

Truthful Pictures

TRUTHFUL PICTURES

Slavery Ordained by God in the
Domestic Sentimental Novel of the
Nineteenth-Century South



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Truthful Pictures examines novels and sermons written in the antebellum South, in particular those written after the 1851 publication of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It begins with a historical overview of the function of women writers in American literature in order to help locate sentimental fiction within the historical place of women in America by analyzing the works of Southern female authors such as Caroline Hentz and Mary H. Eastman. Though they follow in Harriet Beecher Stowe's footsteps, authors like Hentz and Eastman used their voice in conjunction with Christian ideology to support slavery. The text then explores the way in which Holy Scripture was perverted in Southern sermons by pulpit leaders such as Thorton Stringfellow and Alexander McCaine in order to allow the continued enslavement of one group by another, using religion to defend white patriarchy as the normal way of life. By examining antebellum sermons and writings and their influence on sentimental novels, Truthful Picture shows how religious texts reinforced political ideologies in the wake of increasing racial tensions between the North and the South.

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