

Donna Freitas' *Sex & the Soul* (Sections 2 & 3)

Evangelical colleges have a “purity culture” that isn’t always followed: “A series of studies have shown that young Christians find it difficult to keep the covenant these rings symbolize. In many cases, abstinence pledges do little more than postpone sexual intercourse for a few months, or turn those who try to keep them in the direction of other sexual activity” (p. 77).

Evangelical men play an active role and women a passive role regarding romance and sex; few women would ask a man out.

“Among evangelicals, the quest for purity is always a religious quest.... [R]omance *is* religious for evangelical students; purity is an explicitly Christian ideal. This is a boon for the chosen few who are able to live up the close-to-impossible standards of this romantic ideal. But for those who fail in this quest for purity and thereby forfeit the Christian fairy tale, it is a terrible burden” (92).

At “spiritual” colleges there is a gap between what men and women want: Women want romance and to avoid being labeled a “slut.” Men may want romance but can’t discuss it; they are pressured to be “players.” Romance is made difficult by the hook-up culture. Many women want a “perfect first time.”

“Even engaging in a process of discernment about sex—taking time to assess and reflect on experiences that were not enjoyable or that a person felt shameful about, to try to discover better, more satisfying ways of being sexually active—does not seem to occur to students at spiritual universities” (p. 122).

Gay/lesbian/bisexual students struggled with having a minority sexual orientation. There is a hook-up culture for gay men; however, being too promiscuous can lead to a reputation. “[B]eing sexually active proves your sexual orientation, while at the same time sexual promiscuity risks your reputation” (p. 142).

Most students define romance as “chaste.”: Asked to describe their most romantic experience, few mention sex; most describe “just talking.” And many sexual experiences are not romantic.

At evangelical colleges, dating comes with the expectation of marriage: Many women want to get engaged before graduation, but they can't ask men out. Many men are afraid to date because of the expectation it will lead to marriage. Couples engage in pseudo-dating activity such as "frugaling" and "taking a Walk."

At "spiritual colleges," hooking-up has replaced dating as the way students initiate romantic/sexual relationships: Dating may follow hooking-up, but it often doesn't (to the disappointment of one of the participants). Students are often unhappy about the hook-up afterwards.

College women continue to face the "double standard." Women who participate too much in the hook-up culture may develop a bad reputation. Women may dress provocatively to feel feminine and beautiful, but they can get labeled as being "slutty."

College women often have sex without giving their consent or with ambiguous consent. This is usually not defined by them as rape.