

“College Has Been the Means of My Conversion”: The Empowering Role of Evangelicalism at Southern Women’s Colleges, 1800-65

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The history of evangelicalism and women in the antebellum South is often presented as a narrative of oppression. Scott Stephan accurately describes existing scholarship on religion and southern women when he writes that, “the traditional starting point for most studies on evangelical women in the antebellum South [has constituted] what religion did to women.”¹ Rejecting the notion that evangelicalism played only a restricting role in southern women’s lives, Stephan challenges scholars to examine not only “what religion did to women,” but also “what religion did for women.”² While scholars may agree theoretically with this approach, Stephan’s challenge has nonetheless gone unheeded in many aspects of historians’ actual work. This is certainly the case with scholarship on southern women’s higher education. Preoccupied with demonstrating that southern women’s education was engendered in such a way as to shape young women into submissive southern ladies, scholarship on southern women’s education simply assumes that evangelicalism, being one of the means to shape young women into ladies, played a fundamentally oppressive role in southern women’s lives.³ This interpretation may be substantiated by an examination of institutional records, which highlight the role of evangelicalism in shaping (sometimes oppressive) educational ideals, but an examination of women’s recollections of the religious life on campus presents a more complex story. For while evangelical ideals were often propagated by college authorities to remind female students of their roles as pious and submissive persons, evangelicalism also enabled college

women to challenge the notion that they were passive creatures who were dependent on male authority and allowed them to explore new identities as independent women.

As one of “the cultural engines of the South,” evangelicalism played a major role in shaping southern gender ideals.⁴ In particular, the Second Great Awakening, a spiritual revival that took place approximately between 1790 and 1835, played an especially influential role in shaping antebellum women’s identities, giving rise to what Barbara Welter has termed the “Cult of True Womanhood.”⁵ The evangelical fervour that accompanied the Second Great Awakening shaped woman’s identity in at least two ways. First, women’s active participation in evangelical revivalism spurred the idea that women were by nature a pious sex. Women were heavily involved in revivalism, going out to hear preachers and then returning home to convert husbands and children.⁶ Second, the Second Great Awakening “attracted far more women than men” and women began to dominate elements of church life.⁷ Women “constituted the largest increase in church membership” during this period, outnumbering men by sixty to forty per cent.⁸

Women’s involvement in the Second Great Awakening, then, affirmed the idea that women were naturally more disposed towards religion than men. Sermons and poems published and distributed by and for southerners insisted that, because “God hath made a woman’s nature holier than man’s,” women were to “yield the wand of [moral] power” over their more degenerate male counterparts and thereby regenerate the world. This mission to regenerate the world was especially important given that the Second Great Awakening’s emphasis on personal choice in regards to salvation (versus earlier preoccupation with predestination) meant that it was now viewed as insecure. As a result, there was “an urgency exist[ent] among the stalwart to ‘get religion.’”⁹ Women, with their “superior devotional feelings,” bore the important responsibility of leading individuals and society to salvation.¹⁰

In addition to reinforcing the idea that women were naturally pious individuals who bore the responsibility of morally regenerating society, the evangelicalism that accompanied the Second Great Awakening suggested that women were dependent creatures. At the same time that southern evangelicalism granted women power by labelling them moral superiors, it also, somewhat paradoxically, reinforced the notion that women were by nature meant to be subordinate to men. In fact, it was women’s very moral superiority and proclivity towards spiritual devotion

that explained her secondary position. According to nineteenth-century southern writers, the same quality that enabled woman to be so purely dependent on God made her dependent on man as well. In his famous "Dissertation on the Characteristic Differences between the Sexes," Thomas Dew linked woman's dependence on God with her natural weakness and passivity, writing that, unlike a man, who is an active creature, a woman "throws her arms into the arms of the divinity and awaits the result . . . she is carried forward by powers that are not hers, by energies that she is unable to control."¹¹ Similarly, in her 1828 *Letters on Female Character*, Virginia Cary wrote that it is "because of their very physical inferiority and vulnerability that women are superior to men in religiosity."¹² Because the same weakness that reminded women of their need for God's protection made them reliant on man's protection, their position in relation to men was a subordinate one.

The gender ideals that accompanied the Second Great Awakening directly inspired the establishment of the southern woman's college. Beginning in the 1790s and extending into the 1850s, southern churches founded a plethora of institutions devoted to women's higher education. Over eighty per cent of female colleges in the South were closely associated with one of four denominations: Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Episcopalian.

That women's colleges were at least partially established in order to reinforce emerging evangelical gender ideals is obvious in their efforts to cultivate the feminine ideals of piety and submission. That colleges worked to reinforce women's identities as pious individuals is evident in a number of ways. First, the stated aims of institutions reveal that the ultimate purpose of women's education was to cultivate women's piety. The Board of Trustees at Mary Baldwin College announced in their annual address that the college's "aim [was] first to prepare each child to live in time with a wise reference to eternity."¹³ A circular released for Harmony Female College similarly declared that, "the religion of Jesus Christ is the best part of all education, the ornament of all ornaments" and therefore would be at the forefront of women's education.¹⁴ And the Board of Elizabeth Academy in Washington, Mississippi, justified raising support for its college by arguing that women's virtue was best guaranteed by education.¹⁵ Second, working to fulfill these stated aims, the curriculum and practices followed at women's colleges reveal that these institutions intended to remind women of their identities as purveyors of piety. The Bible was to be "the first text-book" of the woman's college,¹⁶ the

“exercises of each day [were] commenced by reading the Bible and prayer,”¹⁷ and students were “required to attend Divine Services on the Sabbath.”¹⁸ Not only were students required to take part in explicitly religious coursework and practices, but they were also reminded that every aspect of their education was grounded in religion. As Mary Watters points out in her examination of Mary Baldwin College, women’s study of various subjects was justified on religious grounds: geology “because it reveals the glories of God’s creation,” etymology because it “form[s] the soul for its immortal destiny,”¹⁹ and astronomy because it cultivated admiration for God’s works and gave “rise to a new field of devotion” that was “above the reach of vulgar minds.”²⁰ Finally, that college was meant to cultivate piety in female students is clear in parents’ reasons for sending their daughters to college. Writing to his daughter Lou who was a student at Wesleyan College in the 1850s, Dr. Sanders reminded her that “religion is the most essential, all-important quality of education” and thus that she needed “above all” to “know the Lord Jesus Christ as [her] Saviour.”²¹ Similarly, R.W. Bailey reminded his daughters that they were “being educated for eternity,” and thus, that while in college, they needed to continually ask themselves “[w]hat bearing and influence is this to have on my eternal interests?”²²

Proponents of women’s education made clear that the cultivation of women’s piety through education was not only meant to ensure the salvation of individual women, but rather to redeem the entire society. While education was intended to prepare women for the home rather than the workforce, southern proponents of female education argued that educated women’s influence could extend beyond the domestic sphere and into society through women’s influence on men. One popular proponent of women’s education, R.W. Bailey, suggested that one of the “true reasons” women were to be educated was because they exercised the power to convert family members into Christian believers and thereby transform society. To illustrate his point, Bailey quoted John Randolph, who famously asserted “I should have been an infidel had it not been for the influence exerted on me by my mother, as she taught me to kneel at her side, and fold my little hands and say, ‘Our Father who art in heaven.’”²³ According to Bailey, it was through witnessing female piety that husbands could decide what was right for society.²⁴ Furthermore, proponents of female education argued that educated women in particular were in a special position to transform society because of their ability to converse with men on an intellectual level. As Ronald Lora and William Henry

Longton point out in their analysis of the *Southern Ladies' Book*, a magazine established in conjunction with the founding of Georgia Female College in the 1830s, proponents of women's education such as George Foster Pierce and Philip Coleman Pendleton believed that women could fulfill their duty of morally regenerating society by raising men up from "gross sensuality" to "the world of the mind."²⁵ They could do this, the editors of the *Southern Ladies' Book* suggested, by gaining an education and "bring[ing] [their] 'magic power to the aid of Literature."²⁶ By focusing men's minds on virtue, women would inadvertently impel men to "produce an authentic southern literature" that would transform society.²⁷

In addition to working to shape young women into pious individuals who were prepared to transform society morally by converting their future husbands, women's colleges aimed to reinforce female students' assumedly ordained identities as dependent and submissive women. Not only did the authorities at women's colleges constantly remind female students that their education was primarily intended to prepare them to be pleasing wives, they also employed strict rules to foster submission. Women's colleges used strict codes of conduct, outlining when and with whom students could leave campus, what they were allowed to buy, and with whom they were able to visit in campus parlours. What is significant is that it was considered essential for female students to obey the rules set by college authorities not only because this kept order, but also because doing so reinforced women's subordinate position within society. In his *Letters to Daughters at School*, Bailey wrote to his daughters saying that he "require[d] in [their] teachers not only the ability to teach, but [the] authority to govern,"²⁸ because "the youth who does not regard [her] teacher . . . with the subjection rendered a protector, is not prepared to profit suitably by his instructions" and will "receive lessons of insubordination"²⁹ that will cause the pupil to disregard other authority after leaving college – namely, male patriarchs.³⁰

Not surprisingly, contemporary scholars often see the evangelical ideals of piety and submission espoused by the southern women's colleges as oppressive. Within the southern context, the ideals of piety and submission were important markers of social position; social position, in turn, was extremely important in a slave society – a society in which every person was understood as having a particular position and was warned not to challenge it lest the whole structure of society fail. Characterizations of white women as pious and dependent, while not necessarily oppressive

descriptors, justified women's secondary position within society. Celebrating women's assumedly natural piety not only placed a heavy responsibility upon women to be moral and often resulted in double standards, but also suggested that women, naturally pure and passive, were in need of male protection – a need that could only be fulfilled through obedience. Obligated to obey male patriarchs, white women were in a position somewhat similar to black slaves, with “husbands and masters” being the same person.

But, even given the reality that religious ideals could be oppressive, does this mean that evangelicalism as a whole was always a restricting force in southern women's lives? How did women experience evangelicalism while at college? Paying attention to women's recollections seems to suggest that female students exerted agency in their religious lives, both embracing and challenging the evangelical ideals of womanhood that were espoused through their educations.

Like their counterparts in wider southern society, college women often embraced their prescribed roles as spiritual beings. Taught that their identities were linked to morally regenerating the world, female students' behaviour suggests that they believed that it was not only their duty to prepare for taking on their roles as redeemers of the home, but also to offer spiritual guidance to one another while at college. That this was the case is most obvious in students' obsession with spiritual revivals and their preoccupation with ensuring their classmates' personal salvation. The diary of Ella Gertrude Thomas, a student at Wesleyan Female College in the late 1840s and early 1850s, does a particularly thorough job of describing the culture of piety young women cultivated while at college. Reporting that college “had been the means of [her own] conversion,”³¹ Thomas demonstrates the general interest college women had in evangelicalism in her chronicling of the “glorious revivals” that took place weekly at Wesleyan, both through formal prayer meetings and more informal student gatherings.³²

In formal prayer meetings, students expressed their concern that their peers should grow spiritually and/or “obtain religion.” Thomas notes the frequency and intensity of formal meetings in her journal, recording the number of those converted at each. On 2 February 1849, Thomas writes, “today we had a glorious revival. Sallie Tucker, Victoria Holt, Amy Sparks, Joe Freeman, Lou Warrington, [and] Lou Warner have been converted.”³³ Just four days later, Thomas records another prayer meeting, this time noting that two more of her peers “became converted.”³⁴

Repeatedly throughout her journal Thomas chronicles the “glorious meeting[s]” held on campus and the consequent “blessed conversion of souls to God.”³⁵ In all, Thomas notes that more than twenty-two female students were converted through prayer meetings during her short time at Wesleyan.³⁶

In addition to expressing concern for peers’ spiritual lives through formal prayer meetings, students worked to inspire religious zeal in their fellow classmates by holding informal gatherings in their rooms and engaging one another in religious conversations. At times, the revivalism that was sparked at formal prayer meetings concluded with students gathering in dorm rooms to continue experiencing “manifestation[s] of God” late into the night.³⁷ After a Sunday night prayer meeting at which two girls “became converted,” Thomas “set up with Puss Tinsley all night.”³⁸ On other occasions, students met in one another’s rooms to witness conversions. Thomas records how she was called to Ria Easterling’s room to witness Easterling being “happy.”³⁹ The next day, Thomas spent the afternoon in Bettie William’s room with “a great many girls” who “were seeking religion.”⁴⁰ A few hours later, she “went down to Daughter Solomon’s room to see Bell Fernandez, [who] was perfectly happy lying on the bed and shouting the praises of God.”⁴¹ And, that evening, Thomas joined other students in celebrating classmate Sue Evan’s “obtain[ing] religion.”⁴²

That many students embraced their prescribed identities as pious regenerators is especially evident in their concern for their peers who did not show signs of conversion or spiritual growth even when urged to do so at student gatherings. Thomas pays particular attention in her diary to students whom she deems in need of spiritual conversion and whose salvation she is “anxious” about.⁴³ Repeatedly throughout her college years Thomas makes mention of Joe Freeman, a girl whom Thomas “dearly love[s]” and “take[s] a very great interest in,” but considers unresponsive to evangelical Christianity.⁴⁴ Describing one particularly exciting evening gathering in Daughter Solomon’s room, Thomas notes that, “there appeared to be but little feeling on [Joe’s] side.”⁴⁵ Joe “stood apparently unheeding prayers to kneel.”⁴⁶ Astonished by what she calls Joe’s “invincib[ility]” on this particular evening, Thomas takes the responsibility for Joe’s salvation upon herself. A little less than a month after the meeting in Daughter Solomon’s room, Thomas pleads with Joe “to go and be prayed for” at church, but Joe would, ultimately, “not be persuaded.”⁴⁷ While Joe’s spiritual state is of primary importance to

Thomas, she is not the only one Thomas shows concern for in her diary. After “talk[ing] with Mary Tucker on the subject of religion” over dinner one evening, Thomas writes, “How interested I feel for her. How anxious I am with reference to her spiritual welfare.”⁴⁸

While the detailed attention Thomas gives to the religious activities at Wesleyan is certainly remarkable, the evangelical culture she describes developing at the school was not uncommon for women's colleges generally. Rather, the type of religious culture outlined in Thomas' diary, a culture that was preoccupied with female students' spiritual growth and/or conversion, was a common element of the southern woman's college. Noting the development of a similar religious culture at the school she was attending in the 1850s, Mary Bailey informed her father that “a revival of religion [had] commenced in [her] school [and] many young ladies [were] anxiously inquiring what they sh[ould] do to be saved.”⁴⁹ According to Mary, “several [of her peers] ha[d] already obtained a hope of pardon” and she “humbly place[d] her own name in that class.”⁵⁰ In her journal, Susan Nye Hutchison, a teacher at a Raleigh woman's college, also noted that a similar religious revival was taking place at Athens Female College.⁵¹

By concentrating on spirituality while at school, young women embraced the idea that their identities were linked to piety and moral regeneration. At the same time as they reinforced the Protestant ideal of the Christian woman, however, they also, somewhat paradoxically, extended beyond and even challenged the ideal. In their very upholding of the image of the pious woman, female students exercised an independence that southern evangelicalism did not necessarily intend to grant them. Rather than simply adhering to the idea that they be passive and submissive, young women used the authority granted them in religion to be the leaders of their own lives while at college.

In the midst of fulfilling the expectation that they be pious individuals, female students used the authority granted them in religion to challenge strict rules outlined by colleges. In reading Thomas's journal it becomes clear that focusing on peers' spiritual conditions provided students with the opportunity to create their own rules and schedules. Numerous entries in Thomas's journal describe how a preoccupation with spirituality became an excuse for neglecting homework and skipping class. Staying up to “hear the girls sing until eleven” during one particularly exciting evening of “glorious revival” hindered Thomas from reading over her lesson.⁵² On another occasion she “ask[ed] Mr. Stone to excuse her

from recitation” so that she could go down to Daughter Solomon’s room to check on Bell Fernandez, who, she reports, “was perfectly happy lying on the bed shouting the praises of God.”⁵³ At times attention to religious matters concluded in Thomas both neglecting her homework and skipping class. Too busy talking to her peers to prepare for her astronomy class, Thomas “stayed away from recitation and from 11 to 12 was in Fannie Floyd’s room talking to her.”⁵⁴ Again, a few weeks later, Thomas notes that she “did not attend Dr. Ellison’s recitation in Astronomy or Mr. Stone’s recitation in Natural Philosophy.”⁵⁵ While religious reasons seemed to excuse Thomas from classes at times, eventually her lack of attention to college schedules and rules dissatisfied college authorities. On one Wednesday evening Thomas “received the harshest reproof [she] ever did receive” from Mr. Stone, a teacher whose classes Thomas had been repeatedly skipping.⁵⁶

In addition to using their identities as religious persons to neglect homework and skip classes, female students set their own rules and schedules by staying up late and being noisy. Detailing Sue Evans’s evening conversion, Thomas writes, “all [the girls] were shouting and praying and making a good deal of noise when someone said [their instructor] Mr. Myers was coming [down the hallway].” Displeased with the girls’ behaviour, Mr. Myers “requested [them] to come to [their] rooms” and he did this in such a manner that “all [the young women] stopped shouting immediately and left the room.”⁵⁷ Rather than paying strict attention to the rules outlined for them, rules that, according to parents, were intended to remind them of the place of authority in their lives and so prepare them to be submissive later in life,⁵⁸ students used religion as a way to challenge college rules and exercise authority in their own lives.

Examining the religious culture that developed at women’s colleges both highlights the ironies existent within southern evangelical ideals and sheds light on broader issues within historical scholarship. An analysis of the religious culture that developed at women’s colleges suggests that southern evangelicalism was full of ironies and that it was amidst these ironies that college women found the space to exert agency in their lives. While common interpretations of the Bible suggested that women were by nature dependent creatures whose priority it was to obey male patriarchs, the very status evangelicalism granted to women as pious individuals challenged the notion that women were helpless creatures who should take on only subordinate roles within society. For in simply using the religious

authority granted them, southern women simultaneously revealed their ability to be independent, authoritative figures. This was certainly the case at the southern woman's college, where young women fulfilled their identities as pious individuals at the same time that they challenged their supposedly dependent nature.

At the same time that evangelicalism encouraged young women to maintain identities as spiritual beings, it also stipulated that they remain passive and submissive – a combination which, considering the very “active, noisy, physical, and enthusiastic” nature of southern evangelicalism, proved impossible to accomplish.⁵⁹ In female students' very embrace of their identities as pious individuals, therefore, they encountered a religion that was itself inconsistent with the evangelical ideal of female passivity.⁶⁰ It was in the midst of these tensions inherent in southern evangelical ideals that women shaped their lives and identities.

An examination of the religious cultures at women's colleges also sheds light on wider issues within both southern women's history and American religious history. The ways in which female students shaped their lives through their religious behaviour reveal that, despite what scholarly narratives suggest, women were not simply victims of southern religion.⁶¹ By concentrating on the spiritual conditions of their fellow peers, women embraced their prescribed roles as pious individuals who were concentrated on morally regenerating society. In the midst of embracing this role, however, young women collectively challenged their identities as passive and dependent beings. Recognizing that southern college women both challenged and contributed to southern gender ideals through their cultivation of a religious culture draws attention to their roles as social actors and underlines the problem with viewing religion as a monolithic force in southern women's lives.⁶²

An analysis of the influence of evangelicalism in female students' lives is equally important for broader historical scholarship. It suggests that examining diverse types of sources and embracing an interdisciplinary approach benefits scholarly efforts to understand the influence of Christianity in historical persons' lives. Extending analyses beyond traditional religious sources (such as sermons and religious tracts) and typical religious contexts (such as churches) complicates monolithic interpretations of Christian history and contributes to a re-envisioning of religious history.⁶³

Endnotes

1. Scott Stephan, *Redeeming the Southern Family: Evangelical Women and Domestic Devotion in the Antebellum South* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 14.
2. Stephan, *Redeeming the Southern Family*, 14.
3. Few scholars say this directly, but their analyses imply it by suggesting that women's education, which included a vigorous religious education, was propagandizing in nature. See, for example, Sally G. McMillen, *Southern Women: Black and White in the Old South*, 2nd ed. (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davison, 2002), 92-100; and Patricia Palmieri, "Women's Colleges," in *Women in Academe: Progress and Prospects*, ed. Mariam K. Chamberlain (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1991), 111.
4. Donald G. Matthews, "Introduction," in *Religion in the American South: Protestants and Others in History and Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 3.
5. Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (1966): 151-74.
6. Rosemary Skinner Keller, Rosemary Radford Ruether, and Marie Cantlon, "Protestant Women's Colleges in the United States," in *The Encyclopaedia of Women and Religion in North America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 1:xxxiv.
7. Tina Stewart Brakebill and Celestia Rice Colby, "*Circumstances are Destiny*": an Antebellum Woman's Struggle to Define Sphere (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2006), 10.
8. Victoria Boynton and Jo Malin, ed., *Encyclopedia of Women's Autobiography: K-Z* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2005), 8.
9. Jean E. Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden: Women and Community in the Evangelical South, 1830-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 35.
10. Stephan further outlines woman's role as redeemer of the southern family in his work *Redeeming the Southern Family*.
11. Dew, "Dissertation on the Characteristic Differences between the Sexes, and on the Position and Influence of Woman in Society, No. III," 690.

12. Virginia Cary as quoted by Elizabeth R. Varon, *We Mean to be Counted: White Women & Politics in Antebellum Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 14. Emphasis mine.
13. As quoted by Mary Watters, "The History of Mary Baldwin College, 1842-1942" (Ph.D. diss., Mary Baldwin College, 1942), 23.
14. Harmony Female College, "Circular of Harmony Female College, Sumter Mineral Springs, South Carolina, for 1859" (Sumter Mineral Springs, SC: Harmony, 1859), 6. Available online: <http://www.archive.org/stream/circularofharmon00pres#page/n17/mode/2up> (accessed 3 February 2012).
15. Catherine Clinton, "Equally Their Due: The Education of the Planter Daughter in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic* 2 (1982): 48.
16. As quoted in Watters, "The History of Mary Baldwin College," 22.
17. Athens Female College, *Second Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Pupils of Athens Female College at Athens, Tennessee (July 5, 1860)*, 14-15.
18. Athens Female College, *Second Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Pupils of Athens Female College at Athens, Tennessee (July 5, 1860)*, 14-15; Greenville Woman's College, *Catalogue of the Trustees, Faculty, and Students of the Greenville Baptist Female College* (Greenville, SC: Greenville Baptist Female College, 1857), 13; and Watters, "The History of Mary Baldwin College," 22.
19. Watters, "The History of Mary Baldwin College," 22.
20. Rufus W. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Education, 1857), 224.
21. Sanders, 15 July 1862; quoted by Pearl J. Young in "'Genius uncultivated is like a meteor of the night': Motives and Experiences of Methodist Female College Life in the Confederate States of America," *Methodist History* 47, no. 3 (2009): 190.
22. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 11.
23. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 207.
24. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 207.
25. Ronald Lora and William Henry Longton, ed., *The Conservative Press in Eighteenth-and Nineteenth-Century America* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999), 169.

26. Lora and Longton, ed., *Conservative Press in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century America*, 169.
27. Lora and Longton, ed., *Conservative Press in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century America*, 169.
28. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 155.
29. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 156.
30. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 157.
31. Ella Gertrude Clanton Thomas, *The Secret Eye: The Journal of Ella Gertrude Thomas, 1848-1889*, ed. Virginia Ingraham Burr (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 82.
32. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 83-92.
33. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 83-92.
34. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 83.
35. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 86-7.
36. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 82- 3, 86-8, 92.
37. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 83.
38. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 83.
39. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87.
40. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87.
41. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87.
42. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 88.
43. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87.
44. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87. It is peculiar that Thomas cites Joe Freeman as one of the girls who was converted on 2 February 1849, but then outlines Freeman's unresponsiveness to Christianity throughout the rest of her journal. Perhaps Thomas believed that Freeman's conversion was not total or genuine.
45. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 88.
46. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 88.
47. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 92.

48. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87.
49. Mary Bailey's letters as described by her father, Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 39.
50. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 39.
51. Susan Nye Hutchison, Journal entry for 10 November 1826. Available online: http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/h/Hutchison,Susan_Davis_Nye.html
52. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87.
53. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 87.
54. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 84.
55. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 88.
56. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 92. Thomas does not explicitly state that the reason she received a "harsh reproof" from Mr. Stone was because of her skipping his classes, but given that Thomas repeatedly mentions neglecting homework from, and skipping, this class, it is inferred.
57. Thomas, *The Secret Eye*, 88.
58. Bailey, *Daughters in School Instructed in a Series of Letters*, 156-157.
59. Anna M. Lawrence, "The Fires of Evangelicalism in the Cauldron of the Early Republic: Race, Class, and Gender in the Second Great Awakening," in *Early Republic: People and Perspectives*, ed. Andrew K. Frank (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2009), 163.
60. Lawrence, "The Fires of Evangelicalism in the Cauldron of the Early Republic," 163.
61. Stephan outlines the tendency existent in scholarship to study only what "religion did to southern women" in his work *Redeeming the Southern Family*, 14.
62. George Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 271.
63. Harry S. Stout and D.G. Hart, ed., *New Directions in American Religious History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 5.