

The Politicization of Family Life: How Headship Became Essential to Evangelical Identity in the Late Twentieth Century

Anneke Stasson

On September 28, 2008, hipster Seattle pastor Mark Driscoll preached a sermon designed to improve the sex lives of married Christians. After the sermon, Driscoll's wife, Grace, joined him on stage. The pair proceeded to answer questions that were texted to them by members of their congregation. As the next question flashed up on the screen, Driscoll gave an audible sigh. "What are your thoughts on stay-at-home dads if the woman really wants to work? Or even if both want/need to work?"¹

During Driscoll's sixteen years of ministry, fellow evangelicals have repeatedly criticized him for his position on gender roles.² His and Grace's book on marriage, in which they elaborate on their traditionalist view of gender, has drawn considerable outrage.³ As the question about stay-at-home dads flashed up on the screen, Driscoll turned to his wife. "Do you want to answer first?" "It's hard to respect a man who isn't willing to provide," Grace Driscoll quipped. Then she paraphrased Titus 2: "As women, we're built to be home with our kids. . . . We're supposed to be loving our husband and children, busy at home, homeward focused, pure, kind, self-controlled, so that we don't malign the word of God." When it was Mark Driscoll's turn, he referenced 1 Timothy 5:8: "Paul tells Timothy in the New Testament if any man does not provide for the needs of his family he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Pastor Mark Driscoll takes pride in the fact that his 14,000-strong church in Seattle is in touch with culture.⁴ He preaches in jeans and an untucked oxford shirt. Worship at Mars Hill is led by an indie rock band. On first glance, then, it seems strange that this hip pastor would continue to assert an allegiance to such a conservative view of gender, but attendees at Mars Hill are not turned away by his message.⁵

Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation, Vol. 24, Issue 1, pp. 100–138, ISSN: 1052-1151, electronic ISSN: 1533-8568. © 2014 by The Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture. All rights reserved. Please direct all requests for permission to photocopy or reproduce article content through the University of California Press's Rights and Permissions website at <http://www.ucpressjournals.com/reprintinfo.asp>. DOI: 10.1525/rac.2014.24.1.100.

And Driscoll is not alone in his commitment to traditional gender roles. According to a Religious Identity and Influence Survey, 90.4 percent of American evangelicals believe the "husband should be the head of the family," and 84.5 percent believe the "husband should be the spiritual leader."⁶ Most evangelicals today do not ascribe to the strict male-breadwinner, female-housewife understanding of headship, which Driscoll advocates. However, the majority still endorse the basic premise of headship that "men are leaders and women subordinate partners within marriage."⁷

Why do evangelicals believe in headship?⁸ Several scholars have argued that evangelicals use headship to distinguish themselves from the surrounding culture, which has thoroughly embraced feminist conceptions of gender.⁹ The importance of headship as an identity marker should not be underestimated. Indeed, this article will seek to bolster the argument that headship is key to evangelical identity and has been for the last century. However, I do not think the identity argument and the other sociological arguments put forward in recent years are sufficient for explaining the male headship phenomenon.¹⁰

The question that comes to my mind when I read the literature on evangelicals and headship is a historical question: When and how did headship become so central to evangelical identity? Answering this question constitutes one of the distinct contributions of this article. Historians Betty DeBerg and Margaret Bendroth have traced the development of evangelical attitudes toward gender in the early twentieth century. DeBerg has shown that, between 1880 and 1930, evangelicals sacralized and promoted the Victorian model of family, which was then in the process of decline. In response to rising divorce rates, the suffrage movement, the "New Woman," and "flapperism," fundamentalist leaders promoted separate spheres ideology. According to DeBerg, fundamentalist leaders claimed that the "Christian" home (by which they meant "the white, middleclass, evangelical, nuclear family in which husband works and wife remains at home subject to the husband's authority") was "the one social institution capable of saving both individuals and the nation from sin and decline."¹¹ This vision of the Christian home had widespread appeal among people who were anxious about the deteriorating morals in American society.

The model of Christian home life that held sway with evangelicals until the 1930s gave women significant authority within the home. By the 1940s, however, fundamentalist and neo-evangelical leaders were beginning to argue that, even within the home, women's authority should be curtailed.¹² It was during this time that the language of "headship" began to be applied in earnest to men's role in the

family. According to Margaret Bendroth, "Under the stresses of rapid social change during and after World War II, emphasis on gender differences shifted toward an insistence on hierarchy and masculine control."¹³ It was not enough for women simply to occupy the domestic sphere while men occupied the public sphere. Men had to be dominant in the domestic sphere, as well. Fundamentalists and neo-evangelicals believed such an arrangement was part of God's "order of creation" and was necessary for the proper functioning of the family.¹⁴

DeBerg and Bendroth have done much to point historians to the way in which gender ideology has been important to evangelical identity over the last century. However, their analyses stop short of the end of the twentieth century. This article will pick the story up in the early 1970s, when it was not clear that belief in male headship would become one of the distinct marks of evangelical identity, one of the ways they would define themselves vis-à-vis American culture. The majority of evangelicals at the time certainly believed in headship, but that belief did not yet strongly distinguish evangelicals from the wider culture, which still largely endorsed a male-breadwinner, female-housewife model of family. In addition, a vibrant evangelical feminist movement during the 1970s advocated an egalitarian approach to gender roles. It was unclear whether their vision of egalitarianism or the traditional view of headship would take precedence in the majority of evangelical marriages in the 1980s and 1990s.

This article will show how the politicization of family life, which began in earnest in the late 1970s and continues to this day, has strengthened evangelical commitment to a male headship model of family. Part of the reason evangelicals have clung to male headship for the last thirty years is that it has been connected with their political opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and gay marriage. Fundamentalist and evangelical organizations like Concerned Women for America, Moral Majority, and Focus on the Family have used these political issues to mobilize evangelicals for political action. And as these issues have come to define evangelical political opinion, they have, in turn, strengthened evangelical commitment to male headship.

By analyzing anti-ERA and anti-gay marriage evangelical literature, this article will argue that gender ideology was integral to the formation of evangelical identity during the last third of the twentieth century. Thus, the article seeks to extend the argument of DeBerg and Bendroth into the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s and to present gender ideology as a key feature in defining twentieth-century American evangelicalism.

The Potential of Evangelical Egalitarianism before the Rise of the Religious Right

During the 1970s, evangelicals were in the midst of a heated debate about the role of women in church, family, and society. Should women view themselves as autonomous individuals rather than simply as wives and mothers? Should they seek self-fulfillment? Should women work outside the home? Should they be able to be priests? Second-wave feminists had answered these questions with a resounding “yes!” Mainline Protestants, for the most part, also answered these questions in the affirmative.¹⁵ But among evangelicals in the early 1970s, the verdict was still out.¹⁶

Conservative evangelicals such as James Dobson, Elisabeth Elliot, Bill Gothard, and Marabel Morgan perceived a major incongruity between feminist and biblical views of gender. They were uncomfortable with the feminist tendency to minimize the difference between men and women. Elisabeth Elliot perceived in feminism a “faceless, colorless, sexless wasteland.”¹⁷ Conservative evangelicals discouraged wives from working outside the home. They encouraged husbands to lead and wives to submit.¹⁸ Bill Gothard taught that the “chain of command” in marriage ran from God to man to woman.¹⁹ Marabel Morgan taught that the way to marital bliss was for a woman to center her life around her husband. “It’s only when a woman surrenders her life to her husband, reveres and worships him and is willing to serve him, that she becomes really beautiful to him. She becomes a priceless jewel, the glory of femininity, his queen!”²⁰

Conservative evangelicals have a history of uniting around a common enemy, and, in the 1970s, that enemy was feminism.²¹ They blamed the feminist movement “for abortion, the rising divorce rate, the proliferation of sexually transmitted diseases . . . and a general moral decline in the country.”²² In his popular book *What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women*, James Dobson blamed feminism for making housewives feel depressed about their lot in life. It was because of feminism, he wrote, that women’s “traditional responsibilities have become matters of disrespect and ridicule.”²³ And it was because of feminism that women were abandoning their home responsibilities and contributing to the deterioration of family life in America. Conservative evangelicals such as Dobson believed that the way to restore healthy family life in America was for men and women to uphold the male-breadwinner, female-housewife gender roles.²⁴

In the early 1970s, the Equal Rights Amendment provided the perfect opportunity for conservative evangelicals to express their opposition to feminism and their support of traditional gender roles.

Many conservative evangelicals lined up behind Phyllis Schlafly in opposition to the ERA, convinced that the amendment would violate the God-given identity of men and women.²⁵ The "STOP ERA" movement was so effective in its tactics that, although twenty-two of the required states had ratified the amendment in 1972, there were "only eight ratifications in 1973, three in 1974, one in 1975, and none in 1976."²⁶

Not all evangelicals, however, opposed feminism and feminist political causes. During the 1970s, a growing group of progressive evangelicals supported the ERA and called themselves Christian feminists. Although these people upheld core evangelical beliefs such as biblical inerrancy, they came to a different conclusion on the women question. Christian feminists followed the lead of secular feminists in validating women's quest for "something more than my husband and my children and my home"²⁷ They believed the Bible supported women's leadership in the church and the equal partnership of husband and wife in marriage. In 1975, the evangelical and interdenominational Fuller Seminary initiated a policy in line with Christian feminists when it began to hire "only teachers who are committed to women's ordination."²⁸ Throughout the decade, evangelical feminists such as Letha Scanzoni, Nancy Hardesty, and Paul Jewett strove to convince their fellow evangelicals that the Bible supported egalitarianism, both in the church and in marriage.²⁹

In October 1975, 2,500 evangelicals concerned with marriage and family life gathered in St. Louis, Missouri, for a Continental Congress on the Family.³⁰ Executive director J. Allan Petersen and the other organizers of the conference invited progressives such as Letha Scanzoni and conservatives such as James Dobson to speak at the conference. The congress guide warned participants, "Many of the presentations made at the Continental Congress on the Family are controversial and provocative. It is the purpose of the Congress to provide a forum for expressing and exploring a broad spectrum of sometimes competing ideas."³¹ Program director Gary Collins told participants in his welcome address, "We do not all see from the same perspective. Though our emphases may vary, we share one common objective—to clarify our Biblical mission to the family and face the hard, real issues of a changing society."³²

The Continental Congress on the Family illustrates the fluidity of evangelical ideas about gender during the 1970s. Dobson's critical perspective on feminism surely came through while he was giving one of the fifty "action seminars" offered at the conference.³³ Likewise, Scanzoni's positive view of feminism came through in the plenary address she and her husband delivered:

Men are enjoying cooking and baking and writing books about it. Large numbers of husbands are enrolled with their wives in natural childbirth classes and are fighting hospital policies which bar fathers from the delivery room. Men want to share the special moments of childbearing and childrearing, too. Increasingly, men are realizing that they've been cheated out of a tremendously rich aspect of life because older ideas about male roles have kept them so busy with breadwinning that they have had all too little time with their families.³⁴

According to John Turner, the Scanzonis' progressive view of gender characterized the tenor of the conference overall.³⁵ Diane Petersen, a conference attendee, agrees: "I don't remember anyone saying anything like the husband is the head of the household."³⁶ Actually, male headship was mentioned at the conference, most notably in a document entitled "Affirmation on the Family," which was drawn up by conference organizers and distributed to participants. The document situated male headship, however, within an overall paradigm of spousal "interdependence" and "equality."³⁷

Evangelical feminists such as Letha Scanzoni carried the momentum from the Continental Congress on the Family into an Evangelical Women's Caucus held in Washington, D.C., in November 1975. The theme of the conference was "Women in Transition: A Biblical Approach to Feminism," and the conference was attended by some 360 evangelical men and women.³⁸ Participants endorsed the ERA and expressed hope about the future of an egalitarian evangelicalism. The conference was well organized, passionate, and optimistic. It made itself heard in the evangelical world, if not in American society at large.³⁹

Although they were nowhere near as numerous as the conservatives, the evangelical feminists of the 1970s had a real chance to make headway in evangelical culture at large. According to W. Bradford Wilcox, evangelical feminists "hail[ed] disproportionately from intellectual centers of evangelicalism like colleges, Christian publishing, and the evangelical media."⁴⁰ This meant that they had the capacity to influence the next generation of evangelicals. That they were influencing the next generation was evidenced by the positive response to feminism taken by Richard Quebedeaux in his 1974 book, *The Young Evangelicals*. "The Young Evangelicals believe that their churches should give equal representation to women on their governing boards, in the ministry (where their salaries should equal those given to men), and in denominational and interdenominational hierarchies where female executives are most rarely encountered."⁴¹ When

Quebedeaux made this pronouncement, it seemed feasible that the majority of evangelicals would gradually embrace egalitarianism. That they did not was, in part, due to what David Swartz has called the “fragmenting” of the evangelical left. Rather than working together, “women, African American, Anabaptist, and Reformed evangelicals established separate vehicles for their particular interests.”⁴² Equally devastating for the evangelical feminist cause was the increasing politicization of family life in the coming decades.

The Politicization of Family Life and the Solidification of Male Headship in Evangelical Identity

In November 1977, a government-funded National Women’s Conference took place in Houston. The goal of the conference was to “identify barriers that prevent women from participating fully and equally in all aspects of national life.”⁴³ Conference organizers took care to ensure that the 1,842 delegates to the conference would be a representative sample of American women. However, suspecting that their perspective on women’s issues would be underrepresented, conservatives decided to hold a rally of their own nearby. They called their three-hour rally the National Pro-Family Rally. Some 15,000 people attended the rally, and speakers expressed their opposition to the ERA, abortion, and gay rights.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, the resolutions passed at the National Women’s Conference confirmed conservative fears. The conference ended up reflecting the agenda of the most progressive delegates, people such as Bella Abzug and Betty Friedan. It endorsed the ERA and abortion and aligned feminism with lesbian rights.⁴⁵

The National Women’s Conference and its counterpart, the National Pro-Family Rally, demonstrated the growing reality of “culture wars” during the late 1970s.⁴⁶ The resolutions passed at each event became the political platforms around which liberals and conservatives rallied in the coming years. Both sides were passionate about their positions and were eager to see the political process bear out their goals. They had little patience for those who did not agree with them.

President Jimmy Carter, for his part, tried to navigate the political minefield by holding a kind of middle-way perspective on issues such as abortion and gay rights. Like conservatives, President Carter was personally “against abortion” and did not support “the use of Federal funds to pay for abortions.”⁴⁷ Like liberals, he did not think “that it would be advisable to have a constitutional amendment which would specifically prohibit all abortions.”⁴⁸ Instead, President

Carter sought to “discourage the need for abortions by improving services to unmarried pregnant women, by improving adoption services, and by encouraging family planning programs.”⁴⁹ In terms of gay rights, Carter said during his campaign that he was “not entirely comfortable with homosexuality for personal feelings.”⁵⁰ Nevertheless, he promised gay rights activists, “I oppose all forms of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. As President, I can assure you that all policies of the federal government would reflect this commitment.”⁵¹

While Carter hoped his middle-way perspective would build bridges with both liberals and conservatives, the opposite in fact occurred. His recognition of abortion as a moral issue and his government-program approach to minimizing abortions was not satisfying to either party.⁵² One would think that, at least, Carter’s position on the ERA—an amendment he strongly supported—would have satisfied the liberal camp, but this was not the case either. Carter called the ratification of the ERA “the single most important step in guaranteeing all Americans, both women and men, their rights under the United States Constitution.”⁵³ Yet women’s groups accused the President of equivocating on the issue and failing to do enough to ensure the passage of the amendment.⁵⁴

As women’s organizations grew increasingly frustrated with Carter’s political leadership, so, too, did evangelicals. When Carter was first elected, evangelicals were elated that, after decades of being distant from political power, they had one of their own in the White House. This optimism was short-lived. Many evangelicals felt betrayed by Carter’s refusal to take the firm position against abortion, gay rights, and the ERA that growing numbers of evangelicals were advocating. They could not understand Carter’s pledge to “keep strictly separated my political life from my religious life.”⁵⁵ Increasingly, evangelical leaders were encouraging evangelicals to do precisely the opposite, to use politics to make their personal religious beliefs national policy.⁵⁶

A particularly vivid example of evangelical frustration with Carter can be found in the story of Carter’s 1980 White House Conference on Families. Carter had promised to hold such a conference during his campaign for presidency. In the early years of his presidency, other issues took precedence, but, in 1978, planning for the conference began in earnest. Executive director John Carr decided that, instead of having one “big Washington meeting,” they would hold a series of three conferences in Baltimore, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles.⁵⁷ Selecting delegates for these three conferences occurred through a variety of processes. Thirty percent had to be “chosen through some sort of open process, such as public balloting, voting at the state convention,

or even a random drawing." Governors chose another 30 percent of their state's delegates, and it was up to the states to decide how to choose the remaining 40 percent.⁵⁸

During the years leading up to the conference, conservative evangelical leaders went to great lengths to ensure that their "pro-family" message would be represented at the conference. Ever since the National Pro-Family Rally of 1977, the phrase "pro-family" had been shorthand for supporting a male-breadwinner, female-housewife model of family and opposing feminism, the ERA, abortion, and gay rights.⁵⁹ James Dobson was one of the leaders in the pro-family movement. Like many other evangelicals, Dobson dated his own involvement in the pro-family movement to the 1977 National Women's Conference in Houston. Reflecting on the event twenty years later, his disgust with the conference was still palpable:

We can thank President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalyn, for turning that government-sponsored event over to the likes of Abzug, Gloria Steinem, Jane Fonda, and Betty Friedan. Watching them on television as they ripped into everything I believed actually motivated me to join the pro-family movement. When President Carter announced his follow-up White House Conferences on the Family two years later, I said to myself, "Not this time, sir. Not this time!"⁶⁰

Tim and Beverly LaHaye were also leaders in the pro-family movement. They chaired a National Pro-Family Coalition on the White House Conference on Families, which encouraged evangelicals to attend state conventions where delegates were chosen. The Pro-Family Coalition worked with "more than 150 other pro-family, pro-life, pro-American organizations in developing strategies to make [its] views known in the White House conference meetings."⁶¹

The efforts of the Pro-Family Coalition to mobilize evangelicals were extremely successful. They did make their view of family known, to the frustration of the liberal attendees at the state conventions. One attendee at the state convention in Virginia remembered the way in which the evangelicals "came in with their agenda and tried to 'x' out most of the things we had formulated. They didn't want anything about family planning, no family-life education in the schools. Their picture of the family was Mom, Dad, and kids, with Mom at home—the 'traditional family.' I heard that term till I thought I was going to die."⁶² Not only did conservatives make their view of family known, but they also succeeded in winning the majority of delegate positions at state conventions in Virginia, Michigan, Oklahoma, and Oregon.

Despite evangelical success, ultimately only about “two hundred fifty of some fifteen hundred delegates [to the White House Conference on Families] came from conservative Christian ranks.”⁶³ By the time conservative delegates arrived at the first conference in Baltimore, they had come to believe that the conference was “a liberal stacked deck.”⁶⁴ This feeling was confirmed when their efforts to assert a traditional view of family were silenced by conference facilitators.⁶⁵ Frustrated that they were allowed to discuss neither the definition of the family nor abortion, they staged a walk-out.⁶⁶ Conservatives at the conferences in Minneapolis and Los Angeles did the same. According to Campus Crusade’s Jerry Regier, “Sometimes you have to do things that will mobilize people. . . . And ‘Conservatives Stage Walk-Out’ was front-page news. It woke people up all across the country to what was going on.”⁶⁷

Carter’s White House Conference on Families illustrates the way in which conservative evangelicals in the late 1970s were mobilized for political action around a traditional model of family. Two political organizations founded by conservative evangelicals in 1979 continued to mobilize evangelicals in the 1980s around a pro-family political agenda: Beverly LaHaye’s Concerned Women for America (CWA) and Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority.⁶⁸ These organizations breathed new energy into the male-breadwinner, female-housewife model of family advocated by conservative evangelicals earlier in the 1970s. “Scripture declares that God has called the father to be the spiritual leader of his family,” declared Falwell in *Listen, America!*, a book he wrote to call Americans to “rise up against the tide of permissiveness and moral decay” in the country.⁶⁹

The husband is to be the decisionmaker and the one who motivates his family with love. The Bible says that husbands are to love their wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it. A man is to be a servant to his family while at the same time being a leader. A husband and father is first of all to be a provider for his family. He is to take care of their physical needs and do this honestly by working and earning an income to meet those needs.⁷⁰

In his prescription for womanhood, Falwell stressed women’s God-given role of motherhood and encouraged women to find fulfillment in their lives as wives and mothers:

I believe that a woman’s call to be a wife and mother is the highest calling in the world. My wife is proud to be called a housewife. She is dedicated to making a happy and rich life for us and our three children. She does not consider her

life work of making my life happy and that of loving and shaping the lives of our precious children inconsequential or demeaning. Women who choose to remain in the home should never feel inferior to those working outside, but should know they are fulfilling God's command for the home.⁷¹

In her book *I Am a Woman by God's Design*, Beverly LaHaye echoed these sentiments. Woman's true purpose, she argued, was to have and raise children.⁷² She attributed the problems of modern society to a denial of the account of human origins contained in Genesis.

The problems [in modern society] increase when a woman will not accept that she was created from and for man, with a specific purpose to fulfill. She begins to question who she is. Why is she here? Why should she be different from a man? Why can't she exchange roles with a man? Why should she be a 'baby machine'? Why does she have to care for the children? She begins to believe that this God-created difference is really discrimination toward the female sex.⁷³

By contrast, LaHaye argued that "a woman who does believe that God was the Creator of all things has little problem with accepting who she is and what her divine purpose is in life."⁷⁴

Tim LaHaye built on these ideas in his 1982 book, *The Battle for the Family*. Like Falwell, he described motherhood as "the greatest calling in the world, according to God."⁷⁵ He also described the "harmful effects" of feminism, noting that it "creates unnecessary competition between husband and wife...blurs the distinction between the sexes...creates unnecessary dissatisfaction with being a housewife and mother...causes insecurity in women...destroys femininity...causes insecurity in men...[and] makes children insecure."⁷⁶ LaHaye called "feminism" and "women in the work force" two of the "forces of evil" that were "attacking the family."⁷⁷

The LaHayes, Falwell, and the other Christian Right leaders were extremely skilled in marketing their pro-family message in the evangelical world. Because the leaders of the Christian Right believed mainstream media was predisposed against them, they constructed an impressive offering of religious media. They developed radio and television programs and pioneered the use of direct mail to alert their constituency to particular issues.⁷⁸ In the early 1980s, somewhere between six and fifteen million people listened to Jerry Falwell's *Old-Time Gospel Hour*.⁷⁹ The *Moral Majority Report* "reached 840,000 homes, and its daily commentary was carried by upwards of three hundred radio stations."⁸⁰ By 1987, "religious broadcasting was a

\$2 billion a year industry, and religious broadcasters controlled more than 1,000 full-time Christian radio stations and more than 200 full-time Christian TV stations."⁸¹ According to a Religious Activist Survey conducted by four political scientists in 1990, ordinary evangelicals were more likely to get political news from direct mail, religious TV, and religious radio than from public media such as "network TV, secular radio news, newspapers, news magazines, and opinion journals."⁸²

The Christian Right's masterful use of media fostered "issue consistency, a certain militancy, and a sense of political direction" among evangelicals during the 1980s.⁸³ The Religious Activist Survey found that conservative evangelicals in 1990 "possess[ed] greater enthusiasm for political combat" than liberal Christians.⁸⁴ Historian David Watt attributed this political energy to the politicization of family life during this period. "If you have staked your hopes on your family, if you are convinced that your family is in peril, and if you conclude that your government's actions are what imperil it, then your private hopes can, paradoxically, push you into political action."⁸⁵

The Equal Rights Amendment

Whether or not evangelicals tuned in regularly to Jerry Falwell or contributed to the Moral Majority, the politicization of family life and the fierce rhetoric of the Christian Right compelled ordinary evangelicals to reflect consciously on family life. This was especially evident in the Christian Right's campaign against the ERA. According to Beverly LaHaye, prior to the work of Concerned Women for America, "The average Christian woman didn't know what was happening. We were concentrating on raising our families and working in our churches. We didn't know what the ERA stood for; we didn't know what NOW [National Organization for Women] was doing."⁸⁶ Phyllis Schlafly's "STOP ERA" campaign had been remarkably successful in stalling the ratification of the amendment during the early 1970s, but it was not until the Christian Right began using religious media to broadcast its pro-family message during the early 1980s that the majority of evangelicals across the country began to reflect consciously on the politicization of family life.

The Christian Right's campaign against the ERA during the early 1980s brought the issue of gender to political center stage. If evangelicals had been previously uninterested in feminism or unbothered by it, they suddenly found that their opinion on gender mattered politically. Furthermore, evangelicals were told that, by taking a political stand against the feminist view of gender, they could help save the American family from destruction. LaHaye told evangelicals that the

ERA was “the one piece of legislation that would do more to destroy the traditional family in this country than any other.”⁸⁷ In *Listen, America!*, Jerry Falwell said the ERA was “not merely a political issue, but a moral issue as well.” He went on to say that the ERA was “a definite violation of holy Scripture [for it] . . . defies the mandate that ‘the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church’ (Ep. 5:23).”⁸⁸

The Christian Right’s campaign against the ERA made it politically expedient to assert one’s support for male headship over and against a feminist paradigm of the family. The choice facing evangelicals in this period was a black-and-white choice: would they support the androgyny of the feminist vision of gender, or would they support the headship of the biblical vision of gender? As Brigitte Berger and Peter Berger noted in 1983, “the politicization of issues tends to polarize and to do away with nuances.”⁸⁹ Even after the defeat of the ERA in 1982, Concerned Women for America continued to assert a polarized view of gender:

Feminists want more than equality. They want *sameness*. To say that women are the same as men is dangerous, non-Biblical, and anti-woman. To enforce such an ideology would require denial of basic natural aspects of womanhood. We know that God created men and women equal. Thankfully, He also created us to be different in role. That does not make us different in rank. The ERA proposes the elimination of our God-given roles as men and women, resulting in the redefinition—and eventual destruction—of family.⁹⁰

Headship Redefined: The Divergence between Rhetoric and Practice

The Christian Right’s insistence on the distinct, God-given roles of men and women resembled pronouncements made earlier in the twentieth century.⁹¹ However, by the late 1980s, these pronouncements were increasingly at odds with the beliefs of the majority of Americans. In the late 1970s, a full “76 percent of Americans believed that it was better for the man to work outside the home and for the woman to focus on the care of the home and family.” Thus, evangelical endorsement of this division of labor was not unique. By 1993, however, “only 37 percent of Americans” advocated the male-breadwinner, female-housewife division of labor.⁹² This meant that, during the 1980s and early 1990s, a huge shift occurred in gender

ideals. Americans increasingly adopted the flexible position on gender roles advocated by feminists since the early 1960s. Even among conservative evangelicals, the separate spheres model of family life began to crumble.⁹³ For many people, this was simply the result of the economic necessity of dual-income homes. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, "From 1975 to 2000, the labor force participation rate of mothers with children under age 18 rose from 47 percent to 73 percent."⁹⁴ A study conducted by the Barna Research Group in 1990 confirmed this trend for the evangelical community. A full 84 percent of evangelical Christians agreed with the statement: "These days, women have to work to make ends meet."⁹⁵

Given the changing demographics of American households, it would have made sense for evangelicals in the late 1980s and 1990s simply to embrace the egalitarian model of family proposed by evangelical feminists in the 1970s. That they did not do this was, in part, due to other theological trends in conservative churches at the time. In 1978, two hundred prominent evangelicals pledged their support of biblical inerrancy by signing the "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy."⁹⁶ Supporting biblical inerrancy became a litmus test of orthodoxy for evangelicals during this period. And for many evangelicals, questioning the seemingly straightforward words of scripture regarding gender roles seemed to be dangerously close to questioning the inerrancy of scripture.⁹⁷

During the 1980s and 1990s, there was also a resurgence of evangelical interest in Calvinism.⁹⁸ This was especially true within the Southern Baptist Convention.⁹⁹ Calvinist commitment to the sovereignty and order of God reinforced evangelical commitment to male headship. Calvinists did not consider gender roles to be socially conditioned. They saw gender roles as part of the original structure of God's creation.¹⁰⁰ As Dallas Theological Seminary professor A. Duane Litfin wrote in 1979, "God is the source . . . of all authority. . . . That the universe should be ordered around a series of over/under hierarchical relationships is His idea, a part of His original design."¹⁰¹ Because of their emphasis on human depravity, many Calvinists considered the rejection of male headship to be a rejection of God's authority and an expression of sin.¹⁰²

Calvinism and commitment to biblical inerrancy reinforced evangelical belief in male headship, but a shifting understanding of headship itself also contributed to the solidification of male headship in evangelical identity. During the 1980s and 1990s, evangelical elites began to incorporate egalitarian language and values into their pronouncements for male headship. Phrases like "servant leadership" became a popular way of distinguishing male *headship* from "autocratic,

dictatorial, and potentially abusive" male *domination*.¹⁰³ Robert Lewis and William Hendricks, for example, sought to entice egalitarian-oriented readers by saying,

Now if you hold to a more egalitarian position . . . you may jump to the conclusion that I'm just a chauvinist advocating the oppression of women through a hierarchical model of male dominance. Nothing could be further from the truth. . . . Wives, are you afraid that if your husband is the 'leader,' he'll dominate you? . . . Too many homes, including Christian ones, have degenerated into this style of leadership. . . . But that kind of leadership totally contradicts biblical teaching. . . . The kind of leadership Jesus defines for His followers has to do with: *Responsibility*, not privilege. *Service*, not being served. *Support*, not superiority.¹⁰⁴

Similarly, James Dobson encouraged husbands to lead with "loving authority" rather than what he called "nineteenth-century authoritarianism."¹⁰⁵

The softer headship language appealed to evangelicals who were struggling to fit their changing experiences of gender roles with their commitment to biblical authority. By rooting headship less in economic provision and more in responsibility and "servant leadership," evangelicals were able to be faithful to biblical authority while also developing a functional family life. As Sally Gallagher noted in her 2003 study of evangelical family life,

headship plays a strategically important yet largely symbolic role in the lives of ordinary evangelicals. While husbands retain the status of head of the household, the roles of evangelical men and women in decision making, parenting, and employment demonstrate that, for the most part, evangelical family life reflects the pragmatic egalitarianism of biblical feminists while retaining the symbolic hierarchy of gender-essentialist evangelicals.¹⁰⁶

Evangelicals during this period continued to assert the complementary, God-given identity of husbands and wives.¹⁰⁷ When asked about gender roles, most evangelicals said things like: "I don't think you would need a husband and a wife if they were going to be the same person or have the same role. There is a reason you need both. There are specific things each are called to."¹⁰⁸ Unlike earlier generations of evangelicals, however, the understanding of what constituted men's and women's roles had changed significantly. With women taking a more active role in financial provision for the family, male headship became essentially about men taking a more active role in family life.

In his study of evangelicals in the late 1990s, Christian Smith found that, for most evangelicals, headship was about “burdens of responsibility, accountability, and sacrifice.”¹⁰⁹ As one evangelical man said, “Being the head doesn’t mean that you’re a ruler or something. It’s more of a responsibility.”¹¹⁰

Both Smith and Wilcox have argued that evangelical understanding of headship as familial responsibility served to domesticate evangelical men during the 1990s.¹¹¹ In his 2004 study of Christian men, Wilcox found that, although evangelical homes had “a more unequal division of household labor than nonevangelical homes,” evangelical men were more involved in parenting and what he called the “emotion work” of marriage. This led him to conclude, “The soft patriarchs found in evangelical Protestantism come closer to approximating the iconic new man than either mainline or unaffiliated men do.”¹¹² In short, there was a considerable divergence between evangelical rhetoric and practice during the 1990s and 2000s. Although evangelicals continued to profess belief in male headship, the actual working out of that doctrine in evangelical households differed significantly from earlier decades.¹¹³

Gay Marriage

As evangelicals in the 1990s altered their understanding of headship to fit new domestic arrangements, a political issue arose that further helped to cement male headship in evangelical identity. In the 1970s and 1980s, evangelicals had fiercely opposed the ERA, and that issue had reinforced their commitment to male headship. In the 1990s and 2000s, evangelical opposition to gay rights, particularly gay marriage, reinforced their commitment to headship. James Dobson played a key role in the Christian Right’s campaign against gay rights. In 1992, “Dobson joined an effort to promote an amendment to the Colorado state constitution that would prohibit the passage of gay rights laws.”¹¹⁴ Because of his involvement, the measure passed.¹¹⁵ In 1995, Dobson denounced the imminent United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, calling it part of “the most radical, atheistic, and anti-family crusade in the history of the world.”¹¹⁶ He told his supporters that “homosexual and lesbian rights [were] central to the philosophy driving the conference.”¹¹⁷ He urged them to do what they could to express their displeasure:

Call local talk shows. Call national talk shows. Call your Christian radio station. Write letters to the editors of your hometown newspaper. Write to secular and Christian

magazines. Inform your pastor and ask him to mobilize your church. Post messages on computer bulletin boards. Let your voices be heard.¹¹⁸

A few years later, as the Christian Right was discussing the merits and risks of pushing for a federal marriage amendment, Dobson came out strongly in favor of the amendment.¹¹⁹ And when Massachusetts granted marriage to gay couples in 2004, Dobson led “the campaigns to pass state constitutional amendments barring gay marriage through ballot initiatives.”¹²⁰ According to Dan Gilgoff, these campaigns “gave in-the-pew evangelicals and fundamentalists vehicles for channeling their outrage at Massachusetts into action.”¹²¹ By the end of 2004, thirteen states had banned gay marriage through amendments to their state constitutions.

Gay marriage, like the ERA, struck at the heart of evangelical convictions about family. The fact that it was James Dobson who almost single-handedly galvanized evangelical political action around this issue in 2004 is significant.¹²² It helps to show how a male headship model of family motivated evangelical political opposition to gay marriage and how that political opposition in turn reinforced belief in male headship. In his 1980 bestseller, *Straight Talk to Men and their Wives*, Dobson declared his support of the male headship model of family:

God has charged men with the responsibility for providing leadership in their homes and families: leadership in the form of loving authority; leadership in the form of financial management; leadership in the form of spiritual training; and leadership in maintaining the marital relationship.¹²³

Dobson blamed feminism for destroying the headship model of the family by degrading women’s work in the home, enticing women to work outside the home, and minimizing the differences between men and women. He argued that, by putting men and women into a state of confusion about their sexual identity, feminism was threatening to destroy society itself: “We are sexual beings, and everything that we value is influenced by that aspect of our psychobiology. Whenever that basic nature is tampered with, the stability of society itself is threatened.”¹²⁴ Dobson’s prescription for restoring the stability of society was for men and women to honor their God-given sexual differences:

We *must* not abandon the Biblical concept of masculinity and femininity at this delicate stage of our national history. Not that every woman must become a mother, mind you, or even

a homemaker. But those who *do* must be honored and respected and supported. There should be a clear delineation between maleness and femaleness, exemplified by clothing, customs, and function. Children . . . should be taught that the sexes are equal in worth, but very different from one another. Girls should know they are girls and boys should know they are boys.¹²⁵

Dobson knew that growing numbers of evangelical women were entering the workforce. Stories in *Focus on the Family's* magazine followed some of these women and took a far less dogmatic tone than did Dobson himself. These stories did not depict working women as being duped by feminism. They did not accuse women of abandoning their home responsibilities. In a 1983 article, Konny Thompson, a working mother of a nine-month-old, simply shared about the ups and downs of being a working mother. She claimed to have had "some feelings of resentment toward my job—that eight-hour chunk of time interrupting our family life. Some days I felt cheated, as I was jealous of friends who were able to stay home with their kids." But she also said, "Other times I was glad to be involved in the working world. I welcomed the intelligent conversation of adults."¹²⁶ At the bottom of the page, the magazine included a note from Dobson: "It would be presumptuous for any family specialist, particularly a man, to tell the women of America how to live their lives. The decision to have a career or be a homemaker is an intensely personal choice that can only be made by a woman and her husband."¹²⁷ An article in *Focus on the Family* in 1990 followed five mothers, each of whom represented a different arrangement of work and family.¹²⁸ Articles like these led historian Colleen McDannell to conclude in 2002, "What is abundantly clear from *Focus on the Family* publications is not that women should submit to God, their families, and their husbands but that women should create intense and stable relationships with these significant entities."¹²⁹

Despite the more measured message on work-family balance in *Focus on the Family* in the 1980s and 1990s, Dobson himself did not abandon his preference for the male-breadwinner, female-housewife model of family. He recognized that not all women would want to or be able to stay home with their children, yet he continued to keep the male-breadwinner, female-housewife model of family as his default in subsequent editions of *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives*, which sold over one million copies between 1980 and 2004.¹³⁰ Along with other conservative evangelicals, in the 1980s and 1990s, Dobson also continued to stress the complementary nature of men and women, saying things such as, "Men derive self-esteem by being respected;

women feel worthy when they are loved."¹³¹ He placed great weight on the idea that women were responsible for domesticating men, reigning in their aggressive tendencies and sexual urges and, thus, preserving the stability of society.¹³²

It takes no stretch of the imagination to see why Dobson opposed gay marriage. Not only did he believe the Bible called homosexuality a sin, he also believed the flourishing of society depended on men and women holding complementary roles within a committed, marital relationship. It is perhaps slightly more difficult to see how Dobson's opposition to gay marriage renewed his commitment to male headship in heterosexual marriage, but that is precisely what occurred. After Massachusetts granted marriage to gay couples in 2004, Dobson published two books, a new edition of *Straight Talk* and a book dedicated entirely to the issue of gay marriage, *Marriage under Fire: Why We Must Win This War*. In the new edition of *Straight Talk*, Dobson moved the chapter on "A Man and a Woman and Their Sexual Identity" from the end of the book (chapter 12) to the front of the book (chapter 2). In the first edition of *Straight Talk*, a feminist vision of gender had been his primary foil, but, by 2004, gay marriage, specifically the marriage of gay men, was his primary foil. Although he never explicitly mentioned gay marriage, it clearly formed the context for his revision of the text.

In addition to moving the chapter on sexual identity to the front of the book, Dobson also renamed it simply "A Man and His Sexual Identity." He also changed the title of the entire book. Instead of *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives*, he called it *Straight Talk to Men: Timeless Principles for Leading Your Family*. The removal of the reverence to women and wives in these two instances suggests that feminism was no longer the primary context for his writing. In the earlier edition of *Straight Talk*, the context of feminism was evidenced by statements such as: "Children . . . should be taught that the sexes are equal in worth, but very different from one another."¹³³ In the 2004 edition, the reader's awareness of gay marriage was implied in statements like: "The first element of self-identity as toddlers comes from our identification as boys and girls. Any confusion at that point . . . or in the relationship between the sexes . . . must be seen as threatening to the stability of society, itself."¹³⁴ There is no specific reference to homosexuality in this statement, but the reference to sexual identity of toddlers suggests that gay marriage was in the forefront of Dobson's mind when he wrote. He noted as much in his November 2004 newsletter to supporters of Focus on the Family: "The wrong-headed notion that children can thrive in a same-sex family (i.e., an environment in which they are intentionally robbed

of either a mother or father) is just one more way that our culture is diminishing the natural, innate differences between the sexes and leaving boys confused about their masculinity."¹³⁵

The way in which opposition to gay marriage renewed commitment to male headship is more obvious in *Marriage under Fire*. Dobson opened the book with a vision of marriage centered on the differences of men and women and their need for each other. He wrote that men and women "are specifically designed to 'fit' together, both physically and emotionally, and neither is entirely comfortable without the other."¹³⁶ He then repeated his argument about the stability of society resting on male-female relationships:

A man is dependent for stability and direction on what he derives from a woman, which is why the bonding that occurs between the sexes is so important to society at large. Successful marriages serve to 'civilize' and domesticate masculinity. . . . Conversely, a woman typically has deep longings that can only be satisfied through a romantic, long-term relationship with a man. Her self-esteem, contentment, and fulfillment are typically derived from intimacy, heart-to-heart, in marriage.¹³⁷

Dobson then described men's rationality and need for respect and women's emotionality and need for love.¹³⁸ He said these differences "cannot be explained by cultural influences that are learned in childhood, as some would have us believe."¹³⁹ Rather, they are "deeply rooted in the human personality." Dobson said this observation "was confirmed for me time and again in my professional work as a psychologist, where those same patterns were evident in couples with whom I was working." He took this to mean, "There was clearly a divine plan in human nature that suited men and women for one another."¹⁴⁰ There is no specific reference to the husband being "the head of the wife" in *Marriage under Fire*, but the message about male headship is certainly present, namely that men and women have been designed by God with different and complementary roles.

The headship vision of marriage dominates the first chapter of *Marriage under Fire*. In chapter three Dobson describes the specific risks of allowing gay marriage. In chapter five, he tells readers to "contact your senators. . . . Register to Vote. . . . Put up lawn signs and distribute bumper stickers proclaiming the sanctity of marriage."¹⁴¹ Someone sitting down to read *Marriage under Fire* in 2004 might have taken Dobson's advice about how to take political action against gay marriage. He or she might have contacted a senator, registered to vote, or

attached a bumper sticker to the family minivan. But he or she was just as likely, if not more, simply to look critically at his or her own marriage. In fact, Dobson urged readers to do just that:

The battle begins today, right now, under your own roof. If you have children, if you are married, or if you hope to marry, then while you are defending the cultural institutions of marriage and family, don't forget to defend and nurture *your own* marriage and family... For all the strategies we have discussed for preserving marriage and the American family, perhaps our first and best defense of these cherished and vital institutions is to model healthy marriages and families for all the world to see.¹⁴²

Prior to his political activism around the issue of gay marriage, Dobson had taken "pains to insulate himself and his ministry from partisan politics."¹⁴³ He had maintained his insistence on being apolitical into the late 1980s, when he told a reporter, "We never talk about anything but the family. We never endorse a political candidate."¹⁴⁴ But the possibility and then reality of legal marriage for gays and lesbians propelled Dobson into political activism. Gilgoff has argued that Dobson's hesitancy to be political actually made him the most politically powerful evangelical of the last thirty years.¹⁴⁵ When he has chosen to advocate a political position, people have trusted him precisely because they view him as standing outside of the political arena. This is exactly what happened with the issue of gay marriage. As the "six to ten million weekly listeners" of Dobson's radio show heard him decry the endorsement of gay marriage in Massachusetts, many of them were galvanized for action.¹⁴⁶ In April 2004, several thousand people in San Jose and San Francisco gathered to express their opposition to gay marriage.¹⁴⁷ In May, twenty thousand people gathered in Seattle to express their opposition.¹⁴⁸ And, in November, 78 percent of evangelicals voted for Bush.¹⁴⁹ When Gilgoff interviewed Dobson immediately after the election, Dobson "laid out an ultimatum for the president and his Republican allies in Congress: They had 'four years to deliver' on issues like curbing abortion rights and passing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to ban gay marriage. If they failed, Dobson said, millions of evangelicals would stay home in the next presidential election."¹⁵⁰

Just as in the case of the ERA, even those evangelicals who were not galvanized for political action were affected by the culture war against gay marriage. In the 1970s and 1980s, evangelicals had been told that the ERA was the means by which feminists were seeking to destroy the family. Similarly, in the 1990s and 2000s, they were

told that gay marriage was the means by which gays were seeking to destroy the family. "Homosexuality has become the cause du jour of those who seek to undermine the family," wrote Dobson in 2000.¹⁵¹ "The legalization of homosexual marriage is for gay activists merely a stepping-stone on the road to eliminating *all* societal restrictions on marriage and sexuality," he warned in a Focus on the Family newsletter in 2003.¹⁵² In his April 2004 newsletter, he spoke of the "thousands of unlawfully 'married' gays and lesbians [who were] fanning out across the nation, preparing civil rights suits and demanding recognition by the courts."¹⁵³ He warned his supporters, "There can be little doubt that the U.S. Supreme Court will soon 'find' a provision in the Constitution that guarantees homosexual marriage. If the people accept that decision passively, the issue will never be in question again. The institution of the family will have been destroyed." In his November 2004 newsletter, Dobson was particularly concerned about the way in which the media and gay activists were targeting children:

Invariably, sitcoms today feature at least one gay or lesbian character, who is cast in a sympathetic role. It is a powerful force in the culture. One overriding goal of homosexual activists is to influence the next generation and to recruit children to their movement, if not to their lifestyle.¹⁵⁴

Dobson's dire warning about gay activists seeking to destroy the family was especially strong in *Marriage under Fire*:

For nearly sixty years, the homosexual activist movement and related entities have been working to implement a master plan that has had as its centerpiece the utter destruction of the family. . . . The movement has become a tsunami—a tidal wave that threatens to overwhelm anyone who stands in its way. I do not recall a time when the institution of marriage faced such danger, or when the forces arrayed against it were more formidable or determined.¹⁵⁵

Just as the campaign against the ERA made it politically expedient to choose male headship over a feminist paradigm of family, so the campaign against gay marriage has made it politically expedient to choose headship over a gay paradigm of family. In both cases, even for those evangelicals who have not been motivated to attend rallies or put a bumper sticker on their car, the campaigns against the ERA and gay marriage have made them aware of the very real presence of different models of family in American society. This awareness has enhanced commitment to the headship model of marriage.

Conclusion: The Importance of Gender Ideology to Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism

Male headship became central to evangelical identity in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s as the Christian Right led campaigns against the ERA and gay marriage. Belief in male headship became such an important part of evangelical identity that sociologist Sally Gallagher argued, in 2003, that the most important evangelical beliefs are: Jesus, the Bible, the heart, community, marriage, and *the husband's headship within marriage*.¹⁵⁶ Considering Gallagher's own conclusion that the majority of evangelicals actually practice a form of "pragmatic egalitarianism," her assertion of headship as a key evangelical belief was perhaps a bit zealous. Still, sociologists such as Gallagher, Smith, and Wilcox are to be commended for giving attention to gender ideology in their analysis of evangelical identity. Most theologians and historians have been far less willing to embrace gender ideology in their characterizations of twentieth-century evangelicalism.¹⁵⁷

Might it be time for historians to include some reference to gender ideology in their standard definitions of twentieth-century American evangelicalism? Betty DeBerg and Margaret Bendroth have shown how important gender ideology was to evangelical identity in the first half of the twentieth century. This article has shown how important it was at the end of the century. David Bebbington warned, in 1994, that adding further characteristics to the standard four-fold definition (biblicism, crucicentrism, conversion, and activism), which he coined in 1989, risked "excluding groups that properly belong" to the evangelical family.¹⁵⁸ Adding "belief in male headship" to the definition of evangelicalism would exclude many nineteenth- and twentieth-century evangelicals who have resisted using the language of headship. Moreover, most evangelicals would not say that headship is as central to their identity as allegiance to the Bible and the cross. Thus, it does not make sense to modify Bebbington's formulation. However, as historians seek to characterize twentieth-century American evangelicalism, they would do well to acknowledge the central role that gender ideology has played in defining this particular era of evangelicalism.¹⁵⁹

Gay marriage remains an important political issue in the twenty-first century. As such, it will likely continue to reinforce commitment to male headship among some evangelicals. Proponents of headship, whether "soft patriarchs" like James Dobson or "hard patriarchs" like Mark Driscoll, will continue to argue that God has designed men and women with different and complementary roles for the flourishing of family life. They will continue to point to male headship as

a way of honoring God, improving individual family life, and contributing to the stability of the nation.¹⁶⁰

While it is fairly clear that gender ideology will be important to twenty-first century evangelicals, it is less clear whether the majority of evangelicals will continue to subscribe to the gender roles that Driscoll and Dobson endorse. Rachel Held Evans, an evangelical author and blogger who subscribes to an egalitarian view of gender, commands an impressive following on her blog, where she often discusses issues of faith and sexuality.¹⁶¹ Many of the bloggers at *hermeneutics*, an online magazine hosted by the conservative Christian magazine *Christianity Today*, also express an egalitarian approach to gender.¹⁶² And as the debate about gay marriage wages on, surveys show that support for gay marriage is growing among evangelicals. While only 11 percent of evangelicals supported gay marriage in 2004, in 2013, the number rose to 24 percent.¹⁶³ Among “white evangelical Protestants under the age of 35,” 51 percent have expressed support of same-sex marriage.¹⁶⁴

The 1970s were a fluid time for evangelical gender ideology, and it appears that the present is another such time. Evangelical opinion only coalesced around commitment to male headship in the 1980s as the Christian Right led campaigns against the ERA. Opposition to gay marriage during the 1990s and 2000s helped to solidify evangelical commitment to headship. Might growing evangelical support of gay marriage now help to unravel commitment to headship? It may well be that those who support gay marriage will simply get frustrated and leave the church. As Evans comments on her blog, “One of the top reasons 59 percent of young adults with a Christian background have left the church is because they perceive the church to be too exclusive, particularly regarding their LGBT friends. Eight million twenty-somethings have left the church, and this is one reason why.”¹⁶⁵ Nonetheless, leaving the church has never been a satisfactory option for the majority of evangelical feminists over the last forty years. They have preferred to stay and fight, and some believe they are now finally beginning to see real change on the horizon.¹⁶⁶

Notes

1. Mark and Grace Driscoll’s responses to this question can be viewed on YouTube, accessed May 17, 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WPVxndUcHQ>.

2. Collin Hansen, “Pastor Provocateur,” *Christianity Today*, September 2007, 48–49.

3. Mark Driscoll and Grace Driscoll, *Real Marriage: The Truth about Sex, Friendship, and Life Together* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012). For criticism, see David Sessions, "Mark Driscoll's Sex Manual 'Real Marriage' Scandalizes Evangelicals," *Daily Beast*, January 13, 2012, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/01/13/mark-driscoll-sex-manual-real-marriage-scandalizes-evangelicals.html>.

4. The 14,000 people meet "weekly across 14 locations in four states, Washington, Oregon, California, and New Mexico." "About Mark," Mars Hill Church, accessed May 17, 2012, <http://marshill.com/pastors/mark-driscoll>.

5. "Mars Hill has been recognized as the 54th largest, 30th fastest-growing, and second most-innovative church in the country by Outreach magazine. Pastor Mark is the co-founder of the Acts 29 church-planting network, which has planted over 400 churches in the U.S., in addition to 13 other nations. He founded the Resurgence, which services Christian leaders through books, blog posts, conferences, and classes, with theResurgence.com receiving close to 7 million visits annually." In addition, Driscoll is "regularly #1 on iTunes for Religion & Spirituality" and "in the Top 50 of all podcasts, with about 10 million sermons listened to and watched each year." Mars Hill Church, "About Mark," accessed May 17, 2012, <http://marshill.com/pastors/mark-driscoll>.

6. Sally K. Gallagher, "The Marginalization of Evangelical Feminism," *Sociology of Religion* 65, no. 3 (2004): 217, 229. Although the Religious Identity and Influence Survey was conducted in the late 1990s, there is good reason to believe that evangelical belief in headship is still alive and well. For example, Driscoll's marriage book, which affirms male headship, "just cracked Amazon's top 50" in January 2012 (Sessions, "Mark Driscoll's Sex Manual 'Real Marriage' Scandalizes Evangelicals"). The large Acts 29 church-planting network, which has planted some 400 churches, includes male headship on its doctrinal statement ("We are not egalitarians and do believe that men should head their homes and male elders/pastors should lead their churches with masculine love like Jesus Christ." Acts 29 Network, "Doctrine: What do Acts 29 churches not believe?" accessed May 17, 2012, <http://www.acts29network.org/about/doctrine/>). It appears that churches such as Driscoll's Mars Hill grow because of, not in spite of, their position on gender (Hansen, "Pastor Provocateur"). Books by prominent evangelicals continue to assert male headship: Driscoll and Driscoll, *Real Marriage*; Timothy Keller and Kathy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* (New York: Dutton, 2011); Suzanne Venker and Phyllis Schlafly, *Flipside of Feminism: What*

Conservative Women Know—and Men Can't Say (Washington, D.C.: WND Books, 2011); Allan C. Carlson and Paul T. Mero, *The Natural Family: A Manifesto* (Dallas: Spence Publishing, 2007); John MacArthur, *Divine Design: God's Complementary Roles for Men and Women* (Colorado Springs: Cook Communication Ministries, 2006); Mary A. Kassian, *The Feminist Mistake: The Radical Impact of Feminism on Church and Culture* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2005); and Wayne A. Grudem, ed., *Biblical Foundations for Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2002).

7. Sally K. Gallagher, *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 84.

8. When questioned about his commitment to male headship, Driscoll points to passages such as Titus 2, 1 Timothy 5:8, and Ephesians 5:23, which says the husband is “the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church.” Evangelicals like Driscoll, who hold tenaciously to a belief in the inerrant Bible, say these Pauline passages are why they continue to assert male headship. However, as Christian Smith has shown, there are several inconsistencies with the evangelical belief in biblical inerrancy. First, evangelicals do not always do everything the Bible commands (*The Bible Made Impossible* [Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2011], 68). Why have evangelicals latched onto headship instead of the command to greet each other with a holy kiss, which is mentioned in several New Testament texts (Rom. 16:16, 1 Cor. 16:20, 2 Cor. 13:12, 1 Thess. 5:26; 1 Pet. 5:14)? A second and, according to Smith, more fundamental problem with the claim about inerrancy is that “the very same Bible—which biblicalists insist is perspicuous and harmonious—gives rise to divergent understandings among intelligent, sincere, committed readers about what it says about most topics of interest” (*The Bible Made Impossible*, 17). When it comes to the passages on gender, some evangelicals, since at least the 1830s, have developed “feminist” interpretations of the text. In 1836, Angelina Grimké published her *Appeal to the Christian Women of the South*, and, in 1838, Sarah Grimké published *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes*. For “hints of a more egalitarian perspective” throughout the two thousand years of church history, see Gallagher, “The Marginalization of Evangelical Feminism,” 219ff.

9. Mark Chaves, *Ordaining Women: Culture and Conflict in Religious Organizations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Gallagher, “The Marginalization of Evangelical Feminism”; Gallagher, *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life*; Sally K. Gallagher and Christian Smith, “Symbolic Traditionalism and Pragmatic Egalitarianism: Contemporary Evangelicals, Families, and Gender,” *Gender and Society* 13, no. 2 (1999);

and W. Bradford Wilcox, *Soft Patriarchs, New Men: How Christianity Shapes Fathers and Husbands* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

10. Ammerman and Brusco have argued that women embrace a headship model of family in order to improve their marriages. Bendroth, DeBerg, and Gallagher have argued that headship gives evangelicals a sense of order in the midst of chaotic cultural change. Smith and Gallagher have given many explanations for evangelical belief in headship, but one of the most interesting is the argument that headship “blunts some of the harsher effects of living in a materially rich, but time poor culture, by defusing an area of potential conflict.” See Nancy Tatom Ammerman, *Bible Believers: Fundamentalists in the Modern World* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1987), 229; Elizabeth E. Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995); Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender, 1875 to the Present* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Betty A. DeBerg, *Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990); Gallagher, *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life*; and Gallagher and Smith, “Symbolic Traditionalism and Pragmatic Egalitarianism.”

11. DeBerg, *Ungodly Women*, 126–27.

12. Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 98–100.

13. *Ibid.*, 98–99.

14. *Ibid.*, 112.

15. Wilcox, *Soft Patriarchs, New Men*, 10, chap. 2.

16. David R. Swartz, “Identity Politics and the Fragmenting of the 1970s Evangelical Left,” *Religion and American Culture*, 21 (Winter 2011): 97.

17. Elisabeth Elliot Leitch, “Feminism or Femininity?” *Cambridge Fish* 5 (Winter 1975–76): 6.

18. See, for example, Jill Renich, *To Have and to Hold* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972); Timothy Foster, *Dare to Lead* (Glendale, Calif: G/L Publications, 1977); and James C. Dobson, *What Wives Wish their Husbands Knew about Women* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1975). For an especially conservative evangelical perspective, see Judith M. Miles, *The Feminine Principle* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1975). Miles argued that “the most simple principle of the true feminine nature” was to give pleasure. Her book described the duties of “woman as pleasure-giver, primarily to men, but also to other women and to children” (14).

19. Bill Gothard, *Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts* (Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts, 1979), 25.
20. Marabel Morgan, *Ohio History Central: An Online Encyclopedia of Ohio History*, accessed December 6, 2011, <http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org/entry.php?rec=1767>.
21. "In the 1920s, the devil was Darwin. From the 1930s to the 1960s, it was communism." D. Michael Lindsay, *Faith in the Halls of Power: How Evangelicals Joined the American Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 52.
22. Randall Balmer, *Blessed Assurance: A History of Evangelicalism in America* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1999), 88.
23. Dobson, *What Wives Wish their Husbands Knew About Women*, 25.
24. Rebecca L. Davis, *More Perfect Unions: The American Search for Marital Bliss* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 177–78.
25. Donald G. Mathews and Jane Sherron De Hart, *Sex, Gender, and the Politics of ERA* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 162.
26. Roberta W. Francis, "The History behind the Equal Rights Amendment," accessed May 17, 2012, <<http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/era.htm>>; Mathews and De Hart, *Sex, Gender, and the Politics of ERA*, chap. 3.
27. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 78.
28. Julie Ingersoll, *Evangelical Christian Women: War Stories in the Gender Battles* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 22.
29. See Letha Scanzoni and Nancy Hardesty, *All We're Meant to Be: A Biblical Approach to Women's Liberation* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1974); and Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1975).
30. Relationship Resource Group, "The History of the Relationship Resource Group," accessed May 17, 2012, <http://www.betterrelationships.com/about/history.html>.
31. Continental Congress on the Family Congress Guide, 17, John Petersen residence, Berkeley Springs, West Virginia.
32. "Welcome to the Continental Congress on the Family," Continental Congress on the Family Congress Guide, 6.

33. Dobson's action seminar was entitled "Self-Image and Family Success," Continental Congress on the Family Congress Guide, 19.

34. John Scanzoni and Letha Scanzoni, "A Christian View of Men's and Women's Roles in a Changing World (St. Louis: Family '76, Inc., 1976), 2.

35. John G. Turner, *Bill Bright and Campus Crusade for Christ: The Renewal of Evangelicalism in Postwar America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 155.

36. Diane Petersen, telephone conversation with author, September 26, 2013.

37. John Peterson, email to author, October 8, 2013, "Affirmation on the Family," John Peterson residence, Berkeley Springs, West Virginia.

38. Carol Prester McFadden, "Christian Feminists: 'We're on Our Way, Lord!'" *Christianity Today*, December 19, 1975, 36–37.

39. David Harrington Watt, *A Transforming Faith: Explorations of Twentieth-Century American Evangelicalism* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 108–9.

40. Wilcox, *Soft Patriarchs, New Men*, 60. However, Sally Gallagher has argued that, "until recently, gender conservatives have occupied more (and more prestigious) faculty positions in major seminaries and institutions across the country." Gallagher, "The Marginalization of Evangelical Feminism," 232.

41. Richard Quebedeaux, *The Young Evangelicals: Revolution in Orthodoxy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), 114.

42. Swartz, "Identity Politics and the Fragmenting of the 1970s Evangelical Left," 83.

43. William Martin, *With God on Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America* (New York: Broadway Books, 1996), 163.

44. *Ibid*, 165.

45. *Ibid*, 164.

46. James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

47. Jimmy Carter, "Los Angeles, California—Remarks during a Televised Question-and-Answer Session with Area Residents," May 17, 1977, posted online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The*

American Presidency Project, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7521>; Jimmy Carter, "Yatesville, Pennsylvania, Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at a Town Meeting," October 15, 1980, posted online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=45302>.

48. Jimmy Carter, "Elk City, Oklahoma, Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at a Town Meeting," March 24, 1979, posted online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=32097>.

49. Ibid.

50. Robert S. Havely to Jean O'Leary, October 4, 1976, Records of the Office of the Assistant for Public Liaison —Margaret Costanza's Subject Files, "Gay Rights: Jimmy Carter's Views on, 10/76," Box 4, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

51. "Jimmy Carter Speaks Out on Gay Rights," Press Release: May 23 (no year), Records of the Office of the Assistant for Public Liaison—Margaret Costanza's Subject Files, "Gay Rights: Jimmy Carter's Views on, 10/76," Box 4, Jimmy Carter Presidential Library.

52. Jimmy Carter, "Conversation with the President, Remarks in an Interview with Tom Brokaw of NBC News, Bob Schieffer of CBS News, Robert MacNeil of the Public Broadcasting Service, and Barbara Walters of ABC News," December 28, 1977, posted online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7072>; Jimmy Carter, "The President's News Conference," July 12, 1977, posted online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7786>.

53. Jimmy Carter, "Proclamation 4590—Women's Equality Day, 1978," August 25, 1978, posted online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=31234>

54. Jimmy Carter, "Ad Hoc Coalition for Women, Remarks to Representatives of Women's Groups," March 10, 1977, posted online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7146>.

55. "Jimmy Carter Speaks Out on Gay Rights."

56. Grant Wacker, "Searching for Norman Rockwell: Popular Evangelicalism in Contemporary America," in *The Evangelical Tradition*

in America, ed. Leonard I. Sweet (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1984), 298–99.

57. Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 176.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., 165

60. James Dobson, “Family News from Dr. James Dobson,” August 1995, obtained from Dr. James Dobson’s Family Talk, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

61. Beverly LaHaye, *Who but a Woman* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984), 46.

62. Unnamed participant quoted in Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 176.

63. Martin, *With God on Our Side*, 177.

64. Ibid., 181.

65. The definition of family had been an explosive topic at the state conventions, so facilitators at the Baltimore regional conferences decided it would not be necessary for the conference to produce an agreed-upon definition of the family. Ibid., 177–82.

66. Ibid., 182–83.

67. Ibid., 184–85.

68. Falwell described Moral Majority as “pro-life, pro-family, pro-moral, and pro-American” (ibid., 201). For a description of the goals of CWA, see LaHaye, *Who but a Woman?*

69. Jerry Falwell, *Listen, America!* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980), 7, 128.

70. Ibid., 128–29.

71. Ibid., 124.

72. Beverly LaHaye, *I Am a Woman by God’s Design* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revel, 1980), chap. 3, chap. 9.

73. Ibid., 21–22.

74. Ibid., 22.

75. Tim LaHaye, *The Battle for the Family* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1982), 170.

76. Ibid., 140–45.

77. Ibid., 28.

78. James L. Guth et al., “Onward Christian Soldiers: Religious Activist Groups in American Politics,” in *Religion and the Culture Wars: Dispatches from the Front*, ed. John C. Green et al. (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996), 80.

79. Quebedeaux put Falwell’s weekly viewership at six million, and LaHaye put it at fifteen. Richard Quebedeaux, *By What Authority: The Rise of Personality Cults in American Christianity* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982), 56; Tim LaHaye, *The Battle for the Mind* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1980), 200.

80. Dan Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine: How James Dobson, Focus on the Family, and Evangelical America Are Winning the Culture War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2007), 82–83.

81. Sara Diamond, *Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right* (Boston: South End Press, 1989), 1.

82. Guth et al., 80.

83. Ibid., 82.

84. Ibid.

85. Watt, *A Transforming Faith*, 91.

86. “An Interview with Beverly LaHaye,” *Fundamentalist Journal*, April 1984, 41, quoted in Kirsten Lynn Isgro, “‘Real Women’ and the Struggle against Spiritual Forces of Darkness: A Transnational Feminist Analysis of Concerned Women for America” (Ph.D. diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2006), 107.

87. LaHaye, *The Battle for the Family*, 140.

88. Falwell, *Listen, America!*, 151.

89. Brigitte Berger and Peter Berger, *The War over the Family: Capturing the Middle Ground* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), 51.

90. Concerned Women for America, “‘Equal Rights’ or Gender Reconstruction?” October 8, 1998, <http://www.cwfa.org/articledisplay.asp?id=1019&department=CWA&categoryid=family>, quoted in Isgro, “‘Real Women’ and the Struggle against Spiritual Forces of Darkness,” 110.

91. See DeBergh, *Ungodly Women*; Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*.

92. Wilcox, *Soft Patriarchs, New Men*, 4.

93. "In the 1970s, 74 percent of conservative Protestants . . . agreed that it is better if 'the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and the family.' Thirty years later, only 49 percent of conservative Protestants . . . held that view." *Ibid.*, 82–83.

94. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Women in the Labor Force: A Databook" (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Labor, 2007), 1.

95. Barna Research Group, *Born Again: A Look at Christians in America* (Glendale, Calif: The Barna Research Group, 1990), 66.

96. "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 21 (December 1978): 289–96.

97. Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 118, 125; Gallagher, "The Marginalization of Evangelical Feminism," 232.

98. Collin Hansen, *Young, Restless, Reformed: A Journalist's Journey with the New Calvinists* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 2008).

99. *Ibid.*, 69–94. According to Steve W. Lemke of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, "Two major factors contributed to the resurgence of Calvinism in the SBC. First, presidents with strong Calvinist commitments were elected to two of the six institutions. Second, most Calvinists hold to a high view of the inspiration and authority of Scripture, and were thus attractive faculty candidates in a denomination in the midst of controversy over the inerrancy of Scripture." Steve W. Lemke, "Evangelical Theology in the Twenty-First Century," speech delivered as the Presidential Address for the 2000 Southwest Regional meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed September 2, 2013, <http://www.nobts.edu/faculty/itor/lemkesw/personal/Evangelical%20Theology.html>.

100. Bendroth, *Fundamentalism and Gender*, 124.

101. A. Duane Litfin, "Evangelical Feminism: Why Traditionalists Reject It," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 136 (July 1979): 267.

102. Hansen, *Young, Restless, Reformed*, 44.

103. John P. Bartkowski, *Remaking the Godly Marriage: Gender Negotiation in Evangelical Families* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 59.

104. Robert Lewis and William Hendricks, *Rocking the Roles: Building a Win-Win Marriage* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: NavPress, 1991), 51–52, emphasis in original.

105. James Dobson, *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1980), 22; James C. Dobson, *Doctor Dobson Answers Your Questions* (Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House, 1986), 409.

106. Gallagher, *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life*, 84.

107. For example, see John Piper and Wayne Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1991).

108. Christian Smith, *Christian America? What Evangelicals Really Want* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 173–74.

109. *Ibid.*, 174.

110. *Ibid.*, 175.

111. *Ibid.*, 175; Wilcox, *Soft Patriarchs, New Men*, 13.

112. Wilcox, *Soft Patriarchs, New Men*, 13.

113. Considering the fact that so many evangelical homes were marked by what Gallagher has called “pragmatic egalitarianism,” it makes sense to ask whether evangelical efforts to adapt to changing gender ideologies during the 1980s and 1990s were really all that different from the efforts of other Americans. The sociological analysis from the period identifies two main ways in which evangelicals *were* different from other Americans: (1) A greater percentage of evangelicals (49 percent, compared to 37 of Americans in general in the early 1990s) continued to assert a male-breadwinner, female-housewife model of family as their *ideal*, even if they did not live up to that ideal in practice, and (2) evangelical fathers did less housework than nonevangelical fathers but were more emotionally engaged with their wives and more “active and expressive with their children” than nonevangelical fathers. See Wilcox, *Soft Patriarchs, New Men*, 4, 13, 82–83.

114. Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine*, 34.

115. *Ibid.*, 35.

116. Dobson, “Family News from Dr. James Dobson.”

117. *Ibid.*

118. *Ibid.*

119. Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine*, 147. See also James C. Dobson, *Marriage under Fire: Why We Must Win This War* (Sisters, Oreg: Multnomah, 2004), 26, 79.

120. Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine*, 174.

121. Ibid.

122. "All but two of the thirteen state amendment campaigns were led by Focus on the Family's state-level Family Policy Councils. And the Arlington Group [a Christian Right coalition in Washington, D.C., to which Dobson belonged] . . . acted as the national coordinating body for the individual state campaigns." Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine*, 174, 11.

123. Dobson, *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives*, 22–23.

124. Ibid., 156.

125. Ibid., 159.

126. Konny Thompson, "Torn between Two Worlds," *Focus on the Family*, May 1983, 13.

127. Ibid.

128. "Motherhood in the '90 s," *Focus on the Family*, January 1990, 2–5.

129. Colleen McDannell, "Beyond Dr. Dobson: Women, Girls, and Focus on the Family," in *Women and Twentieth-Century Protestantism*, ed. Margaret Lamberts Bendroth and Virginia Lieson Brereton (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 126.

130. In a 1991 edition of *Straight Talk*, Dobson wrote, "The primary responsibility for the provision of authority in the home has been assigned to men. It will not be popular to restate the age-old Biblical concept that God holds *men* accountable for leadership in their families. . . . God apparently expects a *man* to be the ultimate decision-maker in his family." James Dobson, *Straight Talk: What Men Need to Know, What Women Should Understand*, revised and expanded edition (Dallas: Word Books, 1991), 92–93.

131. James C. Dobson, *Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions about Marriage and Sexuality* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1982), 67.

132. Dobson, *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives*, 156–57; Dobson, *Dr. Dobson Answers Your Questions about Marriage and Sexuality*, 98–99.

133. Dobson, *Straight Talk to Men and Their Wives*, 159.

134. James C. Dobson, *Straight Talk to Men: Timeless Principles for Leading Your Family* (Sisters, Oreg.: Multnomah, 2004), 29–30, ellipses in the original.

135. James Dobson, "Family News from Dr. James Dobson," November 2004, obtained from Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

136. Dobson, *Marriage under Fire*, 10.

137. *Ibid.*, 11–12.

138. *Ibid.*, 13–15.

139. *Ibid.*, 16.

140. *Ibid.*, 16–17.

141. *Ibid.*, 84.

142. *Ibid.*, 88–89. Christian Smith has also noted the tendency for evangelicals to look inward at their own families. He found that "the majority of evangelicals think about dealing with family breakdown primarily in terms of individual—not political or institutional—influence and change. They want, first, to make sure that their *own* families are strong. . . . When we asked interviewees, 'What should Christians be doing about concerns such as the breakdown of the family?' by far the most common response was to look to their personal commitments to their own families." Smith, *Christian America?*, 166–67.

143. Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine*, 29.

144. Quoted in *ibid.*, 31.

145. See Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine*.

146. *Ibid.*, 7.

147. Putsata Reang, "Two Thousand Evangelicals Rally against Gay Marriage," *San Jose Mercury News*, April 5, 2004, A9; Ulysses Torassa, "Thousands Protest Legalizing Same-Sex Marriage: Asian Americans, Christians Rally in Sunset District," *San Francisco Chronicle*, April 26, 2004, B1.

148. Lornet Turnbull and Patrick Coolican, "Two Sides of Gay-Marriage Debate Face Off at Safeco Field Rally: Event Draws 20,000 People," *Seattle Times*, May 2, 2004, A1.

149. Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine*, 94, 125.

150. *Ibid.*, xii.

151. James C. Dobson, *Dr. James Dobson Discusses America's Choice: Nine Key Issues That Will Shape Our Future* (Colorado Springs, Colo: Focus on the Family, 2000), 6.

152. Gilgoff, *The Jesus Machine*, 147.

153. James Dobson, "Family News from Dr. James Dobson," April 2004, obtained from Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

154. Dobson, "Family News from Dr. James Dobson," November 2004.

155. Dobson, *Marriage under Fire*, 19–21.

156. Gallagher, *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life*, chap. 4, emphasis mine.

157. See, for example, David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge, eds., *The Evangelicals: What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975); David Bebbington, "Evangelicalism in Its Settings: The British and American Movements since 1940," in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700–1990*, ed. Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, and George A. Rawlyk (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnston, eds., *The Variety of American Evangelicalism* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1991). An exception is Wacker, "Searching for Norman Rockwell." One reason for the hesitation to embrace gender ideology may be the desire, expressed by George Marsden in *Fundamentalism and American Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), to represent fundamentalism as "considerably more than gut reactions to cultural change" (240).

158. Bebbington, "Evangelicalism in Its Settings," 367.

159. Balmer, in *Blessed Assurance*, devotes the fifth chapter (out of six) to gender ideology. The chapter opens: "No issue has caused evangelicals more consternation in the second half of the twentieth century than feminism" (71).

160. For example, see Owen Strachan, "The 'Dad Mom' and the 'Man Fail,'" November 2, 2011, accessed August 18, 2013, <http://owenstrachan.com/2011/11/02/the-dad-mom-and-the-man-fail/>.

161. "In January 2013 her Web site received 462,069 pageviews." Rachel Held Evans, accessed August 18, 2013, <http://rachelheldevans.com/advertise/>.

162. For example, see Katelyn Beaty, "My Calling as a Female Breadwinner," June 25, 2013, [http://www.christianitytoday.com/women/2013/june/my-calling-as-female-breadwinner.html?start=2](http://www.christianitytoday.com/women/2013/june/my-calling-as-female-breadwinner.html?start=2;); Halee Gray Scott, "Where Have All the Women Leaders Gone? May 9,

2013, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/women/2013/may/where-have-all-women-leaders-gone.html>; and Laura Ortberg Turner, "Too Girly to Lead?" <http://www.christianitytoday.com/women/2013/may/women-and-church-too-girly-to-lead.html>. All accessed August 18, 2013.

163. Molly Ball, "The Quiet Gay-Rights Revolution in America's Churches," August 14, 2013, accessed August 18, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/08/the-quiet-gay-rights-revolution-in-americas-churches/278646/>.

164. Public Religion Research Institute, "Fact Sheet: Gay and Lesbian Issues," April 26, 2013, accessed August 18, 2013, http://publicreligion.org/research/2013/04/doma-gay-marriage-march-2013/#.UhErUb_H4g.

165. Rachel Held Evans, "How to Win a Culture War and Lose a Generation," accessed October 19, 2013, <http://rachelheldevans.com/blog/win-culture-war-lose-generation-amendment-one-north-carolina>.

166. For example, see Jonathan Merritt, "Evangelicals and the Growing Gender Debate," Religion News Service, June 6, 2013, accessed August 18, 2013, <https://jonathanmerritt.religionnews.com/2013/06/06/evangelicals-and-the-growing-gender-debate/>.

ABSTRACT This article describes the fluidity of evangelical gender ideology during the 1970s and posits that belief in male headship became one of the distinct marks of evangelical identity in the late 1970s and early 1980s. At that time, the Christian Right led a campaign against the Equal Rights Amendment, arguing that the ERA was the means by which feminists were seeking to destroy the family. It became politically expedient for evangelicals to assert their support for male headship over and against a feminist paradigm of the family. In the 1990s and 2000s, as evangelicals had begun to feel less animosity towards feminism and had actually absorbed many feminist assumptions, the Christian Right's campaign against gay marriage gave evangelicals a new reason to cling to the ideology of male headship. The campaigns against the ERA and gay marriage have made evangelicals aware of the very real presence of different models of family in American society. This awareness has enhanced commitment to the headship model of marriage.

Historians Betty DeBerg and Margaret Bendroth have done much to point historians to the way in which gender ideology has been important to evangelical identity over the last century. By analyzing anti-ERA and anti-gay marriage evangelical literature, this article argues that gender ideology was integral to the formation of evangelical identity

during the last third of the twentieth century. Thus, the article seeks to extend the argument of DeBerg and Bendroth into the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s and to present gender ideology as a key feature in defining twentieth-century American evangelicalism.

Keywords: evangelical, gender, headship, politics