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# “Born Again Is a Sexual Term”: Demons, STDs, and God's Healing Sperm

[Amy DeRogatis](#) ✉

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## Abstract

In this article I examine the intersection between sexuality and spirit-filled bodies in American Evangelicalism. I am interested in investigating two

issues: the sexual body as a site of spiritual battle and the use of popular science, especially the domain of genetics, as material evidence for this spiritual warfare. Specifically, I trace the increasingly spiritualized framing of marital intercourse in evangelical literature. To follow this trajectory, I highlight the spiritualized dangers of transgressive sexuality as well as the sexualizing of spirituality in evangelical sex manuals and deliverance manuals. This article centers around one text, *Holy Sex: God's Purpose and Plan for Our Sexuality*, whose authors' contend that sexually transmitted diseases are, in fact, demons lodged in genetic material that can be transferred through body fluids and bloodlines. The assertions about biology and demonic affliction made throughout the book are extreme and would be rejected by most readers of mainstream evangelical sex manuals. I argue that this book, though marginal, is not an irrelevant text. It reflects deep-seated anxieties about sexual bodies, spiritual concerns, and disease. Idiosyncratic though it may seem, *Holy Sex* taps into wider uncertainties about the spiritual vulnerability of the physical body found in contemporary evangelical literature.

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