

# The Medieval Chastity Belt: A Myth-Making Process (The New Middle Ages)

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### The Medieval Chastity Belt: A Myth-Making Process (The **New Middle Ages)**

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The Medieval Chastity Belt: A Myth-Making Process (The New Middle Ages) Albrecht Classen Conrad Kyeser was the first to present an image of a chastity belt in his illustrated book on war machinery, Bellifortis (1405), and some fifteenth- and sixteenth-century poets and artists referred to this object as well. Yet, there is no firm evidence that chastity belts were ever used in reality. By contrast, modern writers have often referred to the chastity belt as an object employed primarily in the Middle Ages in order to support a highly speculative perspective of past practices, maybe as a spurious legitimation for the use of chastity belts in the modern sex industry. Anthropologists, ethnologists, then also cultural historians, and feminist scholars have happily embraced the idea of the chastity belt because it provided them with an effective battle-cry to malign the medieval world and to project the benefits of the civilization process in the lives of modern women freed of being degrading by a chastity belt.



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