Trixie Films
presents

How To Lose Your Virginity

A documentary by Therese Shechter

Released 2013 | US | English | 16:9 | 67:00

Film Website  | Facebook  | Twitter  | Instagram

Images and other Visual Assets: Go to DropBox

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Tag Lines
What if all we had to lose were our virginity myths? | If sex sells, why is virginity so valuable?

Logline
This funny, eye-opening, and thought-provoking documentary explores why female virginity is still so valued in our hyper-sexualized society. Traveling through the worlds of religion, history, pop culture and $30 internet hymens, the film reveals the myths and misogyny behind a rite of passage that everyone thinks about but few truly understand.

Short Synopsis
It has launched both purity balls and porn franchises, defines a young woman’s morality—but has no medical definition. Enter the magical world of virginity, where a white wedding dress can restore a woman’s innocence and replacement hymens can be purchased online.

Filmmaker Therese Shechter uses comedy and her own path out of virginity to explore why our sex-crazed society cherishes this so-called precious gift. Along the way, we meet sex educators, virginity auctioneers, abstinence advocates, and young men and women who bare their tales of doing it—or not doing it.

How to Lose Your Virginity uncovers the myths and misogyny surrounding a rite of passage that many obsesses about but few truly understand.

Medium Synopsis
Female virginity has been ‘restored’ through surgery, fetishized by porn and glorified by popular culture. A woman’s ‘virginity’ recently fetched $780,000 at auction, and an ‘artificial hymen’ sells online for $30. Fifty years after the sexual revolution, this outmoded construct continues to define a young woman’s morality and self-worth.

Why does virginity hold such importance in our sex-crazed society? Unleashing her trademark inquisitive and hilarious voice, filmmaker Therese Shechter sets her sights on this rite of passage that almost everyone experiences, but few fully understand. Layering verite, interviews and vintage sex-ed films with candid reflection and wry narration, How To Lose Your Virginity is a personal journey and an eye-opening study of modern sexuality.

Using her own path out of ‘virginity’ to frame the narrative, Shechter creates a far-reaching dialogue with women across the sexuality spectrum: Lena, once shamed for writing about her sex life, is now organizing around it; Judy, a Julliard-trained violinist prays to keep mind and body pure while touring with provocateur Lady Gaga; Meghan, a transgender woman re-evaluates what sex and virginity mean to her changing body.

When Shechter gets engaged, she too gets caught up in the virgin industrial complex of the bridal salon as she tries on The Big White Dress and wonders if it makes her look virginal; and on the set of porn franchise “Barely Legal,” she find the ultimate contradiction in a pair of white cotton panties. Using sly humor and candid revelations, the documentary showcases a daring commitment to deeply personal storytelling. The film and interactive spin-offs take the narrative back from the distorted messages of media, religion and porn, to empower us to chart our own sexual paths.
Long Synopsis

Female virginity has been ‘restored’ through surgery, fetishized by porn and glorified by popular culture. A woman’s ‘virginity’ received a $780,000 bid at auction, and an ‘artificial hymen’ sells online for $30. Fifty years after the sexual revolution, this outmoded construct continues to define a young woman’s morality and self-worth. Ironically, in this culture, sex is “everywhere” and yet, barely any space exists for open, non-judgmental dialogue and exploration of sexuality.

Why does virginity still hold importance in our sex-crazed society? It’s into this world, camera in tow, that filmmaker Therese Shechter ventures. Unleashing the same inquisitive and irreverent voice that drove her first documentary, I Was A Teenage Feminist, she sets her sights on this milestone that almost everyone experiences, but few fully understand. Layering verité, interviews and vintage sex-ed films with candid reflection and wry narration, How To Lose Your Virginity is a personal journey and an eye-opening study of modern sexuality.

Everyone has a virginity story to tell, and Shechter uses her own path out of ‘virginity’ to frame the narrative. She creates a far-reaching, personal dialogue with women across the sexuality spectrum, bearing witness to candid and moving stories about the decision to have—or not have—sex. With equal parts humor and empathy, the film introduces us to real women talking candidly about the complexities of their sexual lives: Lena, once shamed for writing about her sex life, now organizing around it; Judy, a Julliard-trained violinist praying to keep mind and body pure while touring with provocateur Lady Gaga; Meghan, a transgender woman re-evaluating what sex and virginity mean to her in a changing body; Abiola, sex educator and multi-media curator who has chosen to be celibate herself; and in a crowded fluorescent-bulbed school hallway, a ‘Greek Chorus’ of teenagers who can’t agree on one definition for virginity.

Traveling through the revelatory terrain of US pop culture, religion and history, the film exposes a landscape of contradictions for young women. We meet sex educators, porn producers and abstinence ideologues, revealing how ‘hookup culture’ and ‘abstinence-until-marriage’ both exploit the age-old virgin/whore dichotomy. When Shechter gets engaged mid-film, she finds herself caught up in the same dichotomy. Standing in a plush bridal salon, a 40-something sex-savvy feminist trying on The Big White Dress, she’s drawn to its pouffy allure, yet furious at its chaste implications. And when she spends the day on the set with “Barely Legal” porn producer Erica McLean, we see the ultimate contradiction in a pair of white cotton panties worn by an adult video actress.

We meet experts caught up in fraught conversations about female sexuality: Former US Surgeon General Dr. Joycelyn Elders, fired for her outspoken views on sex education; COSMOGIRL! Editor Susan Schulz, deluged with complaints when an issue included a diagram of a vulva; and United Nations’ Dr. Henia Dakkak, who denounces virginity testing and its devastating consequences.

How To Lose Your Virginity is the first documentary to fully examine how the concept of virginity shapes the sexual lives of young women and men by journeying beyond the Abstinence-Until-Marriage movement to examine the intersecting forces of history, politics, religion and popular culture. It is also the first to do so by employing humor, a first-person style and personal revelation to encourage a direct dialogue on sexuality between the filmmakers and their young adult audience.

The project showcases Shechter’s distinctive and irreverent humor, and her commitment to personal revelation to disarm and engage her audience. The larger project includes an interactive online crowd-sourced storytelling project about ‘sexual debuts and deferrals’; an ongoing giveaway of V-Cards, a subversive twist on coffee-shop punch cards; and the blog, founded in 2008 to address global and domestic issues around male and female virginity and sexuality in real time.
Director’s Statement

How to Lose Your Virginity begins in the city where I grew up. On a street I walked countless times. Next to a hair salon called Shagg. In a basement apartment, which is now a flower shop called Bloom. Where I had sex for the first time.

When I finally lost my virginity at age 23, it wasn’t because I finally found Mr. Right. I had simply grown tired of waiting for him. So, I had sex with the next guy who asked. Looking back on my haze of fear, shame and confusion, I wondered if others felt the same way I had, and why it’s still so excruciating to talk honestly about sex. I also wondered what exactly I had lost.

My early myth-shattering sexual experience is a jumping-off point for a quest to understand the impact of idealized virginity on young women; virginity’s historical role in U.S. culture; its power to mold a girl’s self-image; its commodification—something manufactured, sold, given away, taken.

Using the grammar of popular culture to deconstruct its message of “be sexy but don’t have sex,” I address young women and men in subversive, disarming and entertaining ways to broach sometimes uncomfortable topics. The style of How To Lose Your Virginity is open-minded, accepting, and positively reinforcing. While some stories may be explicit, they are not intended to titillate, but to present an honest telling of sexual experiences. The interviews are shot without extensive set-ups in an atmosphere of trust and openness with subjects. The goal is to open doors to private spaces and show images of real women that are rarely seen on a screen.

Everyone has a virginity story to tell, but this project isn’t just about virginity, it’s about the larger power of connection and community through storytelling.

For nearly a decade, my work has looked at the world through a feminist lens. I Was A Teenage Feminist (modern feminism), How I Learned To Speak Turkish (sexuality), #SlutWalkNYC (rape culture), The End (romance narratives) and Womanly Perfection (body image) all share my personal style and tone, the way I use humor, my intimacy with subjects, and how I leverage my personal experience to make universal points. They exist on a thematic continuum that runs through all of my work: The ability of each of us to define who we are and what we need, without judgment or shame.

My first-person female voice is grounded in the tradition of feminist filmmaking that treats the personal as political, that our personal issues are a reflection of a systemic problem, and that we are not crazy nor alone in experiencing them. My personal arc guides the larger narrative; I explore public issues by thinking through my own intimate experiences. I am pushing back on the conventional wisdom that men’s personal stories are universal while women’s are only specific. I consider the work a radical conduit to dismantle deeply held beliefs on female sexuality, and my outspoken voice recently led a conservative blogger to label me a ‘Brazen Advocate of Slut Culture,’ (a distinction I am proud of).

I’ve always been a DIY filmmaker, working on shoestring resources, depending on in-kind contributions and community fundraising one $25 donation at a time. I find it is worth the effort when I received comments like this one from a rough-cut viewer, below...

Thank you for helping me put my confusing, frustrated thoughts on sex and relationships into perspective. It makes me feel less like an outcast and more able to take ownership of how I feel and not to listen to what others tell me. — Audience Member

— Therese Shechter / November 2013
Virginity Culture - Our Mission

We believe in using humor to keep young people safe. The film ignites conversations around sexuality in our high school and college-age audiences by presenting a narrative that is eye-opening and thought-provoking—and also very entertaining. Using the grammar of popular culture, we address young women and men in subversive, disarming and irreverent ways to better broach sometimes uncomfortable topics. We believe in personal storytelling to break the silence. Arbitrary and absurd, our obsession with the outmoded virginity construct continues to define a young woman’s morality and self-worth. To break through society's silence, misinformation, sexism, and corrosive messages, How To Lose Your Virginity and its online spin-offs will:

- Push-back against a culture that is shaming about sex, especially for women who are judged no matter what sexual choices they make, through personal, historical and political storytelling in the film
- Create new language around virginity ‘loss’ to reframe it as an ongoing process of becoming sexual, through post-film conversations and our ‘Reusable V-Card’ outreach
- Create safe space communities where users can anonymously share stories through the V-Card Diaries interactive project
- Challenge sex ed curricula to include different timelines and sexualities, as well as age-appropriate conversations about consent and pleasure in partnership with organizations doing advocacy around sex education.

Everyone has a virginity story to tell, but this project isn’t just about virginity, it’s about the larger power of connection and community through storytelling.

Virginity Culture - The Facts

VIRGINITY AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

Women’s bodies and sexuality are controlled through intimidation, shame and misinformation. Conservative and religious mores valuing women solely by the status of their virginity dismiss rape as something sexually active women are ‘asking for.’

- 1 in 10 women aged 18-24, who had sex before age 20, report first experiences of sex as non-consensual. [1]

VIRGINITY AND YOUTH SEXUALITY

Most high school and college students have never received any comprehensive sex education, and one third of entering freshman self-identify as virgins. Messaging around sex comes from two totally divergent sources: abstinence, which promote chastity until marriage, and so-called ‘hookup culture’ which reinforce an ‘everybody is doing it’ atmosphere

- By their 19th birthday, seven in ten teens of both sexes have had intercourse. [2]
- Many sexually experienced teens (46% of males and 33% of females) do not receive formal instruction about contraception before they first have sex.[2]
- Although 15–24-year-olds represent only one-quarter of the sexually active population, they account for nearly half (9.1 million) of the 18.9 million new cases of STIs each year.[2]
• On average, young people have sex for the first time at about age 17, but don’t marry until their mid-20s. Young adults are at increased risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections for nearly a decade.[2]

• Queer youth are five times more likely to attempt suicide as their straight peers.[3]

**VIRGINITY AND ABSTINENCE**

• Between 1996 and federal Fiscal Year 2010, Congress funneled a total of over one-and-a-half billion tax-payer dollars into abstinence-only-until-marriage programs.[4]

• The 2010 health care reform package made available $50 million annually for five years (2010–2014; a total of $250 million) for grants to the states to promote sexual abstinence outside of marriage.[4]

• Among youth participating in “virginity pledge” programs, 88% broke the pledge and had sex before marriage.[5]

• Once pledgers began to have sex, they had more partners in a shorter period of time and were less likely to use contraception or condoms than were their non-pledging peers.[5]

• No abstinence-only program has been proven through rigorous evaluation to help youth delay sex for a significant period of time, help youth decrease their number of sex partners, or reduce STI or pregnancy rates.[5]


**The V-Card Diaries: Giving Our Audience A Voice**

The V-Card Diaries, the film's online interactive story-sharing companion, presents almost 400 crowd-sourced long-form essays about ‘sexual debuts and deferrals’ in a unique interactive interface. The project was recently on exhibit at The Kinsey Institute Juried Art Show, their first interactive piece.

Our crowd-sourced interactive tool combines blogging, data visualization, and search engines where everyone can access and contribute stories about their sexual lives. A number of our contributors are survivors of rape and tell their stories in this forum. Other users engage in a broad spectrum of sexual activity, and this site is particularly targeted to those with little to no experience, who report they feel ignored by most other online discussions about sex.

By seeing how others tell their own stories, and sharing their own, our audience can see there’s no ‘right way’ to do sex. This ongoing project tells a collective story about the universal experience of becoming sexual—and the radical act of speaking honestly about it.

[Go to the live V-Card Diaries site](#)

[More information about The V-Card Diaries here](#)
Q&A with the Director | Therese Shechter

Excerpts from two interviews originally published on the Her Film Project blog. Reprinted with permission.

HF: With the feature documentary film I Was a Teenage Feminist under your belt, you are now focusing on a new project, How to Lose Your Virginity, which is another feature doc. Can you discuss how you came to concentrate your efforts on this topic and how your two films might relate?

TS: I think all my films look at the world through a feminist lens. Of the two shorts I’ve done, How I Learned to Speak Turkish is about sexuality and power and Womanly Perfection is about beauty standards. Taken along with I Was A Teenage Feminist, which I think is about finding a political and personal identity, they all feed into the ideas I’m playing with in How to Lose your Virginity. I also would say that the virginity project is similar stylistically to I Was a Teenage Feminist—it’s funny, there’s a lot of intimacy with subjects, and I use my personal experience to make universal points.

When my editor and I were cutting I Was A Teenage Feminist, we watched a lot of those old ‘Now You Are A Woman’ films from the 1950s. I was struck not only by how useless the information was, but also how they kept telling girls that the only way to avoid social and physical ruin was to be a ‘good’ girl (read: a girl who doesn’t have sex). The abstinence-until-marriage programs (which the government still funds, by the way) are really just a present-day extension of those ideas. I started to wonder what we were telling young women about their sexuality, especially given that pop culture is full of highly sexualized girls that seem to be the polar opposite of this ‘good girl’ expectation. I realized that it all comes down to the same message: that women should model themselves on images of male desire. In trying to mold themselves into either virgin or whore (or an impossible combination of both), women are constantly working to fit someone else’s needs instead of pursuing their own sexual identities.

On a personal note, I was planning my own wedding at the time of the shooting, and was getting a little freaked out by all the chastity-based wedding rituals and coded wedding accessories. What would it mean for me to embrace the white dress, don a veil, and be ‘given away’? What would that say about my own sexual autonomy and identity? It echoes the narration of I Was a Teenage Feminist where I refer to myself as “a woman who feels incredible pressure to conform to an ideal that I don’t even buy into. Is it possible to be who I want to be without judgment, or apology or compromise?”

HF: In American culture, virginity experiences a dichotomous treatment. The social state of virginity is also binary in nature — you either are or you aren’t, at least socially. What differences do you see between gender, age and sexual orientation when the topic of virginity is discussed?

TS: Virginity is basically a complex social construct that’s always been more about female sexuality than male. There’s actually no medical definition, and our conventional concept of ‘losing your virginity’ through penis-in-vagina sex is incredibly narrow. Is a penis really the only way to turn a woman into a sexual person? How then do lesbians lose their virginity? Do we suddenly become sexual beings or is it gradual? When we lose our virginity, what specifically are we losing, if anything at all?

In queer communities, the concept of virginity loss is far more nuanced and individualistic because it doesn’t fit into established hetero understandings about sex. But although ideas about how a person loses his or her virginity might vary, there is still some point where most of us cross a threshold of sexual initiation. It may be a construct, but it’s still an important defining moment – however we define it. You can see how important it is when you speak to older virgins who for whatever reason haven’t yet had sex. I hear from a lot of them through my blog, and there’s a lot of shame and secrecy around being an older virgin (which I think can begin as young as your early 20s). Everyone thinks everyone else is having sex but them, but it’s just not true.
HF: Please talk a bit about your experiences with interviewees... [and] tell us a bit about your production team and how you work with a crew when dealing with people’s (interviewees’) deeply personal experiences?

TS: When I interview someone, I want it to be as casual and as intimate as possible. I want them to talk right to the audience, so they look directly at the camera, not off to the side. And I like to shoot them in their natural environments as much as possible. We have a tiny crew. Sometimes it’s just me, and at most it’s my DP and one PA and minimal if any lights. We give up on some of the beauty, but like I said, I want it to be intimate so subjects can talk about really personal things and feel safe doing it. I’m always humbled by the things they’re willing to share. I’m also very open with them about my own experiences during the interview. I figure I should be just as willing to talk about whatever I’m asking of them.

HF: I’ve taken a few looks at the blog you have to support the storytelling and sharing around the topic of virginity, and you include many first-person pieces. It’s amazing and inspiring to see how many people are willing to share information about something so personal as their virginity and sexuality. What inspired you to introduce this type of “confessional-style” blog post?

TS: I love The V-Card Diaries, and since we launched it in 2009, it’s become the most popular thing on the blog. I was inspired by fellow virginity geek Kate Monro who writes a blog called The Virginity Project in the UK. Aside from her work, most everything else I found was very mainstream and almost nothing outside of religious sites addressed people who weren’t sexually active. I could tell from our blog comments I had a lot of folks out there whose experiences—and even definitions of virginity—didn’t conform to the black-and-white stereotypes of pop culture. So I started building this collection of what I like to call “sexual debuts and deferrals.”

We’ve run stories from a woman who lost her straight, gay and three-way virginity in one night (hey, it worked for her); a Mormon college student who wrote about being a virgin and then did an update after she had forbidden premarital sex (verdict: meh); and we get quite a few submissions from guys in their 30s and 40s who talk about what it’s like to be an older male virgin (not good). We’ve also run several First Persons by women who had intercourse for the first time because of sexual assault, and they want to share their experiences and recovery with others.

My favorites are the “update” submissions that I get when a previous poster starts having sex. One woman said the first three people she told were her roommate, her best friend and me for the blog. I kind of love that.

There’s a lot of silence around how and why and if we become sexual and I think these stories really help us all feel less weird and alone. I really could have used this when I felt like the very last virgin in art school.

HF: Are there differences in what you’ve learned through the actual filming of the documentary and the interactions you have with people online through your blog or twitter, for example?

TS: When I started working on the film, I was really focusing on young women being shamed for being sexual and the value that’s place on virginity. It was in the zeitgeist and was getting all the attention. But when I started getting the V-Card Diaries, I was surprised at how many were coming from people in their 20’s who were ashamed of not being sexually active and that became a much bigger part of my film and the blog.

I think it goes without saying that it’s far, far easier to get candid stories from anonymous writers than getting people to talk about the same things on camera. I’m really grateful to the people agreed to be filmed. They’re very smart and thoughtful about their intimate lives, and they provide an antidote to the way we usually hear stories about sex that are more fabrication or fantasy, like Reality TV and porn.

In the same way that we give people the space to be sexual beings on their own terms, we also tell people who don’t feel ready for sex (or aren’t into it at all) that they’re not freaks. I get a lot of letters along the lines of: “I generally feel like I’m harboring a shameful secret, and before I found your blog was pretty convinced that I was the only woman in her mid-twenties who had never had sex.” Speaking as someone who became sexually active only after college, I can really relate.
About Therese Shechter (Director/Producer/Writer)

Therese Shechter is a Brooklyn-based filmmaker and writer, and the founder of the feminist production company Trixie Films. Her work fuses humor, activism, and personal storytelling to disrupt what's considered most sacred about womanhood. She is currently writing and directing the in-progress documentary *My So-Called Selfish Life*. She most recently directed *How To Lose Your Virginity* (2013) about the mythology and misogyny around our most precious gift. She also curates *The V-Card Diaries*, an online story-sharing companion to that documentary, which was exhibited at The Kinsey Institute’s Juried Art Show (their first interactive piece). Her other documentaries include the award-winning *I Was A Teenage Feminist* (2005) and *How I Learned To Speak Turkish* (2006), which have screened from Rio de Janeiro to Ankara to Seoul.

A frequent public speaker, she’s presented her work at festivals, conferences, galleries, social justice organizations, and college classrooms, including Harvard’s *Rethinking Virginity* conference, and numerous events with Planned Parenthood. Her work is in the collection of over 300 schools, orgs and libraries. Therese has written about filmmaking, feminism, sexuality, and the childfree experience, for publications including *Self, Real Simple, Topic, Bust, Bitch, The Nib*, and *The Chicago Tribune*. In her spare time, she co-hosts the podcast *Downton Gabby*, a funny feminist dish on media by and about women.

Learn more about Therese Shechter

About Trixie Films

Trixie Films is a fully independent, female-led production company founded by Therese Shechter in 2001. Team Trixie is committed to creating a work that challenges the under-explored assumptions about womanhood. We speak feminism, humor, and pop culture.

Selected Filmography (director / producer / writer)

*My So-Called Selfish Life* [doc feature, in progress]
*Vinnie: I Brake for Cycles* [doc short, 2015]
*How To Lose Your Virginity* [doc feature, 2013]
#SlutWalkNYC [doc short, 2013]
*The End* [narrative short, 2010]
*How I Learned To Speak Turkish* [doc short, 2006, winner jury prize Atlanta Film Festival]
*I Was A Teenage Feminist* [doc feature, 2005, winner audience award, NCJW; special mention, Karachi Film Festival]
*Womanly Perfection* [animated short, 2003]

Watch clips and get links here
Additional Crew

LISA ESSELMSTEIN (Producer/Additional Writing) is a Senior Writer/Producer at USA Network, the number one cable network in America. Her department, Brandworks, is the award-winning in-house creative agency responsible for the development and execution of innovative, industry-leading co-branded initiatives for USA’s strategic marketing initiatives and digital platforms.

Previously, she was a writer/producer at Sundance Channel, where she produced short-form programming for scripted originals, including the Emmy-nominated TOP OF THE LAKE, RECTIFY, and THE RED ROAD. Lisa was even lucky enough to receive an award or two. Prior to Sundance Channel, Lisa produced and edited trailers and documentary shorts for IFC Films. She was involved in the marketing and release of more than 55 titles during my time there, including Miranda July’s ME AND YOU AND EVERYONE WE KNOW, JOE STRUMMER: THE FUTURE IS UNWRITTEN, THIS IS ENGLAND, and the Oscar-nominated TRANSAMERICA.

Lisa and Therese met when both were volunteers at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival. They have been collaborators and partners-in-crime ever since. You can find more of her work here.

MARIN SANDER-HOLZMAN (Editor/Additional Writing) is an editor and video artist living in Brooklyn NY. His editorial department feature film credits include THE LARAMIE PROJECT, THE WOODSMAN, LACKAWANNA BLUES, OFF THE BLACK, SHADOWBOXER, SHORTBUS, and LITTLE NEW YORK as well as long and short form documentaries including the The News Hour with Jim Lehrer, The Line, Dateline, The Today Show, and Frontline: “The Jesus Factor”. He was the editor and contributing writer for the eight episode television series ARTSTAR, a collaboration with Deitch Projects. Marin has collaborated on video works for contemporary performance with artists Yasuko Yokoshi, Steven Reker/People Get Ready, Anna Azrieli, Kim Epifano and Miguel Gutierrez. In 2012 Marin created Marin Media Lab, a place for experiments in new media, contemporary performance and film. The lab recently produced a series of interviews with contemporary performing artists. You can watch the interviews and learn more at Marin Media Lab.

DINA GUTTMANN (Additional Editing) has been a part of the documentary world since 1996, editing films shot all over the world. She edited several PBS films including INDEPENDENT SPIRITS (2001), National Geographic's THE LAST ROYALS (2005), and A HEALING ART (2010); and many film festival successes such as COWGIRLS (2002 USA Film Festival finalist), ILONA, UPSTAIRS (HBO Audience Award, 2005 Provincetown Film Festival), and MEZZANOTTE OBSCURA (Best Short Documentary, 2010 Kent Film Festival). Dina received a Bachelors of Arts in architecture with a specialization in film from Columbia University. She and her producing partner, veteran editor Toby Shimin, run the production company Dovetail Films.

STEPHEN THOMAS CAVIT (Composer) recently completed the score for the documentary THE GREATER GOOD. His score for EVERYTHING’S COOL premiered at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival, and he has contributed music to the films CHUCK & BUCK and THE GOOD GIRL for director Miguel Arteta (Sundance 2000 and 2002) and the documentary BLUE VINYL (Sundance 2002). In 2008, Stephen was awarded a regional Emmy Award for his work on the PBS series COMMUNITY STORIES as well as a residency with the prestigious St. James Cathedral Choir in Seattle, the first in it’s 100 year history.
## Full Film Credits

**Written and Directed by**  Therese Shechter  
**Produced By**  Therese Shechter and Lisa Esselstein  
**Editors**  Marin Sander-Holzman | Dina Guttman  
**Music Composed by**  Stephen Thomas Cavit  
**Cinematography**  Allie Humenuk | Ruben O’Malley | Jenna Rosher  
**Animation**  Luke Murphy  
**Consulting Producer**  Jude Ray  
**Associate Producers**  Ellice Liwak | Paul Freeland  
**Field Producers**  Aghigh Ebrahimi Bazaz | Josette Persson  
**Motion Graphics**  Yasmin Mistry  
**Additional Writing**  Lisa Esselstein | Marin Sander-Holzman  
**Additional Editing**  Lisa Esselstein | Carole Larsen | Matthew Sterling  
**Assistant Editor**  Leese Katsnelson  
**Story Consultant**  Fernanda Rossi

**Post Production Services**  Park Avenue Post  
**Re-recording mixer,**  **Sound Design and Foley**  Joe Deihl, C.A.S., M.P.S.E.  
**Narration Recording**  Terry Fabrizio/Trevi Music  
**Production Assistance**  Kate August, Courtney Boyd, Allison Burutch, Melody Cherrington, Rebecca Cubells, Erin Cullen, Dianne Ellis, Libby Feltch, Ilona Gale, Leila Ghannad, Nina Gilbert, Sara Gilford, Cassandra Hale, Man See Kong, Samantha Lang, Gwenaelle Lecocheennec, Jenn Leyva, Kanika Metre, Jessica Noll, Alexandra Ozeri, Judy Park, Gabrielle Perez, Michelle Quartin, Shoshana Roberts, Amanda Sapir, Katie Schlechter, Amanda Stromquist, James Waese, Allison Williams

**Web Design**  Pamela Weis, RedCat Webdesigns  
**Fiscal Sponsor**  Women Make Movies  
**Fundraising Consultants**  Anne Adams | Charlotte Cooper | Elizabeth Hendler

**Film Participants**  Abiola Abrams, Hanne Blank, Lena Chen, Heather Corinna, Meghan Currie, Dr. Henia Dakkak, Sarah DiMuro, Sady Doyle, Dr. Joycelyn Elders, Daniel J. Fleck, Judy Kang, Shelby Knox, Brita Long, Erica McLean, Bronwen Pardes, Susan Schultz, Jessica Valenti, Ellen Westberg  
**Student Chorus**  Austin Auriemma, Samantha Colon, Wannequa Council, Aaron Davis, Daniel Falcone, Marilyn Fernandez, Winifred Harry, Alexandra Ilyashov, Chaniqua Lee Monique Pettaway, Le’Van Rembert, Brenda Salinas, Diana Serrano, Ashley Turzio, Christal Vergara, Marley Weiner

**Advisory Board**  Chloe Angyal, Hanne Blank, Heather Corinna, Paula Kamen, Julie Kay, Gram Ponante, Jennifer Pozner, Stephanie St. Pierre
Selected Previous Events and Screenings

TELEVISION
- USA: Fusion
- ISRAEL: Yes Docu & NOGA
- BRAZIL: Globo GNT.DOC
- SWEDEN: UR
- AUSTRALIA: SBS2 and Studio
- FINLAND: YLE
- POLAND: TV Fokus

SELECTED FILM FESTIVALS
- DOC NYC New York City, US PREMIERE
- Cucalorus Film Festival Wilmington NC
- Jihlava Film Festival Czech Republic
- Haifa Cinematheque, Israel with Isha L’Isha
- FemCine14 Santiago, Chile
- ZagrebDox Zagreb Croatia
- Brattleboro Women’s Film Festival Brattleboro VT
- Film Festival for Women’s Rights Seoul, Korea
- St. John’s International Women’s Film Festival, St. John's Canada
- Filmmor Film Festival Istanbul, Turkey
- Anthology Film Archives New York City, Presented by NYWIFT
- Central Cinema, Seattle WA
- Metreon Theaters, San Francisco, CA

SELECTED SCHOOLS AND ORGANIZATIONS
- **Schools:** Columbia University, Barnard College, New York University, RISD, Yale University, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Hunter College, University of the South, Emory University, MIT, Harvard, The Kinsey Institute/Indiana University, Ohio University, Penn State University, University of Saskatchewan, University of Texas at San Antonio, University of Wisconsin, Skidmore College, UNC Wilmington, UMass Dartmouth, Bowling Green State University, Northwestern University, University of Nebraska, Whitman College
- **Organizations:** Planned Parenthood, NARAL, Spark Movement, YouthCommunication, Center for Sex and Culture, Bad Feminist Readings, In The Flesh Readings,

SELECTED CONFERENCES
- American Public Health Association Conference (APHA) Chicago
- American Sociological Association, San Francisco
- Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence Conference (WSCADV) Spokane WA
- Harvard: Rethinking Virginity, Cambridge, MA
- Vermont Agency of Education Retreat for Sex Educators
- Youth Technology Health (YTH) Conference San Francisco CA
- Victim’s Assistance Services: To Consent or Not To Consent, Valhalla NY