

Kelly

## Performing Virginity and Testing Chastity in the Middle Ages

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This book challenges the belief that female virginity can be reliably and unambiguously defined, tested and verified. Kelly analyses a variety of medieval Western European texts - including medical treatises and their Classical antecedents - and historical and legal documents. The main focus is the representation of both male and female virgins in saints' legends and romances. The author also makes a comparative study of examples from contemporary fiction, television and film in which testing virginity is a theme. Performing Virginity and Testing Chastity in the Middle Ages presents a compelling and provocative study of the paradox of bodily and spiritual integrity as both presence and absence.



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