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**History's Turning Points (16) – The  
End of Chastity - II**

**Lead: Historical study often helps reveal twists in the human journey. Consider one of history's turning points – conspirators in the death of chastity.**

**Intro: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: In his 1960 novel *Where the Boys Are*, Clendon Swarthout mused that “virginity was not all that important...nor do I think a girl's misplacing it somewhere is as catastrophic as the Decline and Fall of**

**the Roman Empire.” Perhaps not, but for thousands of years prior, chastity was very important, for families, for religious institutions, for dynastic security. Men might not have to maintain theirs, a classic double standard, but much energy was expended to make sure that females were chaste. Yet, within just a few short decades, it just went away, something considered so precious in previous generations was abandoned with a near careless lack of restraint.**

**The female contraceptive Pill put the final nail in the coffin of chastity, but there were other conspirators. The growth of the automobile exploded in the 1920s, moving the site of courtship from under the nose of mama and**

**papa out to the back seat of the car parked in lovers' lane. Anti-vice crusaders who shut down red-light districts and brothels unwittingly removed alternatives to sexual release without driving men into marriage. The writings of Alfred Kinsey revealed in banal prose the striking reality of both modern male and female behavior which was decidedly unchaste. Actors in movies and television were soon portrayed in a wide variety of sexual engagement and, beginning in the 1920s, without shame advertisers used sexuality to sell their products. "Had any lately?" one advertiser asked coyly.**

**Armed with the Pill women came to see this revolution as liberating and**

**sex as just one of life's pleasures. In that they had an obvious and clear example. For thousands of years that same attitude toward sex had been enjoyed and explored by men.**

**At the University of Richmond's School of Professional and Continuing Studies, I'm Dan Roberts.**

**Resources**

**Boorstin, Daniel J. and Gerald Parshall, "History's Hidden Turning Points," *U.S. News and World Report*. 110 (15, April 22, 1991): 52-66.**

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