



The feminization of American culture

Ann Douglas

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This modern classic by one of our leading scholars seeks to explain the values prevalent in today's mass culture by tracing them back to their roots in the Victorian era. As religion lost its hold on the public mind, clergymen and educated women, powerless and insignificant in the society of the time, together exerted a profound effect on the only areas open to their influence: the arts and literature. Women wrote books that idealized the very qualities that kept them powerless: timidity, piety, and a disdain for competition. Sentimental values that permeated popular literature continue to influence modern culture, preoccupied as it is with glamour, banal melodrama, and mindless consumption.

This new paperback edition, with a new Preface, will reach yet more readers with its persuasive and provocative theory. Richard Bernstein of *The New York Times* said: "Her remarkable scholarship is going to set the standard for a long time to come."

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