men		-.51	
Women should be cherished as pure creatures			.75
Virginity is a gift to give your spouse on your wedding night			.71
Waiting to have sex until marriage will make the wedding night and future sex life that much better			.64
If you are patient and sexually pure, God will bring you the perfect spouse			.63
If you remain a virgin until marriage, God will bless you and your spouse with a great sex life			.62
You lose a piece of yourself every time you have sex with someone new			.52
Purity is primarily about my virginity			.51

Table 6

Intercorrelations of PCBS Components

	1	2	3
Shame & Guilt	—		
Gender Roles	.55**	—	
Idealization	.57**	.48**	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 7

Descriptives and Alpha Coefficients for Final PCBS

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α	Skewness	Kurtosis
Overall	2.36	.67	.90	0.57	-1.72
Shame & Guilt	2.37	.88	.85	2.41	-1.55
Gender Roles	1.51	.60	.83	8.71	7.19
Idealization	2.44	.92	.83	-1.35	-2.06

Table 8

Significant Correlations Demonstrating Convergent Validity of PCBS

	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
HSS: Courtship & Commitment	.32	<.001
HSS: Men as Powerful Initiators	.42	<.001
HSS: Men Value Women's Appearance	.33	<.001
HSS: Sex Defines Masculinity; Women Set Limits	.39	<.001
ASI: Hostile Sexism	.41	<.001
ASI: Complementary Gender Differentiation	.37	<.001
ASI: Heterosexual Intimacy	.32	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Attitudes/Beliefs	.47	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Congruence/Incongruence	.38	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Awareness/Repression	.52	<.001
OBCS: Shame	.14	<.05

Table 9

Nonsignificant Correlations Demonstrating Discriminant Validity of PCBS

	<i>r</i>
Manifestation of God in Sexuality	-.02
Sacred Qualities of Sexuality	.12
Christian Orthodoxy Scale	-.03
OBCS: Surveillance	-.04
PANAS: Positive Affect	-.05
PANAS: Negative Affect	.04

Table 10

Correlations of PCBS Shame and Guilt Subscale and All Measures

	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
HSS: Courtship & Commitment	.29	<.001
HSS: Men as Powerful Initiators	.34	<.001
HSS: Men Value Women's Appearance	.27	<.001
HSS: Sex Defines Masculinity; Women Set Limits	.31	<.001
ASI: Hostile Sexism	.33	<.001
ASI: Protective Paternalism	-.29	<.001
ASI: Complementary Gender Differentiation	.29	<.001
ASI: Heterosexual Intimacy	.23	.001
SSIS: Sexual Attitudes/Beliefs	.40	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Congruence/Incongruence	.48	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Awareness/Repression	.50	<.001
Manifestation of God in Sexuality	-.01	.90
Sacred Qualities of Sexuality	.07	.30
Christian Orthodoxy Scale	.05	.52
Religious Fundamentalism Scale	-.26	<.001
OBCS: Surveillance	-.01	.91
OBCS: Shame	.17	.01
PANAS: Positive Affect	-.08	.27
PANAS: Negative Affect	.02	.78

Table 11

Correlations of PCBS Gender Roles Subscale and All Measures

	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
HSS: Courtship & Commitment	.43	<.001
HSS: Men as Powerful Initiators	.36	<.001
HSS: Men Value Women's Appearance	.24	.001
HSS: Sex Defines Masculinity; Women Set Limits	.38	<.001
ASI: Hostile Sexism	.35	<.001
ASI: Protective Paternalism	-.26	<.001
ASI: Complementary Gender Differentiation	.46	<.001
ASI: Heterosexual Intimacy	.29	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Attitudes/Beliefs	.56	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Congruence/Incongruence	.31	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Awareness/Repression	.44	<.001
Manifestation of God in Sexuality	.30	<.001
Sacred Qualities of Sexuality	-.12	.09
Christian Orthodoxy Scale	-.22	.001
Religious Fundamentalism Scale	.06	.37
OBCS: Surveillance	-.10	.18
OBCS: Shame	.20	<.01
PANAS: Positive Affect	-.10	.17
PANAS: Negative Affect	.04	.55

Table 12

Correlations of PCBS Idealization Subscale and All Measures

	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
HSS: Courtship & Commitment	.18	.01
HSS: Men as Powerful Initiators	.44	<.001
HSS: Men Value Women's Appearance	.25	<.001
HSS: Sex Defines Masculinity; Women Set Limits	.31	<.001
ASI: Hostile Sexism	.41	<.001
ASI: Protective Paternalism	-.40	<.001
ASI: Complementary Gender Differentiation	.35	<.001
ASI: Heterosexual Intimacy	.39	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Attitudes/Beliefs	.32	<.001
SSIS: Sexual Congruence/Incongruence	.21	<.01
SSIS: Sexual Awareness/Repression	.38	<.001
Manifestation of God in Sexuality	-.11	.12
Sacred Qualities of Sexuality	.22	<.01
Christian Orthodoxy Scale	.09	.20
Religious Fundamentalism Scale	-.25	<.001
OBCS: Surveillance	.03	.66
OBCS: Shame	.07	.36
PANAS: Positive Affect	-.04	.53
PANAS: Negative Affect	.03	.72

Table 13

Factor Loadings of PCBS Control Items

God's will is for sex to happen within a marriage relationship	.71
It is normal to experience sexual thoughts and feelings throughout one's life	.69
Men and women should be equally responsible for maintaining sexual purity	.66
God easily forgives those who have had sex outside of marriage	.50
Purity is about the state of my heart	.49
While modesty is important, it is ultimately a man's job not to lust after a woman	.49

Table 14

Correlations of PCBS Control Items and All Measures

	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
PCBS Overall	.05	.52
PCBS: Shame & Guilt	.05	.47
PCBS: Gender Roles	.21	.002
PCBS: Idealization	-.04	.60
HSS: Courtship & Commitment	.22	.002
HSS: Men as Powerful Initiators	.06	.44
HSS: Men Value Women's Appearance	.00	.99
HSS: Sex Defines Masculinity; Women Set Limits	.15	.04
ASI: Hostile Sexism	.16	.03
ASI: Protective Paternalism	.00	.99
ASI: Complementary Gender Differentiation	.01	.86
ASI: Heterosexual Intimacy	.20	.003
SSIS: Sexual Attitudes/Beliefs	.19	.007
SSIS: Sexual Congruence/Incongruence	-.10	.16
SSIS: Sexual Awareness/Repression	-.01	.94
Manifestation of God in Sexuality	.34	<.001
Sacred Qualities of Sexuality	-.26	<.001
Christian Orthodoxy Scale	-.39	<.001
Religious Fundamentalism Scale	.38	<.001
OBCS: Surveillance	-.02	.81
OBCS: Shame	.08	.26
PANAS: Positive Affect	-.16	.02
PANAS: Negative Affect	.08	.24

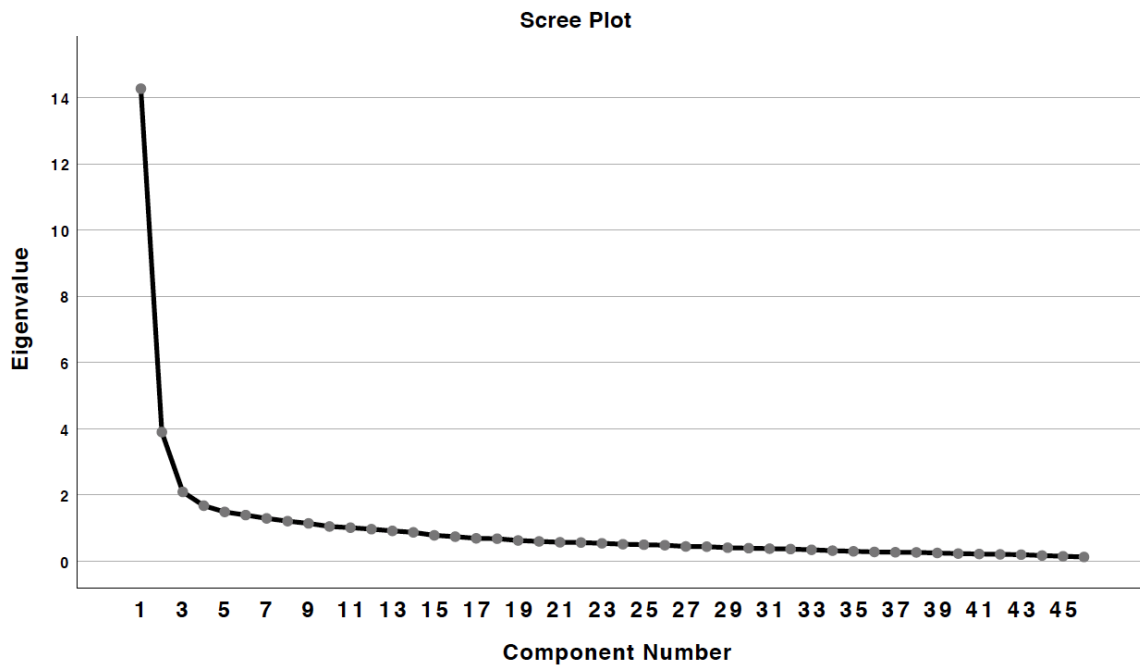


Figure 1. Scree plot for initial PCA with direct oblimin rotation of PCBS

APPENDIX A: MEASURES & DEMOGRAPHICS

Purity Culture Beliefs Scale (PCBS)

Directions: The following items deal with the messages about sexuality you received from your religious community growing up. Please answer *all* items using a 5-point scale, in which a “1” represents that you did not receive this message from your religious community growing up, and a “5” represents that you strongly received this message from your religious community.

Please indicate the degree to which you received these messages (implicitly or explicitly) from your religious community growing up.

Directions: The following items deal with the messages about sexuality you received growing up *and* whether you endorsed them. Please answer *all* items using a 5-point scale, in which a “1” represents that you strongly disagree with the statement, and a “5” represents that you strongly agree with the statement.

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement.

Sexual Double Standard

15. It is normal for a man to struggle with pornography, but not normal for a woman.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Men have a bigger problem with lust than women do.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Since women don't have sexual desire, they do not struggle with pornography.	1	2	3	4	5
23. It is more acceptable for a man to not be a virgin on his wedding night than a woman.	1	2	3	4	5
41. Women should not have sexual desire.	1	2	3	4	5

Women as Gatekeepers

7. Women are responsible for setting sexual boundaries in dating relationships.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Women must be responsible for guarding purity, because men cannot help themselves.	1	2	3	4	5
43. It is the woman's fault if sexual boundaries are crossed in a dating relationship.	1	2	3	4	5

Men Unable to Control Desires/Extreme Modesty

1. Women should dress modestly to avoid sexually tempting men.	1	2	3	4	5
8. A woman who dresses immodestly causes	1	2	3	4	5

her brothers to stumble.

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. A woman who flaunts her body is hard to respect. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21. Men cannot be expected to control their sexual desire; women must help them out. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. You should try to avoid being sexually aroused, as it can lead to sinful behavior. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34. Side hugs are more appropriate than full hugs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35. A woman who is covered up is more attractive than a woman who dresses immodestly. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 40. Women should cover themselves up; men can wear whatever clothing they choose. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Virginity as Gift

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2. Virginity is a gift to give your spouse on your wedding night. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Waiting to have sex until marriage will make the wedding night and future sex life that much better. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Virginity is the most important thing a woman can give to her husband. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. If you remain a virgin until marriage, God will bless you and your spouse with a great sex life. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 52. Purity is primarily about my virginity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Benevolent Sexism

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14. Women should be cherished as pure creatures. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24. When a woman gets married, the responsibility of her welfare is transferred from her father to her husband. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. A woman's father should play an important role in protecting her purity until she is married. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 32. Women are, by nature, more sexually pure than men. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 39. A woman's father should be heavily involved in his daughter's dating process. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 46. A daughter should commit to her parents that she will remain a virgin until her wedding night. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

"All or Nothing"

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6. You lose a piece of yourself every time you have sex with someone new. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Having premarital sex will make you unattractive to your future spouse. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Sex outside of marriage will make you | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

damaged goods.

26. It will be difficult for your future spouse to forgive you if you have sex with someone else before marriage. 1 2 3 4 5

28. Those who remain virgins until marriage are more righteous than those who don't wait. 1 2 3 4 5

31. All sexual thoughts and feelings must be avoided until marriage. 1 2 3 4 5

47. God created us as sexual beings, but that part of ourselves must be reserved for marriage. 1 2 3 4 5

48. Once you have sex outside or marriage, you are irreparably damaged. 1 2 3 4 5

Guilt and Shame

3. Having sex outside of marriage is one of the worst sins a person can commit. 1 2 3 4 5

18. When sexual boundaries are crossed, you should repent and feel guilty. 1 2 3 4 5

42. You should feel ashamed if you have sex outside of marriage. 1 2 3 4 5

49. Sexual thoughts and feelings outside of marriage should cause guilt. 1 2 3 4 5

50. If you have had sex outside of marriage, you should hide that from others, especially at church. 1 2 3 4 5

Courting

22. You should only date when you are ready to get married. 1 2 3 4 5

33. Courting is preferable to casual dating. 1 2 3 4 5

37. When dating, sexual purity should be the top priority. 1 2 3 4 5

38. You should focus on same-sex friendships until you are ready to get married. 1 2 3 4 5

44. If you are patient and sexually pure, God will bring you the perfect spouse. 1 2 3 4 5

Control Items

5. It is normal for women to struggle with lust. 1 2 3 4 5

11. God's will is for sex to happen within a marriage relationship. 1 2 3 4 5

17. Men and women should be equally responsible for maintaining sexual purity. 1 2 3 4 5

25. God easily forgives those who have had sex outside of marriage. 1 2 3 4 5

36. While modesty is important, it is ultimately a man's job to not lust after a woman. 1 2 3 4 5

45. It is normal to experience sexual thoughts and feelings throughout one's life.	1	2	3	4	5
51. Purity is about the state of my heart.	1	2	3	4	5

Heterosexual Script Scale (HSS); Seabrook et al., 2016

Directions: Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale: 0 = strongly disagree; 1 = somewhat disagree; 2 = slightly disagree; 3 = slightly agree; 4 = somewhat agree; 5 = strongly agree.

1. The best way for a girl to attract a boyfriend is to use her body and looks.
2. There is nothing wrong with men being primarily interested in a woman's body.
3. No matter what she says, a girl isn't really happy unless she's in a relationship.
4. Girls should do whatever they need to (e.g., use make-up, buy attractive clothes, and work out) to look good enough to attract a date/partner.
5. Sometimes girls have to do things they don't want to do to keep their boyfriend happy.
6. A woman should be willing to make personal sacrifices in order to satisfy her partner.
7. Guys like to play the field and shouldn't be expected to stay with one partner for too long.
8. Women are attracted most to a man with a lot of money.
9. A man should always protect and defend his woman.
10. Men should be the ones to ask women out and initiate physical contact.
11. A woman wants a man because she wants someone to protect her.
12. Women like to admire men's bodies and are attracted most to men who are muscular and handsome.
13. Being with an attractive partner gives a guy prestige.
14. Guys who are able to date a lot of people (players) are considered cool.
15. In the dating game, guys frequently compete with each other for partners, and girls try to lure or catch partners.
16. It's only natural for a guy to make advances on someone he finds attractive.
17. It is natural for a guy to want to admire or check out other people, even if he is dating someone.
18. Guys are always ready for sex.
19. Most guys don't want to be "just friends" with a girl.

20. Guys are more interested in physical relationships and girls are more interested in emotional relationships.
21. It is up to women to keep things from moving too fast sexually.
22. Women with a lot of “experience” should expect a bad reputation.

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI); Glick & Fiske, 1996

Directions: Below is a series of statements concerning men and women and their relationships in contemporary society. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale: 0 = disagree strongly; 1 = disagree somewhat; 2 = disagree slightly; 3 = agree slightly; 4 = agree somewhat; 5 = agree strongly.

1. No matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman. (B,I)
2. Many women are actually seeking special favors, such as hiring policies that favor them over men, under the guise of asking for "equality." (H)
3. In a disaster, women ought not necessarily to be rescued before men. (B,P*)
4. Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist. (H)
5. Women are too easily offended. (H)
6. People are often truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex. (B,I*)
7. Feminists are not seeking for women to have more power than men. (H*)
8. Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess. (B,G)
9. Women should be cherished and protected by men. (B,P)
10. Most women fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them. (H)
11. Women seek to gain power by getting control over men. (H)
12. Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores. (B,I)
13. Men are complete without women. (B,I*)
14. Women exaggerate problems they have at work. (H)
15. Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash. (H)
16. When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against. (H)
17. A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man. (B,P)
18. There are actually very few women who get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually

available and then refusing male advances. (H*)

19. Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility. (B,G)

20. Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives. (B,P)

21. Feminists are making entirely reasonable demands of men. (H*)

22. Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste. (B,G)

Note. H = hostile sexism, B = benevolent sexism, P = protective paternalism, G = complementary gender differentiation, I = heterosexual intimacy, * = reverse-scored item

Sexual-Spiritual Integration Scale (SSIS); Wittstock et al., 2007

Instructions: Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*):

1. My body with all its desires leads me to commit sin.
2. I think God turns his/her face away when we have sex.
3. Sexual passion and desire turn us into little more than animals.
4. I feel awkward when I realize that God can see me naked.
5. The fact that sexual thoughts even briefly enter my mind while I'm trying to pray or worship means that I must be evil.
6. I am ashamed of my sexual feelings and fantasies.
7. My sexual desires are the most dangerous of all my bodily desires.
8. It would feel disrespectful to pray immediately after having sex.
9. Older people who continue having sex should be ashamed.
10. Nothing convinces me more of my sinfulness than my sexual desires.
11. Sexuality is something I prefer not to think or talk about.
12. It embarrasses me to talk about sex.
13. My bodily desires are dangerous for my soul/spirit.
14. Only married people should think about sex.
15. It usually upsets me when I have dreams that are erotic.
16. Sexual desire and passion make us less free.
17. As long as we have sexual desire and passion we can never be truly free.
18. Nothing distorts the true nature of the human person—created in the image and likeness of God—quite as much as sexual desire and passion.
19. Unless one lives a life of virginity one can never reach the highest stage of spiritual development.
20. When I look back on how I've dealt with my sexuality thus far, I have regrets.
21. I believe that the more spiritual I become the fewer sexual thoughts and fantasies I will have.
22. My sexuality still complicates my relationship with God.
23. If it were not for my body with its passions and desires, I could be a holy person.
24. I'm not living up to my spiritual ideals in relation to my sexuality.

Sexual congruence/incongruence subscale: 1, 7, 10, 13, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24

Sexual attitudes/beliefs subscale: 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 18, 19

Sexual repression/awareness subscale: 6, 11, 12, 14, 15

Manifestation of God in Sexuality Scale (Claney et al., 2017)

Adaptation of the *Manifestation of God in Sexual Intercourse Scale* (Murray-Swank et al., 2005)
and *Manifestation of God in Marriage Scale* (Mahoney et al., 1999)

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*):

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Strongly Agree*

1. My sexuality represents an aspect of God.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. My sexuality is created in God's image
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. God is present in my sexuality
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. My sexuality is a gift from God
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. God is glorified through my sexuality
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. God delights in my sexuality.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. God created me to be a sexual being
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. God has been a guiding force in the development of my sexual identity
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I experience God through being a sexual being.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. I see God's influence in my sexuality
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Sacred Qualities of Sexuality Scale (Claney et al., 2017)

Adaptation of the *Sacred Qualities of Sexual Intercourse Scale* (Murray-Swank et al., 2005) and
Sacred Qualities of Marriage Scale (Mahoney et al., 1999)

Please indicate the degree to which you feel each statement describes your sexuality, ranging from 1 (*Strong Disagree*) to 7 (*very closely describes*):

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 *Strongly Agree*

1. My sexuality is sacred to me.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Experiencing my sexuality feels like a deeply spiritual experience.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. My sexuality is part of a larger spiritual plan.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. At moments, being connected to my sexuality makes me aware of a higher power
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. My sexuality seems like a miracle to me
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. My sexuality is holy
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. My sexual self is a sacred part of who I am.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. My sexual self is blessed.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. I view my sexuality as an aspect of my spirituality.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. My sexuality seems to be transcendent of this physical life.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Christian Orthodoxy Scale (Fullerton & Hunsberger, 1982)

Instructions: This survey includes a number of statements related to specific religious beliefs. You will probably find that you *agree* with some of the statements, and *disagree* with others, to varying extents. Please mark your opinion of each statement, according to the amount of your agreement by using the following scale:

<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Moderately Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Disagree</i>	<i>Slightly Agree</i>	<i>Moderately Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
-3	-2	-1	1	2	3

1. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. Man is not a special creature made in the image of God, he is simply a recent development in the process of animal evolution.*
3. Jesus Christ was the divine Son of God.
4. The Bible is the word of God given to guide man to grace and salvation.
5. Those who feel that God answers prayers are just deceiving themselves.*
6. It is ridiculous to believe that Jesus Christ could be both human and divine.*
7. Jesus was born of a virgin.
8. The Bible may be an important book of moral teachings, but it was no more inspired by God than were many other such books in the history of Man.*
9. The concept of God is an old superstition that is no longer needed to explain things in the modern era.*
10. Christ will return to earth someday.
11. Most of the religions in the world have miracle stories in their traditions; but there is no reason to believe any of them are true, including those found in the Bible.*
12. God hears all our prayers.
13. Jesus Christ may have been a great ethical teacher, as other men have been in history. But he was not the divine Son of God.*
14. God made man of dust in His own image and breathed life into him.
15. Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, God provided a way for the forgiveness of man's sins.

16. Despite what many people believe, there is no such thing as a God who is aware of Man's actions.*
17. Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried but on the third day He rose from the daed.
18. In all likelihood there is no such thing as a God-given immortal soul in Man which lives on after death.*
19. If there ever was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth, he is dead now and will never walk the earth again.*
20. Jesus miraculously changed real water into real wine.
21. There is a God who is concerned with everyone's actions.
22. Jesus' death on the cross, if it actually occurred, did nothing in and of itself to save Mankind.*
23. There is really no reason to hold to the idea that Jesus was born of a virgin. Jesus's life showed better than anything else that he was exceptional, so why rely on old myths that don't make sense.*
24. The Resurrection proves beyond a doubt that Jesus was the Christ or Messiah of God.

* = reverse-scored item

Religious Fundamentalism Scale (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004)

Instructions: This survey is part of an investigation of general public opinion concerning a variety of social issues. You will probably find that you *agree* with some of the statements, and *disagree* with others, to varying extents. Please indicate your reaction to each statement, according to the following scale:

- 4 *Very Strongly Disagree*
- 3 *Strongly Disagree*
- 2 *Moderately Disagree*
- 1 *Slightly Disagree*
- 0 *Neutral*
- 1 *Slightly Agree*
- 2 *Moderately Agree*
- 3 *Strongly Agree*
- 4 *Very Strongly Agree*

You may find that you sometimes have different reaction to different parts of a statement. For example, you might very strongly disagree (-4) with one idea in a statement, but slightly agree (+1) with another idea in the same item. When this happens, please combine your reactions, and indicate how you feel on balance (a -3 in this case).

1. God has given humanity a complete, unfailing guide to happiness and salvation, which must be totally followed.
2. No single book of religious teachings contains all the intrinsic, fundamental truths about life.*
3. The basic cause of evil in this world is Satan, who is still constantly and ferociously fighting against God.
4. It is more important to be a good person than to believe in God and the right religion.*
5. There is a particular set of religious teachings in this world that are so true, you can't go any "deeper" because they are the basic, bedrock message that God has given humanity.
6. When you get right down to it, there are basically only two kinds of people in the world: the Righteous, who will be rewarded by God; and the rest, who will not.
7. Scriptures may contain general truths, but they should NOT be considered completely, literally true from beginning to end.*
8. To lead the best, most meaningful life, one must belong to the one, fundamentally true religion.
9. "Satan" is just the name people give to their own bad impulses. There really is *no such thing* as a diabolical "Prince of Darkness" who tempts us.*

10. Whenever science and sacred scripture conflict, *science* is probably right.*
11. The fundamentals of God's religion should never be tampered with, or comprised with others' beliefs.
12. *All* of the religions in the world have flaws and wrong teachings. There is *no* perfectly true, right religion.*

* = reverse-scored item

Surveillance and Shame Subscales of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996)

1 (*strongly disagree*) 2 3 4 5 6 (*strongly agree*)

Surveillance

1. I rarely think about how I look. (R)
2. I think it is more important that my clothes are comfortable than whether they look good on me. (R)
3. I think more about how my body feels than how my body looks. (R)
4. I rarely compare how I look with how other people look. (R)
5. During the day, I think about how I look many times.
6. I often worry about whether the clothes I am wearing make me look good.
7. I rarely worry about how I look to other people. (R)
8. I am more concerned with what my body can do than how it looks or feels. (R)

Shame

9. When I can't control my weight, I feel like something must be wrong with me.
10. I feel ashamed of myself when I haven't made the effort to look my best.
11. I feel like I must be a bad person when I don't look as good as I could.
12. I would be ashamed for people to know what I really weigh.
13. I never worry that something is wrong with me when I am not exercising as much as I should. (R)
14. When I'm not exercising enough, I question whether I am a good enough person.
15. Even when I can't control my weight, I think I'm an okay person. (R)
16. When I'm not the size I think I should be, I feel ashamed.

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS); Watson et al., 1988

Directions: Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now, that is, at the present moment OR
indicate the extent you have felt this way over the past week.

1 (Very Slightly or Not at All) 2 3 4 5 (Extremely)

1. Interested
2. Distressed
3. Excited
4. Upset
5. Strong
6. Guilty
7. Scared
8. Hostile
9. Enthusiastic
10. Proud
11. Irritable
12. Alert
13. Ashamed
14. Inspired
15. Nervous
16. Determined
17. Attentive
18. Jittery
19. Active
20. Afraid

Demographics Form1. **Age:** _____2. **Ethnicity:**

European American/Caucasian

Hispanic/Latino

African American/Black

Asian/Pacific Islander

Mixed Race

Other

Prefer not to specify

3. **Number of years married:** _____4. **Previously married?**

No

Yes If Yes, for how many years were you previously married?

5. **Religious Denomination:**

Evangelical

Baptist

Non-denominational

Seventh-Day Adventist

Catholic

Methodist

Anglican

Lutheran

Presbyterian

Pentecostal

Mennonite

Other: _____

6. How frequently do you attend church services?

Once a year

Two-three times a year

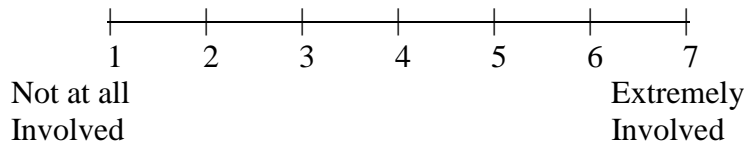
Once a month

Two-three times a month

Once a week

More than once per week

7. Please rate your involvement in your church community:



APPENDIX B: FINAL PCBS

Purity Culture Beliefs Scale (PCBS)

Directions: The following items deal with the messages about sexuality you received growing up *and* whether you endorsed them. Please answer *all* items using a 5-point scale, in which a “1” represents that you strongly disagree with the statement, and a “5” represents that you strongly agree with the statement.

1. Women should dress modestly to avoid sexually tempting men
2. Virginity is a gift to give your spouse on your wedding night
3. God’s will is for sex to happen within a marriage relationship
4. It is more acceptable for a man to not be a virgin on his wedding night than a woman
5. Waiting to have sex until marriage will make the wedding night and future sex life that much better
6. Women should cover themselves up; men can wear whatever clothing they choose
7. Sexual thoughts and feelings outside of marriage should cause guilt
8. It is normal to experience sexual thoughts and feelings throughout one’s life
9. You lose a piece of yourself every time you have sex with someone new
10. A woman who dresses immodestly causes her brothers to stumble
11. Women should not have sexual desire
12. Purity is primarily about my virginity
13. Having premarital sex will make you unattractive to your future spouse
14. Men and women should be equally responsible for maintaining sexual purity.
15. If you remain a virgin until marriage, God will bless you and your spouse with a great sex life
16. It is normal for a man to struggle with pornography, but not normal for a woman
17. Sex outside of marriage will make you damaged goods
18. It will be difficult for your future spouse to forgive you if you have sex with someone else before marriage
19. If you are patient and sexually pure, God will bring you the perfect spouse
20. Women are, by nature, more sexually pure than men
21. You should feel ashamed if you have sex outside of marriage
22. It is normal for women to struggle with lust
23. Women should be cherished as pure creatures
24. It is the woman’s fault if sexual boundaries are crossed in a dating relationship

Component 1 Final: Shame & Guilt

- 21. You should feel ashamed if you have sex outside of marriage
- 7. Sexual thoughts and feelings outside of marriage should cause guilt
- 10. A woman who dresses immodestly causes her brothers to stumble
- 18. It will be difficult for your future spouse to forgive you if you have sex with someone else before marriage
- 13. Having premarital sex will make you unattractive to your future spouse
- 17. Sex outside of marriage will make you damaged goods
- 1. Women should dress modestly to avoid sexually tempting men

Component 2 Final: Gender Roles

- 16. It is normal for a man to struggle with pornography, but not normal for a woman
- 6. Women should cover themselves up; men can wear whatever clothing they choose
- 24. It is the woman's fault if sexual boundaries are crossed in a dating relationship
- 11. Women should not have sexual desire
- 4. It is more acceptable for a man to not be a virgin on his wedding night than a woman
- 20. Women are, by nature, more sexually pure than men

Component 3 Final: Idealization

- 23. Women should be cherished as pure creatures
- 2. Virginity is a gift to give your spouse on your wedding night
- 5. Waiting to have sex until marriage will make the wedding night and future sex life that much better
- 19. If you are patient and sexually pure, God will bring you the perfect spouse
- 15. If you remain a virgin until marriage, God will bless you and your spouse with a great sex life
- 9. You lose a piece of yourself every time you have sex with someone new
- 12. Purity is primarily about my virginity

Control Items

- 3. God's will is for sex to happen within a marriage relationship.
- 8. It is normal to experience sexual thoughts and feelings throughout one's life.
- 14. Men and women should be equally responsible for maintaining sexual purity.
- 22. It is normal for women to struggle with lust.

APPENDIX C

DISSERTATION CHECKLIST

1. Frontis Pages

- _____ Approval Page: double check spacing
- _____ Title Page: double check spacing
- _____ Copyright Page
- _____ Abstract: title formatted the same as on title page
- _____ Table of Contents: double check page numbers
- _____ List of Tables (if any): double check page numbers
- _____ List of Figures (if any): double check page numbers
- _____ Acknowledgements (if any)

2. Dissertation Body

- _____ Chapter 1: Literature Review
- _____ Chapter 2: Method — be sure pagination continues correctly
- _____ Chapter 3: Results — be sure pagination continues correctly
- _____ Chapter 4: Discussion — be sure pagination continues correctly

3. References

- _____ Double check to be sure all citations are referenced and all references are cited.
- _____ Be sure all information and format in Reference section are correct.

4. Appendixes

- _____ Appendixes prior to manuscript
- _____ Appendix: Manuscript Suitable for Publication

5. Vita

- _____ Be sure vita information is correctly formatted and fits on one page

APPENDIX D

MANUSCRIPT SUITABLE FOR PUBLICATION

Defining Purity Culture:
Sexual Messages in Evangelical Christian Culture

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Abstract

Worthington et al. (2002) proposed a model of sexual identity development, in which sexual identity development is influenced by social and cultural factors. One important cultural factor that has not been previously studied is the concept of “purity culture,” which is an important movement within the evangelical Christian subculture. The purpose of the present article is to define the construct of purity culture. First, relevant literature on sexual identity development is presented, with an emphasis on ways in which cultural messages shape sexuality. Second, some of the predominant cultural messages studied in the psychological literature are discussed, including sexual scripts and ambivalent sexism. Third, messages about sexuality specifically from religious sources are presented, contrasting traditional messages from Christianity and those from purity culture. A survey of popular sources referencing purity culture determined that purity culture contains the following messages: the sexual double standard, women as sexual gatekeepers, men as unable to control their sexual desire, extreme modesty, benevolent sexism, and an “all or nothing” mentality as it relates to sexual activity. These messages of the purity culture, while upholding Christian teachings on abstinence, are distinct from traditional Christian teaching. Specifically, purity culture places even greater restrictions upon sexual behavior, and focuses on external standards to the exclusion of internal motivations in legalistic ways. This research helps to establish an initial construct of purity culture that may be used in future research on sexual identity development in evangelical Christian culture.

Defining Purity Culture:

Sexual Messages in Evangelical Christian Culture

While sexuality has been a focus of much psychological research, it has not been well studied within a Christian population. A person's religious upbringing can have a strong influence on development. In particular, most religions morally regulate sexual behavior. Consequently, religious orientation has an important influence on sexual identity development. Within contemporary evangelical Christianity, a series of beliefs and behaviors about sexuality have been identified in popular sources and labeled "purity culture." This purity culture first arose during the 1970s as a reaction against the sexual revolution of the 1960s (Anderson, 2015). Purity culture began to grow in popularity during the 1990s, and its beliefs were taught to many adolescents in youth ministries across the United States.

However, there has been a recent backlash against this purity culture, and many Christians have written blogs about their experience of their sexuality in the context of this culture. These blogs describe shame and guilt associated with sexuality and virginity loss for Christians that grew up in this purity culture (Barbee, 2014; Collins, 2015; Darnall, 2017; Field, 2016; Gregoire, 2016). The purpose of the present article is to define the construct of purity culture, so that it can be used in further research on sexuality in evangelical Christianity.

First, the available literature on sexual development will be presented, with an emphasis on ways in which cultural messages shape sexuality. Second, some of the predominant cultural messages studied in the psychological literature will be discussed, including sexual scripts and ambivalent sexism. Third, messages about sexuality specifically from religious sources will be presented, contrasting traditional messages from Christianity and those from purity culture.

Relevant psychological literature will be discussed, as well as popular sources on purity culture. Finally, a definition of purity culture and its components will be presented.

Sexual Identity Development

The influence of purity culture must be understood in the context of the impact of cultural and social factors on sexual identity development. The messages of purity culture are often heard first in adolescence, which is an important time in development. The sexual identity model proposed by Worthington, Savoy, and Vernaglia (2002) is robust and helpful in understanding development in this area. They defined heterosexual identity development as “the individual and social processes by which heterosexually identified persons acknowledge and define their sexual needs, values, sexual orientation and preferences for sexual activities, modes of sexual expression, and characteristics of sexual partners” (p. 510). The individual process involves identifying and accepting one’s sexual needs, values, etc., while the social process involves recognizing oneself as a member of a group with similar sexual identities. These processes are influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors. Social factors include the person’s microsocial contexts (i.e., immediate family and peers), gender norms and socialization, culture, and religious orientation. This theory highlights various important factors that contribute to development. In particular, social contexts such as religious orientation, family, and peers, have a strong influence on sexual identity development.

Cultural and Social Factors Influencing Sexual Identity Development

As stated above, Worthington et al. (2002) posit that sexual identity is influenced by cultural factors, including socialization. In the following sections, various cultural and social factors that influence sexual identity development will be discussed. These include various

sexual scripts, such as the sexual double standard and women as the gatekeepers of sexual activity. Additionally, the topic of ambivalent sexism will be reviewed.

Sexual Script Theory

One aspect of sexual socialization is described in sexual script theory. “Scripts” are cognitive devices that guide people’s actions and help them make sense of their behavior (Jones & Holster, 2001). Scripts outline the typical sequence of appropriate social behavior (McCormick, 2010). McCormick suggested that there is a continuum of sexual scripts, the least permissive being that sex and intimacy are acceptable only within heterosexual marriage. Religious beliefs help shape and govern sexual scripts.

McCormick (2010) described the sexual double standard as a predominant sexual script that dictates that female sexual behavior should be more regulated and constrained than male sexual behavior. The sexual double standard has also been described as men chasing sex and being driven by lust, while women chase relationships and are driven by love (Reid, Elliott, & Webber, 2011). In a review of 30 studies, Crawford and Popp (2003) found evidence for the continued existence of the sexual double standard, but noted that it has evolved over time and is heavily influenced by situational and interpersonal factors. They found that some groups continue to enforce an absolute sexual double standard, and that it is even evident within groups of people who are abstinent. Another study by Sakaluk, Todd, Milhausen, Lachowsky, and URGiS (2014) used qualitative focus groups to develop a measure of sexual scripts in heterosexual emerging adults. Three focus groups of men and four focus groups of women led to the development of several dominant sexual scripts. One script that emerged was similar to the sexual double standard, which stated, “men are always ready for sex,” and “women inhibit their

sexual expression” (pp. 519-520). An additional script that emerged was that single women who appear sexual tend to be judged more negatively.

The script that women are sexual gatekeepers is defined as women having the responsibility to limit their own and their partners’ sexual expression (Schleicher & Gilbert, 2005). The above-mentioned study by Sakaluk et al. (2014) also demonstrated evidence for this sexual script. Within the study, the script emerged that men tend to initiate sex, while women are gatekeepers, setting limits on sexual activity. Overall, there appears to be evidence within psychological research for the sexual double standard and women as gatekeepers scripts.

Ambivalent Sexism

Another cultural message about sexuality and gender that is often taught is that women are the weaker sex. In psychological research, this type of attitude is conceptualized as benevolent sexism. Benevolent sexism influences sexual identity development and sexuality because the messages within it prescribe specific gender roles and norms, which are then applied in the area of sexuality. Glick and Fiske (1996) described a theory of ambivalent sexism, which consists of hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. While hostile sexism consists of overtly contemptuous attitudes toward women, benevolent sexism characterizes women as pure creatures that need to be protected, adored, and supported by men (Glick & Fiske, 2001). The messages of benevolent sexism imply that women are weak and best suited for traditional gender roles.

Within benevolent sexism, there are three components: paternalism, gender differentiation, and heterosexuality (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Protective paternalism is the belief that women are to be loved, protected, and cherished. Because women are viewed as weaker, men must protect and provide for women. Complementary gender differentiation is the belief

that women have positive traits that complement men's traits, and heterosexual intimacy is the belief that men are incomplete without women, and highlights the psychological desire for closeness. These three aspects of benevolent sexism have particular implications for sexuality. Because protective paternalism suggests that women are weaker and need to be protected by men, women may be viewed as unfit to make decisions about their sexuality or sexual behavior, and the responsibility for these are consequently given to a male. Complementary gender differentiation suggests that women have greater purity and greater moral sensibility than men. When this is applied to sexuality, the sexual scripts mentioned above (i.e., sexual double standard, women as gatekeepers) are likely to emerge. Heterosexual intimacy suggests that worthiness and sense of feeling "complete" cannot happen outside of a sexual relationship between a man and a woman. Benevolent sexism, though more subtle than hostile sexism, is a form of prejudice, and has been shown to promote gender inequality in over 19 nations (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

In addition, a few studies have shown the prevalence of benevolent sexism in evangelical Christian samples. A study by Maltby, Hall, Anderson, and Edwards (2010) demonstrated that men were more likely than women to endorse benevolent sexism in general, and protective paternalism in particular. In addition, for men, as the endorsement of Christian orthodoxy increased, endorsement of protective paternalism also increased; this relationship was not found for women. Another study by Eliason, Hall, Anderson, and Willingham (2017) showed a significant positive correlation between biblical beliefs about gender roles and protective paternalism, as well as a significant positive correlation with hostile sexism. This research suggests that as gender roles become more traditional, endorsement of hostile sexism and protective paternalism increase in evangelical contexts. The above-mentioned studies (Eliason et

al., 2017; Maltby et al., 2010) suggest that endorsement of traditional gender roles and Christian orthodoxy may be associated with greater endorsement of benevolent sexism—particularly the protective paternalism aspect of benevolent sexism—in evangelical subculture. Although research has not specifically addressed the repercussions of these findings for sexual identity development, they provide a context for understanding the rise of purity culture in evangelical contexts.

Christian Messages About Sexuality

In addition to more general societal messages about sexuality, religious messages are particularly important for sexual identity development. Christians' beliefs about sexuality are based on biblical teachings, which affirm that sex is only to be had within the marriage relationship. Within this belief system, sex is for the creation of intimacy between husband and wife, and for procreation. For example, Genesis 2:24 states, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." The words "become one flesh" refer to sexual intercourse (Lawton, 1986). Other passages in the also make this point, including Deuteronomy 22:13-28, Galatians 5:19, Hebrews 13:4, and 1 Thessalonians 4:3. Therefore, many Christians believe in sexual abstinence before marriage, and consequently sex before marriage is viewed as a sin.

Many Christians adhere to these restrictions because they want to live in accordance with what they believe is God's design for their lives. As such, they believe that abstaining from sexual activity before marriage will lead to greater flourishing. The messages proposed by traditional Christianity (i.e., conservative sexual values) have been linked to positive outcomes in psychological research. A study by Hardy and Willoughby (2017) showed that religiosity positively predicted abstinence beliefs. In turn, abstinence beliefs negatively predicted risky

sexual behaviors, risk taking (i.e., drinking alcohol, using illicit drugs), and unhappiness.

Mbotho, Cilliers, and Akintola (2013) conducted a qualitative study of South African Christians ranging from 16-24 years old. Results showed that one of the main motivations for abstinence was to obey God's instruction for sexuality. In doing so, participants believed that they would receive psychological and spiritual benefits.

In addition to endorsing conservative sexual values, Christianity proposes that sexuality is sacred and holy. The sanctification of sex has also been linked to positive outcomes in psychological research. Sanctification of sexuality is defined as believing that one's sexuality and sexual relationships have "divine character and significance" (p. 775). Hernandez et al. (2011) found that couples who reported higher levels of sanctification reported higher sexual and marital satisfaction in addition to greater sexual and spiritual closeness. Murray-Swank et al. (2005) discovered that higher sanctification of sex was linked with increased sexual satisfaction in participants' current relationships. These researchers also found that sanctification was linked to more positive affective reactions about intercourse. A longitudinal study of newly married couples by Hernandez-Kane and Mahoney (2018) found that higher sanctification early in the marriage predicted increased sexual satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and frequency of sexual intercourse at a one-year follow-up. This difference was still observed when controlling for initial marital satisfaction. An additional study by Yip and Page (2014) did not explicitly examine sanctification, but instead looked at the role of religious beliefs in shaping heterosexual identity. Results showed that one of most important beliefs shaping sexual identity was the idea that sexuality is divinely bestowed. This belief then led to a desire to remain sexually abstinent until marriage, in order to honor God, themselves, and their future sexual partner.

Purity Culture Messages About Sexuality

The messages of purity culture, while upholding Christian teaching on abstinence, also go beyond it in placing even greater restrictions upon sexual behavior, focusing in legalistic ways on external standards of behavior to the exclusion of internal motivations. In the paragraphs that follow, the messages of purity culture are described. These messages include the sexual double standard, women as gatekeepers, men as unable to control their sexual desire, extreme modesty, benevolent sexism, an “all or nothing” mentality about sexuality, and unrealistic expectations about sexual activity.

Many people attribute the prevalence of purity culture in evangelicalism to various curricula taught to adolescents at church, the most popular of which is entitled “True Love Waits” (Barbee, 2014; Deneson, 2017). As part of this curriculum, adolescents are separated into gendered groups and told about the importance of maintaining “sexual purity” until marriage. After completing the curriculum, there is often a ceremony where the adolescents sign a pledge. The pledge states, “Believing that true love waits, I make a commitment to God, myself, my family, my friends, my future mate and my future children to be sexually abstinent from this day until the day I enter a biblical marriage relationship” (Pugsley, 2014; “True Love Waits,” n.d.). Families are encouraged to attend these ceremonies, and often fathers will give their daughters “purity rings” to wear as a tangible reminder of the purity pledge (Deneson, 2017). Similarly, some young women and their fathers attend purity balls, which are formal dances where the daughter makes a commitment to her father to remain a virgin until her marriage. Fathers also pledge at these events to guard their daughters’ sexual purity (Frank, 2014). These purity balls often contain marriage imagery, with the daughters wearing formal white dresses, and the father-daughter pairs making vows to each other.

An additional source of purity culture is a book called *I Kissed Dating Goodbye* by Joshua Harris (1997). In this book, Harris suggested that Christians should practice courtship over casual dating. Practicing courtship entails only dating when one is ready for marriage. It also usually involves including parents in the dating process, specifically the woman's parents. Another popular book within purity culture is *When God Writes Your Love Story* by Eric and Leslie Ludy (1999), which proposes rejecting popular messages about dating and sexuality, and instead waiting for a "God-scripted romance."

There are several implicit and explicit messages about sexuality within the teachings of "True Love Waits," *I Kissed Dating Goodbye* (Harris, 1997), and *When God Writes Your Love Story* (Ludy & Ludy, 1999), as well as additional teachings received from churches, parents, and peers in a Christian context. Those who have spoken out about their experience of purity culture note that it emphasizes that men have stronger sexual desire than women—something that has some support in the psychological literature (Hyde, 2005). However, purity culture goes beyond these documented gender differences to teach that women should not have any sexual desire (Anderson, 2015; Barbee, 2014; Claney et al., 2017; Collins, 2015; Darnall, 2017; Field, 2016; Gregoire, 2016).

This belief in the absence of sexual desire in women overlaps with the well-researched sexual scripts discussed above (i.e., the sexual double standard and women as gatekeepers scripts). Within purity culture, the sexual double standard is taken one step further with respect to responsibility. Purity culture teaches, not only that men have inherently higher sex drives, but that they are unable to control their sexual desire. Because women have little-to-no sex drive (according to this ideology), they are held responsible for maintaining abstinence and purity both for themselves and for their partners, thus making them sexual gatekeepers.

This idea that women are the sexual gatekeepers extends even further in terms of responsibility, in that women are told to dress modestly, so that they will not be a temptation or desirable object to men (Anderson, 2015; Claney et al., 2017; Field, 2016). This sends an implicit message that women's bodies are inherently bad and should be covered up. Young men also receive the implicit message that their bodies are somehow bad. Men are taught that any sexual activity outside of marriage is bad, but that they will also not be able to control themselves sexually. As such, sexual arousal becomes inherently associated with "lust" and therefore, shame (Schell, 2014). The religious message that the female body is bad has also been noted in the psychological literature. In a qualitative study by Daniluk (1993), the influence of religious beliefs on sexual experiences was a primary topic of interest. Participants endorsed that their religious beliefs were a primary source of their feelings of accountability for the actions of men. Additionally, they identified a religious belief that the female body was dirty and shameful.

The teachings of purity culture also endorse traditional gender roles, and more specifically, that men are the protectors of women. This is particularly notable at the above-mentioned purity balls, where fathers pledge to guard and protect their daughters' purity (Anderson, 2015). This is additionally seen in the concept of courting, where the woman's father is involved in her dating decisions.

Finally, purity culture teaches an "all or nothing" mentality when it comes to sexuality and particularly, sexual behaviors. Within purity culture, adolescents are taught that they will no longer be worthy of love and affection if they have sex outside of marriage. Images such as a "broken teacup" or a "dirty piece of tape" are used to describe those that engage in sexual activity prior to marriage (Calhoun, 2017). As such, those who engage in premarital sexual

activity view themselves as irreparably damaged (Anderson, 2015). This can lead to extreme feelings of guilt and shame.

Beck (2006) explained some of the underlying mechanisms associated with this “all or nothing” mentality. He proposed that while sins are viewed equally from a theological standpoint, they do not carry the same psychological weight. Beck elaborated that Christians, specifically in North America, have long used contamination metaphors to understand sexual sin. In particular, sexual sin is seen as dirty or contaminated, and is viewed in contrast to salvation, which is pure and clean. Other sins, such as lying or gossiping, do not carry the same feeling of pollution or contamination, and can therefore be easily dismissed. However, when a person commits a sexual sin, he or she views him or herself as polluted or dirty. This can have lasting effects of prolonged guilt and self-loathing.

Garceau and Scott (2017) conducted 50 semi-structured interviews with Canadian undergraduate students who had sexual experiences before age 16. Thirteen of the participants reported that religious values played an important role in understanding early sexual experiences. Specifically, many participants reported experiencing guilt or fear over their sexual experiences. Those who felt guilt expressed that it was due to feeling that they had sinned or disobeyed their religious authority figure. Those who felt fear expressed that it was due to fear of punishment. Additionally, in a qualitative study by Claney et al. (2017), college-aged women reflected this all-or-nothing mentality, including that sex is either a “gift” or something “gross.”

Given this “all or nothing” mentality, purity culture also teaches that waiting to have sex until marriage will make sex better and more enjoyable. Those who wait to have sex are promised a tangible reward for doing so. Along with this, the woman’s sexual desire (which should not exist before marriage) will almost magically appear on the wedding night (Anderson,

2015; Darnall, 2017; Gregoire, 2016). This mentality can lead to unrealistic expectations of sexual activity within marriage.

It is important here to distinguish sexual expectations set up in purity culture and the above-mentioned sanctification of sexuality. In the studies by Hernandez et al., 2011, Murray-Swank et al. (1995), and Hernandez-Kane and Mahoney (2018), sanctification of sexuality is defined as believing one's sexuality and sexual experiences are holy and blessed by God. In these studies, higher sanctification was associated with higher marital and sexual satisfaction. It is likely that these internally held beliefs are different from the external standards imposed by purity culture. In purity culture, being able to have a "better" sex life is seen as a reward for adhering to the rules. This may lead to unrealistic expectations of sexual activity within marriage, and disappointment if one does not receive the reward that was promised (Pugsley, 2014). In contrast, if one believes that sexuality and sexual activity is holy and blessed, it follows that this belief would enhance sexual experiences.

Overall, purity culture can be viewed as a distortion of Christian beliefs. Traditional Christian restrictions on sexuality are motivated by love of God and a desire for flourishing. Jones and Hostler (2001) present this more positive view of Christian sexuality. They propose that Christianity should affirm the fact that human beings are made with bodies that are explicitly sexual. Sexual intercourse was created for a good purpose, for reproduction and for pleasure. It is meant to create a lasting bond between husband and wife. However, they state that these beliefs must be qualified by the fact that humans are sinful and that sinful nature negatively affects sexuality.

In contrast, sexual beliefs espoused in purity culture are motivated by fear of punishment and shame, as well as a desire for a reward in the form of a "better" sex life. For example, many

Christians believe that modesty is an important virtue. However, in purity culture, modesty is used as a way to shame the female body, to the point where young women feel self-conscious and are hyper-aware of their bodies and how they dress. Additionally, the idea that one is irreparably damaged after engaging in premarital sexual activity can lead to intense feelings of shame and guilt. The messages of purity culture seem to have had a generally negative impact on those who grew up in it, but there has been no psychological research on this construct to date.

Summary and Conclusions

In conclusion, this article explores a construct of sexuality that has not previously been identified or examined empirically. While many women and men have written about purity culture in blogs and books, the concept has not been defined or studied from a psychological perspective. This review adds to the literature by providing a succinct theory that can aid in understanding and studying purity culture. In summary, we propose here that purity culture is a form of religious sexual socialization within some conservative sectors of Christianity, characterized by the sexual double standard, women as gatekeepers, men as unable to control their sexual desire, extreme modesty, benevolent sexism, an “all or nothing” mentality about sexuality, and unrealistic expectations about sexual activity.

In addition to defining the beliefs characteristic of purity culture, we draw on existing psychological literature regarding sexual identity development to explicate the potential negative consequences of exposure to purity culture. Specifically, purity culture contains messages that evoke shame and guilt, prescribe specific gender roles that have been found to result in negative consequences for those involved, and promote idealization of sexuality that may lead to unrealistic expectations. Additional research should be conducted to refine and validate the proposed model of purity culture and document its consequences. Because purity culture may be

a confounding factor in studies on Christianity and sexuality, a validated measure of purity culture is needed to enhance future research. A measure of purity culture is currently being developed by the authors based on the construct of purity culture laid out in this article. Further understanding of these concepts might help bring about important change in the way the Christian church teaches adolescents about sexuality.

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Rosemead School of Psychology Clinical Psychology	Ph.D.	(Cand.)
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