



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Making a Home, Keeping God Close

Groskamp, Nienke; Ivanescu, Carolina

DOI

[10.1163/21659214-bja10106](https://doi.org/10.1163/21659214-bja10106)

Publication date

2024

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture

License

CC BY

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Groskamp, N., & Ivanescu, C. (2024). Making a Home, Keeping God Close. *Journal of Religion, Media and Digital Culture*, 13(1), 110-132. <https://doi.org/10.1163/21659214-bja10106>

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, P.O. Box 19185, 1000 GD Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.



BRILL

JOURNAL OF RELIGION, MEDIA AND DIGITAL CULTURE

13 (2024) 110–132



brill.com/rmdc

Making a Home, Keeping God Close

Nienke Groskamp

Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, Huygens Institute for the History of The Netherlands, Amsterdam, Netherlands

nienke.groskamp@huygens.knaw.nl

Carolina Ivanescu

Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Humanities, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Received 12 September 2022 | Accepted 8 June 2023 |

Published online 8 March 2024

Abstract

In Evangelical Christian communities, the responsibility for maintaining the home is taken up primarily by women (Bartkowski, 1999; Gallagher & Smith, 1999). The discursive construction of the home as a sacred space free from toxic influences emerged during the Cold War, when the global turmoil seemed to demand the delineation of a matriarchal safe space (Shively, 2017; Neumann, 2019; Anagnost 2013). More recently, restrictions concerning COVID-19 have initiated a further shift from the public to the private sphere. Women who were accustomed to conducting housework while their husbands were at work have abruptly come to the foreground as life primarily took place at home. This article explores the intersection of daily activities with religious beliefs as reflected in the practice of blogging. Central to this study is the assumption that ordinary, daily activities provide a unique lens into the way people ‘in the pews’ live their lives.

Keywords

Evangelicalism – lived religion – gender – domesticity – blogging

Amy's evening routine begins after her children are in bed and she has removed her makeup. She puts on her comfy slippers and pours herself a decaf latte before settling in front of her computer. Her screensaver reads, "Cast all your anxiety in Him because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7." She opens the admin page of her blog and checks which of the categories ("Family Life," "From My Kitchen," "Homemaking," "Ministry," or "Marriage") is due for an update. She decides to write a Bible study that can be shared with the whole family and finishes the post with affiliate links from Christian bookstores to help finance her blog.

Amy's evening routine is representative of a larger community of modern American evangelical women who use blogs to live out and communicate their faith. These women refer to themselves as homemakers and take pride in that label, which goes far beyond their cleaning and cooking skills. For them, homemaking involves creating a warm and Godly environment that helps their loved ones grow closer to the Lord.

Our study aims to shed light on how evangelical women create meaning through their daily activities related to their religious beliefs. We analyze their blogs through a grounded theory approach and build on historical literature about the evangelical movement, social scientific studies of the religious blogosphere, and anthropological findings about gender and family life among evangelicals. By centering women's narratives of their relationship to their home, we found that evangelical women use their blogs to sanctify their living space, to minister their version of Biblical womanhood, and to find focus in times of personal and global crisis. This last point is especially relevant for our sample, which was taken during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our study is founded on an interest in everyday life and the home as a unique perspective into the way "people in the pews" practice their religion (McGuire, 2008; Ammerman, 2013; Bender, 2010). We believe that homemaking blogs offer a unique insight into the construction of the home as a religious space. By exploring the everyday practices of homemaking, we aim to understand the intersection of gender, domesticity, and religion in the lived experiences of these women.

Although the angle of homemaking blogs is a novel approach to understanding evangelical family life, there is a large body of literature on the topic of evangelical families more broadly. In order to situate our findings, we will first give a brief overview of the literature surrounding evangelical Christian religious life, the history of the evangelical movement, and gender constructs within evangelical family relationships. We will also relate our work to earlier studies of religious blogs before diving into our findings.

1 Evangelical Blogs: Literature Review

1.1 *The Evangelical Family and the Importance of the Home*

Defining 'evangelical' has not been an easy task for scholars of American religion because it is predominantly an etic term. Among believers, the generic label "Christian" is preferred (Burke, 2016, p. 20). Nonetheless, scholars have found it useful to distinguish between evangelical and mainline protestants. Some scholars have argued that evangelicals share a common identity in their historical connections to the revival movements of the 18th and 19th centuries (Joustra, 2019, p. 8). However, the most famous definition of evangelicalism comes from David Bebbington (1989), who defined evangelicals by their shared theological premises. Bebbington introduced a four-part definition, consisting of a theological emphasis on conversionism (a personal decision to follow Jesus Christ), biblicism (the supreme authority of Scripture), crucicentrism (the atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross), and activism (a commitment to missionary work and social reform) (Bebbington, 1989). Although most Christians share these four elements, what makes evangelicals unique is that when asked about their identity as Christians, they tend to mention these specific aspects quite early in the conversation (Hankins, 2008). Furthermore, evangelicals claim a personal relationship with Jesus Christ at higher rates (97%) than any other religious groups, and many have a deep desire for the personal experience of God, who is as real to them now as He was to the apostles in the time of Jesus himself (Gallagher, 2003; Luhrmann, 2012). In the words of anthropologist Kelsey Burke, "[A] job promotion, the safe travels of a family member, and financial savings are all a part of God's interventions" (Burke, 2016, p.14).

Ingersoll compellingly argues that religion cannot be fully understood as just a belief system (Ingersoll, 2003). This is because evangelicals frequently exhibit differences in beliefs, and their practices may not align with their spoken or written discourse. A key concept steering our research is sanctification, as described by Mahoney and colleagues (2003). They define this as a psychological process where various aspects of life or a wide array of worldly matters are seen as having spiritual characteristics and significance (Mahoney et al., 2003). Sanctification focuses on two primary dimensions: the reference point of the sacred and the social perceptions surrounding what is considered sacred. Assigning sacredness to something involves the process of attributing transcendence, supreme value, purpose, and timelessness to it. They emphasize that many religions, including Christianity, often sanctify family relationships—this includes marital relationships, parent-child

relationships, and the family system as a whole. The vast community of Christian homemaking bloggers not only corroborates the strong connection between religion and everyday family life but also offers a unique lens to better understand this process of sanctification at a more individual, micro-level for these women.

Although blogs have been an important primary source for scholars of religion since the 1990s (Cheong et al., 2008), the specific community of women who call themselves ‘homemakers’ and who combine household advice with theology has not yet been explored. Stravrositu and Sundar (2012) argued that blogging offers a platform for women to foster their self-agency. Similarly, Campbell (2012) discussed religious blogging in the same year, asserting that it aids in the construction and performance of specific religious identities online through a self-identification process. Pertinent to our research, Klassen and Lofton (2013) investigated how women utilize new media formats to share testimonies, arguing that Christian blogging “has created a new kind of space for theological reflection and debate that blends creedal commitments with the intimate details of personal lives and their embodied memories” (p. 62). Therefore, while the Christian blogosphere has already been recognized as a valuable resource for comprehending women’s religious lives and theology, we aim to specifically focus on the home and the act of homemaking to gain insight into how these practices shape the religious identities of the women who write about them.

1.2 *Relationship to “the World” beyond the Home*

In *Christian America? What Evangelicals Really Want*, religious scholar Christian Smith coined the term “strategic relationism” to describe how Christians try to bring about social change by strategically building personal relationships, impressing others with good examples, and sharing beliefs and concerns (Smith, 2000). Evangelicals often justify the importance of family relationships by associating the human nuclear family with God as the Father and the Church as the family. Consequently, they typically regard the family as society’s fundamental unit and express concern over its perceived disintegration in the United States (Smith, 2000).

The notion of the family as a sacred entity and the perception of an American family crisis have their origins in the early Cold War period. Neumann (2019) scrutinized a popular series of 1950s booklets by Biola, the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, penned by its vice president, William W. Orr. Neumann posits that Orr portrayed his mission as a battle against a secular culture believed to be in opposition to “family values,” a battle Orr deemed necessary even if the culture

refused to fight back (Neumann, 2019). In this vein, the Cold War significantly influenced the sanctification of the family. Many Americans longed for a psychological fortress in the face of global upheaval, their own little slice of heaven on Earth amid the chaos (see also May, 1988). The stark Cold War rhetoric, portraying a conflict between two opposing forces, contributed to the creation of oppositional language, thereby symbolically preserving evangelicals' distinct identity.

During the 1970s, as secular parenting experts began promoting permissive parenting, Christian leaders sought to emphasize the need for discipline in child-rearing. James Dobson, founder of the influential evangelical organization Focus on the Family, integrated a therapeutic focus on emotional well-being and mental health with a theological stance that children are not innately inclined towards good deeds. Rather, he held that their sinful nature required discipline and obedience for them to become virtuous Christians. The 1990s experienced a surge in both Christian and secular parenting manuals, with Dobson dominating television, radio, and Christian bookstores. This new generation of evangelicals leaned towards their interpretation of therapeutic discourse, concentrating on self-esteem and relationships. During this period, Dobson also began highlighting children's emotional needs over the demand for discipline. In numerous parenting guides, the parents' role was consistently emphasized as crucial in cultivating a safe society and maintaining moral order. Just like during the Cold War, child-rearing was viewed as a political act in its own right (Stephens, 2013).

Therefore, understanding the evolution of evangelical family life necessitates considering the context of the Cold War. Interestingly, Tanya Luhrmann's (2012) research indicates that the 1960s hippie movement has also significantly impacted evangelical culture. Luhrmann associates literal Bible-reading practices with the hippie Christians of the 1960s, who diverged notably from the theologically conservative Christians of the 1950s in this regard. The hippie Christians adopted a raw interpretation of the text, believing that the Bible is best understood without scholarly intervention or historical context. This approach marked a significant shift from the 1950s when even Biblical literalists approached the scripture with historical detachment (Luhrmann 2012). Currently, evangelicals perceive the Bible as either literally or near-literally true, directly applicable to daily life and requiring no expert interpretation (Luhrmann 2012). This democratic approach to theology aligns well with the nature of blogs, which can be started by anyone without any formal training or expertise (Feller, 2016).

Our research, inspired by scholarship that ties theology to worldly events, places a particular focus on the process of meaning-making in the home during the COVID-19 pandemic. We aim to connect scholarship on evangelical Christianity, the sacred status of the home, and family relationships to the intimate nature of blogging. Blogging blurs the boundaries between the private and public, thereby illuminating how women infuse their daily lives with religious significance. We conclude that women see the home as a site to build and strengthen an array of relationships, with God in the center; that they seek to return to simple core principles to focus their lives on meaning; and that these relationships are narrated according to existing models, even if some interpretation is required for alignment.

2 Evangelical Blogs: Method and Materials

Although defining 'evangelical' has been a challenging task for scholars of American religion, the most famous definition comes from David Bebbington (1989), who introduced the four-part framework described above. Moreover, scholars have highlighted the importance of family relationships as being sanctified in many religions, including among evangelical women. These women utilize blogs as platforms to share their personal testimonies and to construct and perform their religious identities in the digital sphere. It has also been noted in the literature that the central role of family relationships in evangelical thought has roots in the Cold War era, and that the act of raising children is regarded as inherently political, influenced by both conservative and countercultural forces. Despite the importance of these facets, the role of homemaking blogs and the community of women who author them has not been deeply explored by religious scholars. We aim to fill this knowledge gap. It is crucial to highlight that our objective is not to provide an exhaustive overview of the evangelical homemaking community, but rather to conduct an exploratory analysis of the available material to gauge its potential.

Our methodology is aligned with the exploratory nature of our study. We started by conducting a basic Google search for evangelical homemaking blogs. The initial results were compilations of other Christian homemaking blogs by bloggers themselves. We followed these links to websites such as "The Humbled Homemaker," "To Love, Honor, and Vacuum," "Embracing a Simpler Life," and "Club 31 Women." On these websites, we read the "about me" sections and three or four posts that represented a range of topics, from practical homemaking advice to theological issues. Despite the bloggers seldom providing precise information about the authors, we can infer certain characteristics based on

the text and pictures they used. From our analysis, it appears that the bloggers portrayed themselves as individuals in their thirties and forties, belonging to the white ethnic background, and identifying with a middle-class lifestyle.

As we delved into the guest posts on these blogs, we added more bloggers to our list, confident that we were uncovering a self-referential community. In total, we studied 22 bloggers and 65 blogposts. These posts averaged around 1500 words, with exceptions on both ends ranging from 600 to 2400 words. They often included lists, large quotes, and short paragraphs, as well as links to other blog posts and to products such as workbooks and planners. Through open coding, we identified common themes. A few bloggers appeared to be outliers based on their topic choices and viewpoints and were thus excluded from our analysis. For instance, one wrote extensively about head coverings and UFOs, deviating from the broader concerns of the majority of bloggers we discovered through this method. After identifying and building upon the themes, we consulted secondary literature to validate and expand upon the codes and interpretations we had developed. The results of our investigation are presented in the following sections.

3 Findings

3.1 *Sanctification*

Our primary conclusion is that these blogs hold substantial importance in contextualizing homemaking as a religious practice. To enhance the perceived worth of housework, the bloggers underscore its significance to their readers. For those outside these communities, religion often seems like a separate entity, confined to places of worship and potentially extending to the dinner table during daily scripture readings. On a superficial level, there appears to be no explicit spirituality in tasks such as organizing, couponing, or changing diapers. Yet, Rachel from *The House O'Neill* includes the following activities among her New Year's resolutions: "Mop my dirty floors," "Pray without ceasing," "Cook meals, keep the laundry going, tidy the house," and "Conform my attitude to Jesus (be joyful, patient, kind)." (O'Neill, 2021). This suggests that Rachel views household tasks as nearly equivalent in value to her spiritual journey. Katie, a contributor to *The Humbled Homemaker*, affirms that "[t]here is always a spiritual reality in every situation," offering a clear illustration of what Mahoney and colleagues (2003) have called "sanctification" (p. 220–36). These women especially imbue tasks involving children with a special spiritual significance pertaining to discipleship. In the words of Katie Bennett: "Through walking, sitting, eating and talking with our children, we have the opportunity

to model and guide them into a God-soaked and eternity-minded way of thinking, being and living.” (Bennett, 2020a).

The term “eternity-minded” is pivotal in this context. Numerous homemaking bloggers underscore that daily tasks can serve to attune one’s mind and soul towards God and the concept of the afterlife. One woman advocates for minimalism to help find this spiritual focus, posing the question, “What if having less stuff helped me serve God more effectively?” (Hoth, 2022). Another blogger wrestles with reconciling her enthusiasm for planning and organizing with her commitment to ministering to other women in their faith journey through her blog. She eventually discerns a significant connection between the two: “[P]lanning can actually help you keep your faith as your primary focus.” The moment she maps out her schedule, she contends, is the decisive point at which she determines what’s truly important. “THIS is where faith is lived out.” (Pratt, 2020)

Indeed, these women often refer to the notions of focus and prioritization. They express criticism towards worldly distractions, such as coveting the next purchase (Hoth, 2022) comparing one’s parenting style to others on social media (Suzanne, 2021) or even obsessively worrying about maintaining a spotless home, “[b]ecause sometimes loving your husband means spending the evening with him instead of tidying up after dinner.” (Jo, 2021a). To many of these women, homemaking extends beyond mere housekeeping. In no small way, homemaking encompasses loving your husband, children, and God. Bloggers reiterated this sentiment in different ways by stating that “being a homemaker is really about relationships—all the relationships in your home” (Jo, 2021a) and that “[b]eing a homemaker is important to God ... for your marriage ... for your children.” (Jo, 2021b). Katie Bennett (2020b), in her blog post titled “A Few Ways to Live Out the Gospel in Your Homemaking,” lists these different relationships as she sees them:

As the homemaker of the two of us, my desire is to cultivate an environment for [my husband] to be refreshed. For my children; I seek to cultivate a safe, joyful, relational environment that will ultimately point my kids to Jesus ... For others; I desire to create a environment [sic] characterized by God’s presence, abiding peace and hospitality. I want others to find a safe haven here when needed and receive the ministry of God’s grace through the way we welcome them in and love them wholeheartedly.

Katie elaborates that relationships ought to be saturated with love, for love is synonymous with God: “God is love. So what ingredient could be more profoundly powerful in the making of a home than love? Love forgives

offenses, humbly hopes and works for the best for others, even when we stand to gain nothing.” (Bennett, 2020b). Notably, she prefaced this statement with a candid admission of struggle: “In the midst of work that can easily feel endless, cyclical, and mundane, I wonder, ‘what am I actually trying to do here, and why?’” (Bennett, 2020b). Indeed, managing a household and embodying selflessness can be challenging. This surrender of self in favor of others is a cornerstone of evangelical identity, where the sacrificial love modeled by Jesus is a fundamental ideal. The process of sanctification, the act of orienting homemaking around social relationships and a relationship with the divine, appears to provide women like Katie with an anchor that allows them to experience religious significance in their daily lives at home.

3.2 *Principles, (Self-)discipline, and Flexibility*

Our second conclusion is that these blogs provide structure and security in homemaking by emphasizing simple principles. These principles often revolve around fostering loving families and living ‘in the world, but not of the world.’ As blogger Molly De Frank articulates, “It turns out that faithful mothering is less about checking off a zillion todo’s [sic], and more about simply sharing what we know about Jesus with our kids. Walking the walk, and then talking the talk. Simple. Not easy, but simple.” (De Frank, 2020) The word “simple” repeatedly appears in these bloggers’ discourse. They discuss a “a simple habit,” (O’Neill, 2021), “a simple discipleship principle,” (Bennett, 2020c) and “the simple truth,” (Jo, 2020b) encouraging readers to “keep things simple” (Elsie, 2015) and asserting “it’s really that simple.” (O’Neill, 2021). This focus on simple principles and core truths offers the writers and readers a means to navigate a world they perceive as overly complex, filled with choices, and devoid of Godly truth: “In a world that is so distracted, so quick to make an argument or debate, it is so important to have a home that is a safe place for your family. One that encourages connection to each other and to God.” (Suzanne, 2021).

This emphasis on relationships aligns with other research on evangelicals. Susan B. Ridgley (2014) labels this generation of evangelicals, whose parents converted to Christianity in the 1980s, as “connected Christians” due to their preference for relationship-building over rigid Christian institutions. She suggests that in some cases, the term “evangelical” is used as an emic term to signify a particular kind of relationship with God and others, highlighting relational intimacy contrasted with an impersonal detachment (Ridgley, 2014; cf. Bielo, 2009; Luhrmann, 2012).

In the homemaking blogs, we can find this constructed contrast in references to “the world” as an opposing entity. “The world” is seen as a source of conflicting information, and its perceived evils can only be countered by

fostering a nurturing home environment: “In a world that is so distracted, so quick to make an argument or debate, it is so important to have a home that is a safe place for your family. One that encourages connection to each other and to God.” (Suzanne, 2021). This sentiment was particularly relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. Blogger Kim, in her article “How to be #NotConsumed in Times of Crisis & Why Christians Should Care,” emphasizes that with the “influx of information out there,” only God has “an accurate picture of the whole truth.” (Sorgius, 2021). This sense of uncertainty draws women like Kim closer to their homes. Blogger Darlene expresses this by stating that “[w]hen floors are washed, beds are made and dishes are put away, families gain a sense of comfort in knowing that their surroundings are under control.” (Schacht, 2021). However, few bloggers actively advise their readers or children to completely disengage from the world.

Addressing homeschooling, blogger Amy tries to debunk the myth that withdrawing from public education is a protective measure against evil. She concedes, “In this world, I truly do not know how to protect my children from evil. Homeschooling certainly doesn’t prevent bad things from happening. Evil is everywhere, and I cannot keep it from touching my children.” (Amy, 2012). If the goal was to avoid corrupting influences, “why would we take them to Falls Creek church camp and let them be ~~corrupted~~ by hang around with 100 teenagers for a week? (That part about ‘being corrupted’ was a joke, by the way).” (Amy, 2012). While it can be argued whether a church camp truly constitutes an outside influence, Amy seeks to stay clear of the stereotypes of overprotective, isolationist mothers. Other bloggers also reiterate that children are equal members of the Church, individuals who will eventually have to face judgment on their own. Katie Bennett articulates this most explicitly: “We know that there will be no marriage after the resurrection and that our children will stand beside us on the day of Judgment to give personal account for themselves. They will be a brother or sister with us, coheirs in Christ, should they choose to accept His gift of salvation.” (Bennett, 2021). Parenting, then, becomes less about shielding children from all corrupting influences and more about demonstrating what it means to be a Christian in this world, while also fostering a relationship with Jesus. Katie encapsulates this with the statement that “we cannot teach what we do not know ... get to know Him, and tell your kids what you know.” (Bennett, 2021).

Discipline also plays a significant role, particularly as a tool to “lead our kids to the cross.” (Bennett, 2018). The bloggers underscore self-discipline as a means of counteracting the sinful and selfish tendencies that we all have, which suggests that discipline is also needed to help children mature in Christ. On one hand, these mothers advocate for disciplined and protective parenting,

maintaining a clear hierarchy between parents and children. On the other hand, they emphasize individual salvation and leading by example. This dual emphasis strongly echoes the teachings of Focus on the Family, as discussed earlier in this paper, demonstrating a parallel between the Christian child-rearing media of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, and today's homemaking blogs. The key difference is that these women shape the narrative in a decentralized manner through their blogs, as opposed to an authoritative man disseminating his expert opinion via television.

3.3 *Marriage*

One significant aspect of the advice given is that, to effectively raise children, parents' relationships with each other also need to be balanced. This section will explore how bloggers depict their relationships with their spouses and provide advice to other couples on how to enhance their marriages. There are numerous blog posts on themes related to marriage and relationships, particularly concerning the distinct roles that husbands and wives play in the family. This is crucial because, as one blogger notes, "relationships aren't easy ... but that marriage ... is a treasure worth fighting for." (Schacht, 2020). A healthy relationship with one's spouse is therefore a vital component of successful homemaking.

Marriage is about stability and choosing "each other above the noise." (Wray Gregoire, 2021). This choice is based on a lifelong commitment, which includes sharing "deep intimacy" as a way to truly unite and work as a "team," (Wray Gregoire, 2021), connecting and caring for each other, understanding each other at the "heart level," (Wray Gregoire, 2021) and fostering joy (O'Neill, 2021). After all, marriage and homemaking involve "the pouring of yourself into your first priorities, husband and family as you serve the Lord." (Unknown, 2013). Similar to the quotations in the previous sections, bloggers like Darlene frequently emphasize focus and priorities, reminding themselves and their readers to put their partners first and to set aside time to spend together (Schacht, 2012). One blogger writes, "If I want to pursue deeper friendship with my husband, I'm going to have to focus and give it my attention." (O'Neill, 2019). Indeed, friendship seems to be a critical element of these bloggers' marriages. Blogger Rachel wrote, "When I'm having coffee and conversation with a friend, I'm all in. The kids might be bouncing off the walls all around us, but she has my focus and ear. I need to show my husband the same courtesy." (O'Neill, 2019).

Bloggers also extensively discuss sexuality, both promoting traditional viewpoints while also addressing potential issues and proposing solutions to them. They endorse sexuality only within the confines of marriage, as any other form is considered sinful. (Wray Gregoire, 2021). For sexual intimacy to

flourish, it must be “mutually satisfying” for both partners (Smith, 2015). If a reader struggles with her sexuality, one blogger suggests presenting these struggles to God in the form of prayers and requests: “ask God to help you navigate your sex life with your husband” and “pray about this area of your life and ask God to guide you to a place of sexual balance with your husband.” (Smith, 2015). To ensure the longevity of marriages, maintaining love is crucial: “I often pray,” a different blogger writes, “that God will remind us of the love we shared when we first fell in love.” (Sniff, 2019). Love, enriched by sexuality but based on sincere friendship and partnership-like collaboration, is essential.

The topic of feminism, careers, and evangelical Christians has been extensively discussed in scholarly literature. In her book *Family Matters*, Hilde Løvdal Stephens (2019) analyzes prescriptive literature on evangelical family life, demonstrating that James Dobson, from Focus on the Family, consistently asserts that a woman’s entry into the job market should never be motivated by personal career aspirations and is only acceptable as a last resort. Dobson’s message underscores that the women’s movement should have no bearing on a woman’s decision, and that the value of motherhood should remain her primary concern. Gallagher (2003) also concluded from her anthropological research among evangelicals in the late 1990s that earning income was considered acceptable only as a response to economic necessity, but never in pursuit of “happiness and fulfillment.” Women were expected to prioritize the needs of their children first (Gallagher 2003, p. 131).

Gallagher also wrote with Christian Smith (1999) about the concept of headship in evangelical communities, concluding that headship often comes down to a responsibility for decision-making. Most of their interview participants cited men as making the “final decision,” even if, in practice, most decisions were made. Due to this acceptance of headship, women reported feeling loved, secure, and respected in their relationships. Gallagher and Smith argue that, “[r]ather than being profoundly influenced by feminism, the pragmatic egalitarianism of contemporary evangelicals appears to derive more from their own life experiences in a postindustrial economy ... As a result, descriptions of headship emphasise abstract ideas of responsibility and leadership rather than being the sole provider” (Gallagher and Smith, 1999, p. 227). This strategy, termed “symbolic traditionalism,” allows men to maintain their pride while also requiring them to be active partners and to engage in emotional and nurturing work. The approach facilitates a pragmatic handling of social and economic changes while preserving a distinct religious identity (p. 228). Bartkowski (2007) notes that “there is mounting evidence that traditional gender ideologies in evangelical homes often rise to progressive practices” and that in practice, patriarchy often coexists with partnership (p. 163). This

discursive construction of evangelical relationships as more patriarchal than their secular counterparts plays a key role in both creating an evangelical identity and differentiating this identity from a (perceived) mainstream, outsider identity.

These bloggers echo previously analyzed discourse by portraying materialism and selfishness as misguided motivations for pursuing a career and by positioning the woman as the primary homemaker, regardless of her other roles. Furthermore, they emphasize frugality, moderation, and minimalism, delineating a clear distinction between misleading ‘wants’ imposed by ‘the world’ and genuine ‘needs’ that can be equally addressed by traditional, often antiquated, domestic solutions. They frequently reference the Bible verses Ephesians 5:22-5:25: “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (English Standard Version) as a blueprint for the relationship between spouses.

However, some bloggers wrestle with these ideas: “When we learn that we wives are to ‘submit in everything to [our] husbands,’ (Ephesians 5:24) this is the lie we hear: ‘You will be a doormat. Surely God didn’t say, ‘in everything.’” (Schacht, 2011). Interestingly, this particular blogger, Darlene, suggests that women might occasionally need to encourage their husbands to assume leadership if it does not come to them naturally: “A major road block for our husbands not taking leadership as we had hoped they would lies with us. Yes, us. We wives can actually hinder our husband’s progress in this area. In order to encourage our husbands to lead, we must let them lead in everything.” (Schacht, 2011). Bloggers also motivate each other to serve their husbands and continually improve in doing so, even when, according to Rachel, “easy thinking says: ‘I’m already serving my husband! All the time!’” (O’Neill, 2019).

There is a paradoxical construction at play here. Even though women encourage each other to follow their husbands’ lead, they also recognize that their husbands may need some encouragement in assuming that lead. As such, the concept of “male headship” is a negotiated process between two partners who choose to adopt these distinct roles. Another paradox lies in the fact that these women decry materialism and discourage women from working outside the home, while simultaneously selling their own homeschooling curricula, planners, and Bible studies, in addition to posting sponsored content and affiliate links. This might reflect the historical space that women have created to work as missionaries (Bowie et al., 1993), and by ministering to other women

from their own homes, they can earn a little extra money without sacrificing their Christian homemaker status.

3.4 *Relationship to God*

Throughout our discussion of evangelicals' relationships to the perceived secular world, their children, and their spouses, it's crucial to note that the bloggers' relationship with God remains at the heart of all these connections. In her research within Vineyard communities, Luhrmann (2012) describes the evangelical relationship to God as one with "a deeply human, even vulnerable God who loves us unconditionally and wants nothing more than to be our friend, our best friend, as loving and personal and responsive as a best friend in America should be" (p. 35). She refers to the past five decades as a time of "the democratization of God—I and thou into you and me—and the democratization of intense spiritual experience, arguably more deeply than ever before in our country's history" (p. 35).

The bloggers seem to corroborate this intimate relationship with God. For instance, blogger Molly describes her and her husband's relationship to God and how they aim to impart it to their children: "if my husband and I had a famous and generous BFF, we would be excited to introduce our kids. If that famous person had sacrificed time and effort to save our lives, you'd better believe we would speak highly of him in our house." She equates this to her relationship with God, and she aspires to share with her children "all of the ways he had helped our family, everything he had done for the world." (De Frank, 2020). On the one hand, God is as close as a best friend with whom one shares an intimate bond. On the other, He is a famous figure whose attention is esteemed and extraordinarily special.

Another blogger, Tracy, employs a different metaphor to describe Him: "God is the Professional Organizer leading the job ... showing me the scripture and leading me to answers. He allows me to make the decisions, though." (Hoth, 2021). In the same post, Tracy discloses how her self-esteem influences her perception of God: "I have disappointment in myself that I don't do a good enough job which causes me to think that God is disappointed constantly." She chooses instead to believe that God is always pursuing her, which she describes as one of her most cherished beliefs (Hoth, 2021).

The bloggers under discussion exemplify an ahistorical, literal interpretation of the Bible. Hilary, a contributor to *The Humbled Homemaker*, explains how she incorporates the Bible in her post titled "Learning 7 Lessons About Homemaking from Proverbs 31." She remarks, "I know the Bible is God's Word and it's true—but sometimes I forget that it includes so much practical advice ... I never really thought it offered much practical homemaking advice until I

studied Proverbs 31.” (Guest, 2020). Of course, discovering how such an ancient text directly relates to modern motherhood requires some interpretive finesse. As Katie Bennett puts it, “Theology is wonderful—but how does it help me with my screaming two-year-old in the middle of WalMart [sic]?” (Bennett, 2018). For both Hilary and Katie, the solution seems to reside in deriving broad principles from the Bible rather than adhering strictly to its literal instructions. “He gives us principles,” Katie writes, adding that “The Holy Spirit gives us wisdom to use those principles to point our kids to Christ.” (Guest, 2020). This methodology is also how Hilary extracts advice from Proverbs 31: “Homemaking today seems like it would be so different than homemaking thousands of years ago. Yet basic principles remain the same.” (Guest, 2020). That interpretation of the Bible mirrors what Luhrmann (2012) has observed about evangelical Christians in the Vineyard community, that is, their belief in reading the Bible directly, without expert mediation, to personally experience its teachings. This practice is a crucial aspect of their direct relationship with God.

The relationship with God becomes especially intriguing when viewed in conjunction with the bloggers’ other relationships, a connection they continually emphasize and work towards. Consider Katie Bennett’s blog post, “How to Love Your Family Without Making an Idol.” Katie cautions that sometimes mothers may overstep a boundary and love their families too much: “As mothers, our families sometimes gain territory in our hearts they were not meant to possess. If we find ourselves loving our husbands and children more than God, we have created an idol.” She confesses that as a child, she believed at least 60% of her heart should always belong to God—a solid majority—leaving 40% to share among friends and family. However, she has since realized that her entire heart belongs to God: “no math required!” (Bennett, 2021). The type of love her family truly desires, she explains, is God’s love. Mothers can “act as a firehose, channeling His love to our families.” (Bennett, 2021). Although Katie’s expression of her faith aligns with Bebbington’s (1989) description of evangelicalism, her warnings against idolizing the (nuclear) family echo the concerns raised by mainline Protestants in the 1960s. They feared that American families were excessively focusing on the Christian family as the cornerstone of a blissful life and a virtuous society, amounting to the worship of the nuclear family itself (Løvdal Stephens, 1988). Katie’s response to this concern is not to downplay the family’s importance, but to sanctify it: her religious duty lies not in being the perfect mother, but in ministering her children for Christ and leading them to the cross. This notion reinforces the individualistic tendencies commonly seen in evangelical narratives of salvation.

This caution against idolatry leads us to another central element of the bloggers’ rhetoric: the notion of exclusivity and binary thinking. As a Christian,

you must choose between either prioritizing your family or God, between succumbing to “the current culture of buying whatever you want and keeping up with “The Joneses” or finding fulfillment in Christ (Suzanne, 2021). As previously noted, these bloggers urge their readers to maintain a sharp focus on what is most important: a personal relationship with God. However, since God embodies love and love forms the essence of all other relationships, the connection between seemingly mundane and spiritual endeavors is easily made.

3.5 *No Two Families are the Same*

The bloggers under consideration primarily emphasize a personal relationship with God. Their recurring discussions around individuality and personal approaches suggest a decreased emphasis on normativity, at least superficially. On the subject of homeschooling, for example, blogger Amy underlines, “There is no one ‘right’ way to do anything, and every family has to decide for themselves what is best.” (Amy, 2012). Similarly, Jo Lynn, after enumerating a long list of skills a homemaker must possess, imparts some leniency to her readers by emphasizing diversity: “You may be able to rely on some skills more strongly, and less so on others. For instance, you may be a good gardener and canner, so you don’t need to coupon ... You are providing for your family’s needs with your skills. That is all that is necessary.” (Jo, 2021a). These examples reveal an ostensible openness to diversity, underscored by a strong central emphasis: prioritizing your family and doing what’s best for them. In a post titled “Marys and Marthas: Celebrating Women of Different Character,” blogger Marcy discusses Luke 10:38–42, citing the 19th-century Anglican evangelical bishop J.C. Ryle: “Martha, when Jesus came to her house, rejoiced to see Him, and busied herself with preparing suitable refreshment. Mary, also, rejoiced to see Him, but her first thought was to sit at His feet and hear His word. Grace reigned in both hearts—but each showed the effects of grace in different ways.” (Ferrell, 2021). She concludes that both Marys and Marthas are necessary, and that the family of God comprises various strengths and personalities. This is a clear instance where diversity is embraced, but within certain confines. Different personalities are acceptable, provided they love Jesus.

The issue of women working outside the home is another contentious subject, in which we similarly observe the complex interplay of diversity and normativity. While few bloggers explicitly state that homemaking is the sole valid career choice for women, the implications are evident. “Yes, I know there are many wonderful marriages and parents in a home where mom works. People make it work somehow,” concedes blogger Jo Lynn. “I’m just saying there is give and take here. You give up money to be with your kids, or you give up time with

your kids in order to give them more (that can be bought with money)." (Jo, 2021b). Interestingly, the word "contentment" features in the title of this post. Katie Bennett also has a blogpost titled "What it Really Means to be Content," where she criticizes the modern consumer culture for pressuring women into employment: "We work extra jobs to afford that mortgage and those upgrades on that new vehicle. We feel we must have two handfuls because they look oh-so appealing." (Bennett, 2018). On the subject of women working outside the home, the implication is never that it's due to economic necessity; instead, it's typically portrayed as a choice between rampant consumerism and family "contentment" with what one already has.

Blogger Elsie, who takes on a slightly more lenient rhetoric, employs a different strategy to outline acceptable and unacceptable options for women: "Homemaking is my career. And it's yours, too. Whatever other roles you play now or in the future (working outside the home, volunteering, running a business from your computer), you are also a homemaker." (Elsie, 2015). Here, it isn't the absence of other activities that defines a good homemaker, but the core self-identification primarily as a homemaker that distinguishes a virtuous Christian woman from career-centric secular women. This view further bolsters their identity as bloggers, which in many cases also provides some income for these women. They can feel positive about selling their products as long as it doesn't compromise their primary identity as a homemaker and mother.

However, bloggers' reiterations that women should primarily be homemakers risks alienating readers who don't conform to this ideal, either because their circumstances demand dual incomes or because they lack the qualities and skills described as inherent to homemaking. The bloggers seem aware of this fact, and besides emphasizing common goals underlying pew diversity, they use another rhetorical strategy to help their readers cope with this discrepancy. This strategy pertains to relativizing the ideal and consists of two parts. The first is a humble acknowledgment of the blogger's own shortcomings. "Can I be the first to admit that I don't do ANY of this perfectly, or even well most of the time?" Katie confesses. "My goals and ideals are often quite different from what life actually looks like." (Bennett, 2020b). The second component of this strategy emphasizes constant growth and personal development, given that no one is perfect. At the end of her comprehensive list of homemaking skills, Jo Lynn writes that "[n]o one is born this way 100%. We all have to grow and develop." (Jo, 2021a). This growth mindset is deemed integral to the Christian identity. Kayse, from *Anchored Women*, elucidates this as follows: "Our nature is to live selfishly, to protect ourselves and our people, to look inward instead of upward, to serve ourselves and our own goals and plans. But living out the Christian life is just the opposite. Jesus modeled for us a truly unselfish life,

walking out the fruit of the spirit each day, sharing truth with everyone He met.” (Pratt, 2020).

Given its aspirational yet unattainable nature for all Christians, the image of an unselfish ideal life serves as a critical guiding principle that shapes the core identity of contemporary evangelical women within the context of these blogs. Secondary literature supports the assertion that subjectivity and relatability are pivotal characteristics of modern evangelical discourse. Bartkowski (1999) discussing stay-at-home motherhood, quotes an interviewee who states, “I can’t speak for anyone else. We have made our own decisions, and I have a definite opinion” (p. 49). In Bartkowski’s view, she creates a “subjective space within evangelical discourse on this hot-button issue,” a dynamic we believe is also present here (p.49). Ridgley links this subjectivity to a newer generation of evangelicals who, for religious guidance, gravitate towards online blogs and forums rather than authoritative books by experts like James Dobson and Rick Warren. “Instead of ‘cookie-cutter material,’ these converts felt unity and support knowing that other Christians also struggled to live up to the ideal of the true Christian” (Ridgley, 2014, p. 86). The bloggers in this study consistently highlight their own imperfections and position themselves as friends or equals to the reader, rather than experts dispensing prescriptive advice.

Richard Kyle (2006) states that “evangelicals are populists, pragmatic, and experiential—not intellectuals ... Thanks to television and megachurches this populist tendency has increased. As denominational lines have been blurred, theology has been reduced to its lowest common denominator. As a practical people, evangelicals regard doctrine as boring and irrelevant” (p. 317). Here Kyle highlights the significant role media plays in bridging individual differences. Indeed, rapid communication, facilitated by media and the internet, is not discouraged. It is quick and effective, enabling extensive connections and interactions. Blogging affords access to large audiences, unrestricted by physical or psychological barriers, making it an efficient means of disseminating a message. In the context of homemaking, blogging is doubly beneficial: it enables the sharing of individual experiences and personal interpretations of living with God from the intimate space of one’s home, while also rapidly transmitting these experiences and inviting discussion, requiring minimal effort from the bloggers themselves. The flexibility of blogging in terms of space and time, the broad reach of posts, and the potential income-generating opportunities through advertisements and product referrals suggest it is an ideal activity for enhancing rather than disrupting homemaking.

4 Conclusion

Our analysis of evangelical homemaking blogs reveals a complex interplay of diversity and normativity, personal subjectivity, and communal ideals. These blogs are part of a mutual process of shaping evangelical womanhood, as they are both a source through which we can access the home lives of women as well as a significant factor in shaping the aspirations of homemakers and the ideal of evangelical womanhood. The discourse around contentious topics like homeschooling and women working outside the home demonstrates an acknowledgment of diversity, albeit within certain boundaries. While bloggers champion the idea of each family determining what is best for them, they also subtly imply that certain choices, like choosing homemaking over a career, are more aligned with Christian ideals. Importantly, these ideals are not presented as prescriptive dogma, but rather as aspirational goals, a balance that allows the bloggers to maintain relatability with their audience.

Our findings have shown that scholarly interpretations of evangelical women from the Cold War era still hold up today, and we propose that the COVID-19 crisis has reinforced the tendency to fortify the home as a safe space and imbue it with sacred meaning. The evangelical community still prioritizes a personal relationship to God, who is central in the family and in daily life, while also sanctifying seemingly simple, everyday activities such as keeping the home. However, our research has also shed light on new developments in evangelical culture. The importance of planning and efficiency, of simplicity and contentedness, of resisting consumption but also engaging with the growth mindset of eternal improvement toward an unreachable ideal, situate the bloggers firmly in the consumer culture of the twenty-first century. What has further stood out is the strategic humility and relatability, as bloggers tend to downplay their function as role models and instead assure us that they themselves are far from perfect, and that they can relate to the struggles of the reader. This likely reflects the desire for community continuation during a period when church activities had significantly decreased. Especially when the pews themselves are unavailable due to COVID restrictions, these blogs present intimate home life as a religious foundation, which through the internet can be shared with women across America. Through the medium of online blogs, writing becomes a religious activity that helps uncover and sanctify the seemingly private and mundane home. The blogs provided an anchor for women who seek to maintain normalcy and everyday life during a global crisis.

Despite these promising initial findings, much more research can be done to fully explore this rich source material. For example, it would be worth conducting a more thorough mapping of the blogosphere, including which

blogs refer to each other and which host each other as guest writers. Moreover, one could zoom in on different topics, such as home-schooling and cooking, to see more specifically how the women shape these aspects of their lives and what kind of advice they give. These are just some examples of the questions that could be asked of this material.

Our main contribution, though, is to show the important role of the blogging medium itself in facilitating this discourse. Blogging allows these evangelical women to express their individual experiences and interpretations from the personal space of their homes, while also providing them a platform to connect with a broader community of believers. The accessibility and flexibility of blogging, which can be done from home and when the kids are asleep, makes it particularly compatible with homemaking. Further, its potential for income generation and its capacity to reach large audiences allow women to create meaning and contribute to household finances in an accessible way. In essence, evangelical homemaking blogs create a vibrant digital tapestry, weaving faith, family, and homemaking into a fresh tapestry of modern Christian womanhood.

References

- Amy (2012, April 7). Why Our Family Has Chosen to Homeschool. Amy Loves It. <https://www.amylovesit.com/2012/08/07/why-our-family-has-chosen-to-homeschool/>.
- Bartkowski, J. P. (1999). Connections and Contradictions: Exploring the Complex Linkages between Faith and Family. In N. T. Ammerman (Ed.), *Everyday Religion* (1st ed., pp. 153–166). Oxford University Press.
- Bartkowski, J. P. (2007). One Step Forward, One Step Back: “Progressive Traditionalism” and the Negotiation of Domestic Labor in Evangelical Families. *Gender Issues*. *Gender & Society*, 17(4), 37–61.
- Bebbington, David W. (1989). *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*. London: Unwin Hyman.
- Bennett, K. (2018). Dear Tired, Worn-Out Mom Who Hates Discipline: You’re Not Alone. Embracing a Simpler Life. <https://www.embracingasimplerlife.com/dear-tired-worn-mom-hates-discipline-youre-not-alone/>.
- Bennett, K. (2020a, November 5). The Humbled Homemaker, Eternity-Minded Mothering: A Beginner’s Guide to Discipling Your Children Toward Christ. The Humbled Homemaker. <https://thehumbledhomemaker.com/eternity-minded-mothering/>.
- Bennett, K. (2020b, November 5). A Few Ways to Live Out the Gospel in Your Homemaking. The Humbled Homemaker. <https://thehumbledhomemaker.com/ways-live-gospel-homemaking/>.

- Bennett, K. (2020c, November 5). Eternity-Minded Mothering: A Beginner's Guide to Discipling Your Children Toward Christ. *The Humbled Homemaker*. <https://thehumbledhomemaker.com/eternity-minded-mothering/>.
- Bennett, K. (2021, February 28). How to Love Your Family Without Making an Idol. *Embracing a Simpler Life*. <https://www.embracingasimplerlife.com/love-family-without-making-idol/>.
- Bielo, J. S. (2009). *Words upon the Word: An Ethnography of Evangelical Group Bible Study*. NYU Press.
- Bowie, F., Kirkwood, D., & Ardener, S. (Eds.). (1993). *Women and Missions: Past and Present: Anthropological and Historical Perceptions*. Providence, RI: Berg.
- Burke, K. (2016). *Christians Under Covers: Evangelicals and Sexual Pleasure on the Internet*. University of California Press.
- Campbell, H. A. (2012). Understanding the relationship between religion online and offline in a networked society. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 80(1), 64–93.
- Cheong, P. H., Halavais, A., & Kwon, K. (2008). The Chronicles of Me: Understanding Blogging as a Religious Practice. *Journal of Media and Religion*, 7(3), 107–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348420802223015>.
- De Frank, M. (2020, November 27). Raising Kids Who Know Jesus Takes More than Bedtime Prayers. *Anchored Women*. <https://anchored-women.com/raising-kids-who-know-jesus-takes-more-than-bedtime-prayers/>.
- Elsie (2015, February 23). The Busy Girl's Guide to Keeping the Home. *Richly Rooted*. <https://richlyrooted.com/2015/02/busy-girls-guide-to-keeping-the-home.html>.
- Feller, G. (2016). A Moderate Manifesto: Mormon Feminism, Agency, and Internet Blogging. *Journal of Media and Religion*, 15(3), 156–166. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348423.2016.1209393>.
- Ferrell, M. (2021, February 28). Marys and Marthas: Celebrating Women of Different Character. *Thankful Homemaker*. <https://thankfulhomemaker.com/marys-and-marthas-celebrating-women-of-different-character>.
- Gallagher, S. K., & Smith, C. (1999). Symbolic Traditionalism and Pragmatic Egalitarianism: Contemporary Evangelicals, Families, and Gender. *Gender & Society*, 13(2), 211–233. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124399013002004>.
- Gallagher, S. K. (2003). *Evangelical Identity and Gendered Family Life*. Rutgers University Press.
- Guest (2020, November 5). Learning 7 Lessons About Homemaking from Proverbs 31. *The Humbled Homemaker*. <https://thehumbledhomemaker.com/learning-7-lessons-homemaking-proverbs-31/>.
- Hankins, B. (2008). *American Evangelicals: A Contemporary History of a Mainstream Religious Movement*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

- Hoth, T. (2021, February 28). How to Declutter Your Heart. Club 31 Women. <https://club31women.com/declutter-heart/>.
- Hoth, T. (2022, April 6). Would It Be Easier To Serve God If I Had Less Stuff?. Club 31 Women. <https://club31women.com/easier-serve-god-less-stuff/>.
- Ingersoll, J. (2003). *Evangelical Christian Women: War Stories in the Gender Battles*. NYU Press.
- Jo, L. (2021a, February 28). The Skills, Qualities, and Roles of a Homemaker,” Kids and Homes. <https://kidsandhomes.com/the-skills-qualities-and-roles-of-a-homemaker/>.
- Jo, L. (2021b, February 28). 8 Tips for Finding Contentment as a Homemaker,” Kids and Homes. <https://kidsandhomes.com/8-tips-for-finding-contentment-as-a-homemaker/>.
- Joustra, J. (2019). What is an Evangelical? Examining the Politics, History, and Theology of a Contested Label. *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 17(3), 7–19.
- Klassen, P. E., & Lofton, K. (2013). Material Witnesses: Women and the Mediation of Christianity. In M. Lövheim (Ed.), *Media, Religion and Gender: Key Issues and New Challenges* (pp. 52–65). Routledge.
- Kyle, R. G. (2006). *Evangelicalism: An Americanized Christianity*. Transaction Publishers.
- Løvdal Stephens, H. (2013). Parenting and Politics: The Personal and the Political in the Evangelical Family Values Movement. *American Studies in Scandinavia*, 45(1–2), 75.
- Løvdal Stephens, H. (2019). *Family Matters: James Dobson and Focus on the Family’s Crusade for the Christian Home*. The University of Alabama Press.
- Luhrmann, T. M. (2012). *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God* (First Vintage Books edition). Vintage Books.
- Mahoney, A., Pargament, K. I., Murray-Swank, A., & Murray-Swank, N. (2003). Religion and the Sanctification of Family Relationships. *Review of Religious Research*, 44(3), 220–236.
- May, E. T. (1988). *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*. Basic Books.
- Neumann, D. J. (2019). Domestic Security: Defending the Evangelical Home in the Southern California Sunbelt. *Journal of Religious History*, 43(1), 83–107.
- O’Neill, R. (2019, March 6). 5 Ways to Be a True Friend to Your Husband. The House O’Neill. <https://thehouseoneill.com/2019/03/06/true-friend-husband/>.
- O’Neill, R. (2021, January 8). How to Fight Despair and be a Faithful Christian in 2021. The House O’Neill. <https://thehouseoneill.com/2021/01/08/how-to-fight-despair-and-be-a-faithful-christian-in-2021/>.
- Pratt, K. (2020, May 22) How Planning Can Help You Focus On Your Faith!. Anchored Women. <https://anchored-women.com/how-planning-can-help-you-focus-on-your-faith/>.
- Ridgley, S. B. (2014). Connected Christians: New Practices in Evangelical Spirituality. *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, 14(1), 84.

- Schacht, D. (2011, November 2). Day 31 – Encouraging Leadership from Your Husband. *Time-Warp Wife*. <https://timewarpwife.com/day-31-encouraging-leadership-from-your-husband/>.
- Schacht, D. (2012, January 24). The Joy of Marriage & Motherhood. *Time-Warp Wife*. <https://timewarpwife.com/the-joy-of-marriage-motherhood-and-a-titus-2sday-linkup/>.
- Schacht, D. (2020, August 16). Daily Devotion – The Uncertainty of Covid 19. *Time-Warp Wife*. <https://timewarpwife.com/daily-devotion-the-uncertainty-of-covid-19/>.
- Schacht, D. (2021, February 28). Housekeeping Schedule. *Time-Warp Wife*. <https://timewarpwife.com/house-cleaning-schedule/>.
- Smith, C. (2000). *Christian America? What Evangelicals Really Want*. *University of California Press*.
- Smith, J. (2015, October 15). Are You A Wife Struggling With Low Sex Drive?. *Unveiled Wife*. <https://unveiledwife.com/are-you-a-wife-struggling-with-low-sex-drive/>.
- Sniff, N. (2019, September 15). Soul Care. *Just Homemaking*. <https://justhomemaking.com/soul-care/>.
- Sorgius, K. (2021, February 28). How to be #NotConsumed in Times of Crisis & Why Christians Should Care. *Not Consumed*. <https://www.notconsumed.com/how-to-be-notconsumed-in-times-of-crisis-why-christians-should-care/>.
- Stavrositu, C., & Sundar, S. S. (2012). Does Blogging Empower Women? Exploring the Role of Agency and Community. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(4), 369–386.
- Suzanne (2021, April 24). The Top Homemaking Skills You Still Need (even though they're old-fashioned). *Just Homemaking*. <https://justhomemaking.com/old-fashioned-homemaking-skills/>.
- Unknown (2013). For the Love of Christian Homemaking. A Wise Woman Builds Her Home. No longer accessible.
- Wray Gregoire, S. (2021, January 19). To the Wife Who Feels Like God is Punishing Her for Having Sex Before Marriage. *To Love, Honor, and Vacuum* <https://tolovehonorandvacuum.com/2021/01/to-the-wife-who-feels-like-god-is-punishing-her-for-having-sex-before-marriage/>.