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Guardians of Virtue

Historicizing the Evangelical Maternal Ethos and Exploring the Empowering Potentials of Religious Mother-Work

This paper utilizes a theoretical framework of religious subcultural strength and maternal thinking to illustrate how mothers who operate within Western funda-mentalist–evangelical Protestant subcultures are constrained by a maternal ethos to reproduce "acceptable" daughters who model ideals of "righteous" femininity. In addition to acting as children's "natural" primary caregivers and ensuring their physical preservation and growth, these mothers are also designated as religious enculturators who are responsible for reproducing the next generation of "acceptable" Christians to propagate the subculture's traditions and values. This task is partic-ularly exacerbated for mothers of daughters who are charged with simultaneously modelling and reproducing ideals of "traditional" feminine purity and virtue, and who are consequently subject to blame and judgement when their daughters do not uphold these ideals. This paper seeks to historicize this evangelical maternal ethos by contextualizing it within Victorian discourses of "true womanhood." It concludes by arguing that fundamentalist paradigms constrain maternal practice by holding mothers responsible for reproducing subcultural traditions, and it further considers the empowering potentials of religious mother-work then women and girls cultivate their spiritualities from a place of agency, authenticity, and mutual enrichment.

While the growing visibility of evangelical Protestantism as a political and cultural force has garnered much attention in North American popular cul-ture, media discourse, and feminist research throughout the past decade,[1] very few of these discussions specifically address the contentious implications that exist for mothers who participate in this burgeoning religious subculture. This study accordingly seeks to address the experiences and perceptions that frame evangelical women's maternal practice. It contends that evangelical women's

religious mother-work is constrained by a maternal ethos which emerges as the demands of maternal thinking coalesce with the specifically evangelical values of individual salvation and self-obtained social mobility, as well as with the fundamentalist imperatives to preserve "traditional" values and maintain religious subcultural strength. This evangelical maternal ethos compels mothers to simultaneously model and reproduce precepts of "righteous femininity"[2] as they enculturate[3] the next generation of "acceptable" Christians for their religious subculture, and holds them individually responsible for their children's—and particularly their daughters'—successes and failures in perpetuating the subculture's beliefs and practices. This study further seeks to historicize this ethos by contextualizing it within Victorian-era discourses of "true womanhood," which are themselves rooted in evangelical and middle class ideologies. It concludes by considering the empowering potentials of religious mother-work when it is extricated from a fundamentalist paradigm, and mothers and their daughters have the critical space to cultivate their spiritualities from a place of agency, authenticity and mutual enrichment.

Maternal Thinking, Mother-Blame and The Evangelical Maternal Ethos

The contemporary Western evangelical maternal ethos is aptly contextualized within a fundamentalist religious paradigm, the internalized demands of maternal thinking, and mother-blame as a deeply entrenched social practice. While fundamentalism is a loaded and contentious term that connotes a range of meanings, it can be initially traced to the conservative evangelical movement that transpired throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Castells 21; Sandeen 106). Broadly speaking, fundamentalist traditions necessitate literal readings of their canonical texts while minimizing their literary and historical contexts; as such, they emphasize the need to maintain "traditional" beliefs and practices—such as patriarchal gender hierarchies—in the face of societal changes (Bauer 228, 237; Gerami 27-28; Hardacre 129; Sandeen 103). Likewise, evangelical Protestantism is rooted in the beliefs that salvation is an individualized, purposeful commitment (Castells 22), that God rewards the personal morality and responsibility of individual believers with visible prosperity (Reeves-Ellington et al 3), and that believers must expand the "body of Christ" by spreading religious "truths" throughout the world (Gallagher 4). Particularly since the 1970s, evangelicalism has been especially visible in North America as a politically conservative social movement that advocates for preserving the white, middle class, privatized, patriarchal nuclear family structure (Ruether 83). Within this fundamentalist[4] paradigm of "traditional family values," evangelicalism has further emphasized the need for "the family" to function as a moral haven that promotes religious values without interference

from the secular "outside world" (Castells 23; Colaner and Giles 526).

To that end, there remains a prevalent belief in evangelicalism that children are born into original sin, and that their innately depraved spiritual natures must be vanquished through unconditional submission to adult authority (Cross 22). It is thereby critical that religious enculturation begins early in a child's life, and that "genuinely Christian parents" dedicate intensive amounts of time, energy and resources to fostering their children's religious beliefs. In this sense, rather than encourage participants to foster critical spiritualities from a place of agency and authenticity, fundamentalist religious enculturation demands the perpetuation of "traditional" beliefs and practices for the collective purpose of maintaining religious subcultural strength.[5] Furthermore, since fundamentalist-evangelical traditions demand the maintenance of "traditional" gender roles, mothers are designated therein as "natural" sole caregivers (Colaner and Giles 526; Hardacre 132), and are in turn charged with acting as children's primary religious enculturators (Franks 6; Gerami 32; Levitt 531). Here Sara Ruddick's three demands of maternal thinking are pertinent to consider. She contends that mothering practices are governed by the demands of preservation, growth and acceptability (17-23). While the notion of preservation mainly refers to the physical care and nurturance of a child, those of growth and acceptability are more intricately tied to the mother's own peer group and its corresponding values (21). Given that religious enculturation is deemed to be a central aspect of childrearing within fundamentalist-evangelical subcultures, the latter demand of "acceptability" is intensified for mothers who must not only teach their children about broader societal norms and roles, but also reproduce future evangelical Christians who internalize and perform the subculture's traditional beliefs and practices.

Within this ideological framework, mothers may be blamed for failing to adequately model and instill evangelical precepts when their children do not grow into "acceptable" subcultural members. As Paula Caplan contends, this practice of blaming mothers for all that goes "wrong" in children's development is "interwoven into our daily lives" (44). She further explains how the politics of blame are exacerbated for mothers of daughters; patriarchal society demands that girls and women guard and perpetuate man-made regulations and values, and mothers must train their daughters to internalize and perform these ideals (68-71). In this sense, mothers are compelled to model patriarchal precepts of femininity while simultaneously instilling these values in their daughters, thus perpetuating the myth that a girl who does not grow into an "acceptable" woman by patriarchal standards is the product of a "bad mother" (70). Arguably, this imperative is further exacerbated for mothers who participate in fundamentalist religious subcultures. Since "Fundamentalists' notion of the ideal society is inseparably linked to the notion of the ideal woman" (Gerami

154), they regard it as a critical imperative to reproduce "traditional" gender roles which are conceptualized as "Biblical" and God-ordained. This theological framework propagates discourses of "righteous femininity" wherein girls' and women's adherence to patriarchal precepts provides a primary measure of their individual morality and religious commitment, as well as a symbol of religious subcultural strength as a whole. Such values require girls and women to "submit" to male authority within and outside the private domestic sphere,[6] as well as perform standards of "modesty" and "purity" by preserving their sexual and reproductive potentials for the exclusive ownership of their husbands.

To that end, in addition to acting as primary caregivers and overseeing children's religious enculturation, mothers are charged with acting as "guardians of virtue" in their relationships with their daughters by becoming intensively invested in reproducing patriarchal standards of femininity and monitoring girls' sexual conduct.[7] Furthermore, the specifically evangelical values of individual salvation and prosperity stipulate that one's successes and failures are a direct reflection of personal morality and religious commitment, and mothers may in turn be held responsible for what the religious subculture regards as their daughters' spiritual "failures."[8] On the whole, then, the evangelical maternal ethos is rooted in the internalized impetus to model precepts of "righteous femininity" while also reproducing them in daughters who must uphold the fundamentalist religious subculture's "traditional" values. It is also contingent upon the belief that such "good" mothering practices will ultimately be reflected in daughters' "moral" conduct, and that mothers whose daughters do not grow to become "acceptable" evangelical Christians are deserving of blame—both as mothers, and as women of faith.

This evangelical maternal ethos is aptly contextualized within Victorian-era discourses of "true womanhood," which are themselves rooted in evangelical and middle class precepts of individual salvation and self-obtained social mobility. Within this discursive framework, girls and women are compelled to perform precepts of "traditional" and hence "righteous" femininity through intensive rituals of self-monitoring, self-governance and self-improvement, and women are designated as the primary religious enculturators of their children within the private domestic sphere. I will now explore how this ethos emerged in conjunction with the shifting material and discursive landscapes that transpired throughout the Victorian era.

The Victorian Family and the Cult of True Womanhood

To begin, it is pertinent to qualify the historical, cultural and geographical features associated with "the Victorian era." While British monarch Queen Victoria reigned between 1837-1901, Victorianism's ideological influences can

be traced from the end of the Napoleonic Wars to the start of World War I throughout Britain and North America (Frost 1), and the material, political and social transformations that culminated throughout this period had been developing for many years. For instance, the growth of industrial capitalism and urbanization began in the eighteenth century and stretched into the twentieth, thus ushering in many significant socioeconomic shifts. Moreover, the ideologies which enjoyed dominant status in Victorian systems of knowledge cannot be strictly relegated to the nationalist boundaries of Britain since British colonialism in North America and elsewhere ensured the geographical spread of "Victorian" values. The material and ideological legacy of the Victorian era thereby transcends the bounds of nineteenth century Britain, and the ideals of "true womanhood" that pervaded Victorian discourse remain recognizable in contemporary Western systems of knowledge.

Furthermore, these precepts of "true womanhood" emerged in conjunction with discourses which constructed the white, middle class, privatized, patriarchal "Victorian family" as the ideal family form. As remains the case in contemporary Western cultures, this discursive ideal was largely inaccessible to poor, working class, racialized and immigrant populations; as Ginger Frost contends, "Myths about the Victorian family are almost as numerous as those about the American West," and in actuality there was a tremendous variety of family structures throughout Queen Victoria's reign (11). Regardless, this pervasive ideology provided a central tenet of Victorian life, just as it remains prevalent in contemporary Western discourses of "traditional family values." The discursive influence of evangelical Christianity plays a significant role here, however it is first pertinent to explain why "evangelicalism," rather than Protestantism or Christianity more generally, is particularly crucial to contextualizing Victorian-era discourses of "the family" and "true womanhood." While large segments of the Victorian population—particularly among the working classes—were nominally Christian and some degree of religious pluralism existed, evangelical Protestantism enjoyed relative religious and cultural hegemony in the United States and was also highly influential in Britain (Gallagher 37). More importantly, however, the cultural vocabulary of the Victorian era was shaped by an ethos wherein evangelical tenets of individualized salvation and prosperity merged seamlessly with middle class values of self-obtained economic and social mobility. In this sense, the "Victorian family" functioned as an intrinsically *middle class* institution which was legitimized by *evangelical* ideologies that constructed it as a haven or morality and stability from a society that was rife with social, economic and technological changes.

Victorian ideals of "true womanhood" were thereby legitimized and reproduced by evangelical and middle class discourses which constructed the privatized familial structure as both "moral" and "respectable," and such ideals

were ultimately contingent upon the maintenance of separate masculine and feminine "spheres" that emerged with industrial capitalism. Nancy Hardesty explains how, prior to about 1825, "the family" was a multi-generational structure wherein adults and children worked as a collective to manage self-sustaining farms or businesses (37). This familial structure was compromised by the rapid expansion of industrialization and urbanization as "home" and "work" were transformed into separate entities and wage labour became the norm. Throughout this period factories began producing bread, clothing, soap and candles, thus rendering women's domestic labour to be largely superfluous— at least within elite families who could afford to purchase these necessities. Contrary to cultural myths of the monolithic and universal Victorian family, poor and working class households continued to rely on women's and children's labour, many of whom performed domestic work in middle and upper class homes (Gallagher 39).

The newly privatized "Victorian family" thereby emerged as an *exclusionary* discursive ideal since class "respectability" and religious "morality" came to rest on a household's ability to function with the sole economic support of a male breadwinner and the consequent elimination of women's paid and unpaid labour (Burstyn 18). Furthermore, while men performed the work of business and politics wherein the values of ambition, competition and self-interest were dominant (Hardesty 38), the harsh demands of the public sphere required "the home" to function as an isolated moral retreat (Weeks 68). For this reason it was deemed the responsibility of women to maintain the home as a haven of righteousness, peace and cheer so that men—whether they be husbands, fathers, brothers, or sons—who were obligated to go into "the world" each day would wish to return to the women in their lives and be inspired by their piety (Welter 51, 56). Just as "home" was constructed as a peaceful retreat from the industrial world of work, women were conceptualized as "angels in the house" who were innately "pure" since they did not have to face the egregious conditions of the public sphere (Frost 3; Satter 30). This sentiment is encapsulated by what Barbara Welter calls the "cult of true womanhood," wherein altruism, self-sacrifice, submissiveness, domesticity and humility were designated as inherently female qualities (48). Importantly, women were also regarded as "naturally" religious (Hardesty 38), and girls and women who seemingly lacked the virtues of Christian piety were considered to be "fallen angels" or "no woman at all" (Welter 49). In this sense, ideals of women's purity and piety simultaneously naturalized and necessitated their isolation in the domestic sphere, since their exposure to the harsh realities of public life would ultimately deprive them of the qualities that rendered them at once feminine, respectable and moral.

Similarly, just as shifting material conditions produced Victorian ideologies which constructed "true" women as inherently "pure," middle and upper

class children who were isolated in the domestic sphere were conceptualized as innately "innocent" (Cross 23). Such discourses of childhood innocence naturalized children's status as economically and socially dependent beings, and also necessitated their deference to adult authorities—particularly to male breadwinners. This ideological shift was at least partially influenced by middle class fears that male authority within the home would be compromised by the family's reliance on children's income (Hendrick 41). To that end, Victorian ideals of "the child" were constructed in conjunction with the ideal wife and mother performing the role of angel in the house; both of them were to be pampered and supported by men while accepting their subservient role in the patriarchal family hierarchy (Hendrick 58-59). Furthermore, religious guidance and discipline were required to preserve children's innocence, and women were considered to be the "natural" religious enculturators of children since they were innately pure and pious. This parental imperative to instill religious values in children was particularly exacerbated in mother-daughter relationships, wherein mothers were charged with simultaneously modelling *and* reproducing precepts of "true womanhood."

Reproducing Righteous Femininity

Indeed, the Victorian middle classes considered religious training to be a crucial aspect of children's development (Frost 98-100). For these families, religious instruction commonly began as soon as a child could talk; children would participate in habitual family prayers and Bible readings, and Victorian children's storybooks were often based on Biblical narratives (Gorham 19). Because middle class mothers were no longer needed as labourers in the industrial market, it was expected that they would dedicate intensive amounts of time and energy to performing religious enculturation, and those with strong faiths had much anxiety about their children's spiritual lives (Frost 24).[9] Furthermore, this religious enculturation was inherently gendered; while family resources were invested in education for boys who would one day become family breadwinners, mothers taught their daughters to be self-sacrificing, submissive and "pure" (Dyhouse 2; Frost 29). Mothers were accordingly lauded as the primary model of feminine and religious influence in their daughters' lives (Dyhouse 3; Satter 208), and evangelical women were particularly anxious over the "mental and moral culture" of their daughters (Cayton 74). The enculturation of girls was thereby predicated on the assumption that feminine virtues would be modelled by current generations of women and instilled in the next, and mothers were held accountable for the character and conduct of their daughters. Here the evangelical maternal ethos is critical to consider. As Sally Gallagher contends, the evangelical fundamentalist split which culminated at the turn

of the nineteenth century left theologically conservative Protestants weary of any behaviour that may defy "traditional" and hence "moral" femininity (37), and this paradigmatic shift saw evangelicalism become increasingly concerned with preserving historical traditions in the interest of maintaining religious subcultural strength. This endeavour came to rest upon the shoulders of Victorian girls, as well as the mothers who were charged with performing their gendered religious enculturation.

This evangelical imperative to reproduce precepts of righteous femininity can thereby be further contextualized in discourses of female adolescence that arose throughout the Victorian era. While adolescence did not first emerge as a cultural category during this period, an awareness of an intermediate period between childhood and adulthood arguably culminated during this time and promulgated a discursive formation that is recognizable in contemporary Western systems of knowledge. As such, Catherine Driscoll explains how discourses of female adolescence specifically emerged throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and they constructed this transitional period between girlhood and womanhood as intrinsically contentious (15). This is because the adolescent female body is interpreted through a framework of sexual development wherein girls visibly embody sexual and reproductive readiness, yet they have not reached the legally and socially sanctioned age to utilize these potentials as "legitimate" wives and mothers. To that end, it is pertinent to consider how central discourses of "sexual purity" were to Victorian conceptions of girlhood; as Anthony Fletcher explains, the fundamental way in which girls demonstrated "obedience" in the patriarchal family was through "[prizing and preserving] her virginity until her father handed her over to her husband. Her chastity then symbolized her loyalty to him" (25-26). Victorian conceptions of girlhood therefore cannot be bifurcated from ideals of feminine "purity" and childhood "innocence," nor from the material conditions that propagated discourses of middle class "true womanhood." Rather, the very essence of girls' femininity, morality and respectability was hinged upon these ideologies, and it was essential that girls appear "innocent, virginal, and unsullied in every way" (Dyhouse 23).

Female adolescence was thus conceptualized as a time of "becoming" wherein girls were valued for their unused sexual and reproductive potentials, and the anxieties concerning the state of Victorian girlhood were ultimately rooted in concerns about the wives and mothers these girls would one day become. Indeed, female adolescence emerged as a way of understanding and communicating about girls who were not just developing sexually, but were also facing new social freedoms amidst the many structural and material transformations that were rampant in Victorian society. Increasing numbers of middle class women began attending colleges and pursuing careers as teachers and nurses; some

even became suffragists and labour leaders (Frost 32). This all culminated into female adolescence being marked as a site of cultural anxiety and regulation, as it seemed that adolescent girls could either "blossom" into pure, moral and respectable women in accordance with the cult of true womanhood, or emulate the much-maligned "girl of the period."[10] Such discourses equated the changing nature of girlhood with broader evidence of moral decline in Victorian society as a whole, and the new girl of the period was contrasted with the innately "pure" and "virtuous" girls of the past, thus perpetuating a universal model of "traditional" girlhood that never really "was."

In this sense, Victorian children's gender socialization and religious enculturation were intrinsically and inextricably linked—at least among the elite classes and particularly in the case of girls. Moreover, the imperative to reproduce ideals of "righteous femininity" in adolescent girls materialized in a myriad of discourses, initiatives and cultural artifacts. Since middle and upper class girls' labour in the public and domestic spheres was largely rendered superfluous, these girls had unprecedented leisure time at their disposal. It thus became a critical imperative to regulate the ways in which adolescent girls utilized this time—both in terms of how they filled their leisure hours each day, as well as how they conducted themselves throughout this intermediate period of waiting for womanhood. In this regard, Victorian middle class girls were believed to be more innately "pure" than their working class counterparts since the former were protected from the public sphere's deleterious influences, however they were also subject to more meticulous familial control and surveillance (Frost 23). Here the evangelical ethos once again plays a crucial role. Victorian middle class girls were instructed to strive toward individual salvation, righteousness and purity by exercising systematic control over their thoughts, emotions and desires (Satter 209), and a significant aspect of their religious enculturation was predicated on developing intensive rituals of self-monitoring, self-governance and self-improvement. Girls were thereby encouraged to spend their leisure time engaging in individualized "improving" activities, such as utilizing letter and diary writing as a method of self-inspection and confession (Frost 28).

Similarly, providing advice for how these girls could achieve "traditional" and hence "moral" feminine virtues was deemed to be a particularly critical task. Books, magazines, hygiene manuals and encyclopedias of "useful knowledge" for girls proliferated throughout the Victorian period as the broader population's access to literacy increased, and it was necessary that girls limited their reading to texts which conveyed moral lessons and catered to the cultivation of feminine virtues (Frost 93; Gorham 6; Moruzi 6). Girls' conduct manuals particularly flourished as a textual genre among the Victorian middle classes, and in many ways such texts aptly embody the evangelical maternal ethos; they aimed to educate readers about the importance of maintaining the "traditional"

feminine virtues of purity and modesty and embracing their "inferior" social status by submitting to male authority,[11] and many of them were written by evangelical women within an explicitly religious discursive framework wherein the adult author passes her "maternal" wisdom to the young female reader (Vallone 46, 69). Unsurprisingly, these texts constructed strategies for coping with the intergenerational conflict that was increasingly common in middle class families—particularly between girls and their mothers—and further encouraged girls' adherence to precepts of true womanhood (DeLuzio 23, 32). These texts collectively perpetuated the evangelical and middle class values of individual salvation and self-obtained social mobility by constructing the rigid self-monitoring of one's body and mind as necessary for personal and national well-being (Driscoll 71), as well as by linking personal health and success to individual moral virtue (DeLuzio 30).

On the whole, then, female adolescence was conceptualized as a critical stage of "becoming" throughout the Victorian period, wherein the cultivation of "traditional" and hence "moral" feminine virtues was a paramount task amidst the numerous socioeconomic changes that were transpiring. In this regard, Victorian gender socialization and religious enculturation were inextricably linked, and discourses of "true womanhood" maintained that precepts of femininity, morality and respectability could be achieved through individualized rituals of self-monitoring, self-governance and self-control. While Victorian mothers performed the intensive work of gender socialization and religious enculturation—at least among the elite classes—these imperatives were exacerbated for mothers of daughters since "naturally" pure and pious women were charged with simultaneously modelling and reproducing standards of "righteous femininity" in their daughters. In this sense, evangelical precepts of individual salvation and self-obtained social mobility constructed mothers as liable for any "defects" that may disrupt their daughters' transition toward "true womanhood."

This evangelical maternal ethos remains prevalent within contemporary Western fundamentalist-evangelical subcultures which strive to preserve and reproduce their religious traditions amidst socioeconomic changes that undermine patriarchal gender hierarchies. Fundamentalist theological frameworks locate girls' and women's morality and religious commitment in their performance of patriarchal feminine virtues such as sexual purity and submission to male authority within and outside the domestic sphere. In accordance with such "traditional" feminine norms and roles, mothers are designated as children's primary religious enculturators who must simultaneously model and reproduce standards of "righteous femininity" in the next generation of Christian women. Rather than encourage mothers and their children to cultivate critical and empowered spiritualities, this imperative compels women to internalize,

perform and transmit patriarchal beliefs and practices, and in turn holds mothers responsible for the moral conduct of their daughters. I will now consider how this problematic evangelical maternal ethos may be negotiated through re-claiming the empowering potentials of religious mother-work.

Conclusion: Re-Claiming the Empowering Potentials of Religious Mother-work

While the empowering potentials of religious mother-work are subject to constraint within fundamentalist imperatives to reproduce "traditional" values and maintain subcultural strength, it should not be assumed that the religious enculturation which mothers perform in their relationships with their daughters—as well as their sons—is inherently oppressive. Rather, when religious mother-work is extricated from fundamentalist paradigms, mothers and daughters may both cultivate critical spiritualities from a place of agency, authority and authenticity, in accordance with Andrea O'Reilly's conceptual framework for empowered mothering (45), as well as affirm religious mother-work as a valuable site in which women may effect social change. However, in order for this to happen, two key elements must be present. To begin, mothers must be validated as producers of religious knowledge in accordance with the wisdom they have garnered through their own lived experiences, as opposed to functioning as the designated reproducers of patriarchal traditions. As feminist theologian Valerie Saiving famously argues, women experience religion in fundamentally unique ways, and the particular experiences they accrue as mothers further contribute to the religious "ways of knowing" they develop throughout their lives (23, 36). In this sense, the empowering potentials of religious mother-work are augmented when mothers operate as authorities of their own spiritualities and religiosities, rather than as transmitters of patriarchal religious subcultural values. It is similarly pertinent to emphasize the time and energy, as well as the particular skills and resources that are required of the many mothers who perform religious enculturation, and to consider the specific challenges they face when discussing mother-work in a broader sense.

Second, children must be regarded as spiritual agents who actively shape their own religious epistemologies, rather than be conceptualized as human "becomings" (Lee 5) who must internalize and perform religious subcultural traditions. In this sense, religious enculturation should be understood as a fluid, active and participatory journey that does not "end" when children emerge as "stable" and "complete" adult Christians. In many ways, this resolution is antithetical to fundamentalist religious paradigms wherein subcultural solidarity is contingent upon shared beliefs in timeless and eternal "truths," and ambiguity and doubt are viewed as threats to subcultural strength (Gerami

29). Rather than assume that "good" children passively receive the religious subcultural "truths" that adults teach, children should be encouraged to join their mothers in cultivating critical and empowered spiritualities wherein they may doubt, negotiate and contest religious values that do not contribute to their personal growth or reflect their lived realities. In this regard, it is helpful to conceptualize spirituality as a fundamental search for meaning that may occur within or outside the ideological boundaries of formal religious belief systems and institutions (Hyde 43; Myers 62). Furthermore, when children are viewed as spiritual agents rather than blank canvases whose morality must be inspired and moulded by their mothers' own conduct, mothers may be emancipated from the evangelical maternal ethos which holds them responsible when their children—and particularly their daughters—do not conform to subcultural standards of acceptability. Indeed, when mothers and daughters are extricated from the imperative to model and perpetuate patriarchal ideals of "righteous femininity," both have the potential to actively shape religious enculturation and re-claim this process as a conduit for mutual growth and personal enrichment.

[1]In regard to feminist discourse, much research has specifically addressed the "purity culture" that evangelicalism has promulgated among adolescent girls and young women. Jessica Valenti's popular 2009 text *The Purity Myth* is a prominent example.

[2]I use this term to encapsulate how discourses of righteousness and morality for girls and women are expressed in specifically gendered terms within fundamentalist religious subcultures. In this sense, perceptions of a woman's commitment to God and her faith tradition are inextricably linked to her performance of "traditionally feminine" norms and roles.

[3]Here I purposefully use the term "enculturation" instead of the more commonly used "socialization" for a number of reasons. While the latter term refers to raising children as acceptable members of "society" in a broader sense, my work draws from Subcultural Identity Theory and stipulates that many religious groups—particularly those who operate within a fundamentalist theological framework—actively identify as subcultures who operate as a moral minority within and in opposition to what they perceive as a larger "secular society." In this sense, while religious mothers must "socialize" their children in the broader norms and roles that are required for adulthood and citizenship, they also enculturate their children in accordance with the knowledge and values that are particular to their religious subculture. This process is particularly contentious because many fundamentalist subcultural beliefs directly defy "secular" societal values, and mothers are compelled to educate their children

about such "worldly" standards while also ensuring that they do not internalize or affirm them; rather, children must understand "secular" values so that they will be equipped to actively refute them.

[4]While fundamentalist paradigms may enjoy dominant status within contemporary Western evangelicalism, just as there are fundamentalist currents in other Christian traditions and world religions, it is pertinent to note that not all evangelical denominations and organizations are de facto fundamentalist. For instance, the Evangelical Feminist movement has a rich history of challenging and re-negotiating patriarchal-fundamentalist paradigms. For further reading, see the Evangelical and Ecumenical Women's Caucus website: http://www.eewc.com/

[5]For further reading on the significance and wider implication of Subcultural Identity Theory in evangelicalism, see Christian Smith's 1998 text *American Evangelicalism: Embattled and Thriving.*

[6]This particular discourse is popularized by contemporary "Complementarian" evangelical theology which stipulates that men and women are divinely ordained as "different" and thereby "complementary" to one another. Within this paradigm, men are commanded by God to act as domestic and cultural "leaders" while women are required to "submit" to male authority (Castells 22). For a "definitive" evangelical complementarian manifesto, see John Piper and Wayne Grudem's edited collection *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (1991, 2006).

[7]For further reading on the imperative for evangelical mothers to model standards of "righteous femininity" and monitor their daughters' sexual conduct, see Vicky Courtney's 2008 text *Five Conversations You Must Have with Your Daughter* and Dannah Gresh's 2010 text *Six Ways to Keep the "Little" In Your Girl: Guiding Your Daughter from Her Tweens to Her Teens.*

[8]This resolution is intricately expressed in a selection of evangelical sexual purity guidance literature discussed in my ongoing PhD research. The majority of these texts are written by evangelical mothers who construct a fundamentalist-evangelical discursive framework wherein it is God's will that girls grow into "pure" and "righteous" women in accordance with religious subcultural precepts—which are invariably patriarchal values that are lauded as "Biblical" and divinely ordained—and mothers will see their daughters grow into such women *if they wholly submit to God's will in their own lives*. Similarly, these texts address girls as evangelicalism's "mothers of tomorrow" who must learn to perpetuate evangelical precepts of "righteous femininity" now so that they can model and reproduce them in subsequent generations of evangelical Christians. For further reading see Dannah Gresh and Nancy Leigh DeMoss's 2008 text *Lies Young Women Believe and the Truth That Sets Them Free* and Leslie Ludy's 2008 text *Set-Apart Femininity.*

[9]For further reading on the importance of childhood religious enculturation and the primary role that mothers assumed in this process during the Victorian era, see Horace Bushnell's 1861 parenting manual *Christian Nurture*.

[10-]For further reading see Eliza Lynn Linton's 1868 essay "The Girl of the Period," which encapsulates the cultural anxiety surrounding the changing ways that girlhood was experienced amid a series of socioeconomic changes. Here the author notoriously laments that girls no longer embody the feminine ideals of virtue and modesty, that they have dispensed with "old morals," and that they seek to only please themselves rather than men.

[11]For examples of these conduct manuals, see Lydia Howard Signourney's 1833 text *Letters to Young Ladies,* Sarah Stickney Ellis' 1843 text *The Daughters of England, Their Position in Society, Character and Responsibilities,* and Matilda Pullan's 1855 text *Maternal Counsels to a Daughter.*

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