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## The presence of Christian faith traditions and Judaic cultural and faith traditions in multicultural picture books

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THE PRESENCE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH TRADITIONS AND  
JUDAIC CULTURAL AND FAITH TRADITIONS IN  
MULTICULTURAL PICTURE BOOKS

Thesis

Submitted to

The School of Education of the  
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

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by

Ella Schwachter

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WE HEREBY APPROVE THE MASTER'S THESIS SUBMITTED

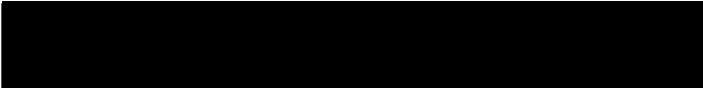
BY

Ella Schwachter


ENTITLED: The Presence of Christian Faith Traditions and Judaic Cultural and Faith  
Traditions in Multicultural Picture Books

AS PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF


Master of Science in Education

  
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## ABSTRACT

### THE PRESENCE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH TRADITIONS AND JUDAIC CULTURAL AND FAITH TRADITIONS IN MULTICULTURAL PICTURE BOOKS

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Prior to discussing the research completed to determine whether Christian faith and Jewish traditions are present in multicultural picture books, (a) the cultural demographics of our nation's schools, (b) the importance of using literature representative of children's cultures in the classroom, and (c) the goals and benefits of a multicultural education are reviewed. An analysis of 148 multicultural picture books indicated that the majority of multicultural picture books contain Christian faith traditions; they do not reflect the diverse religious beliefs of our schools' populations. Before presenting the relevance of these findings, the necessity of teaching about religions is discussed.

The impact of the presence of Christian faith traditions in classroom literature is discussed in regard to (a) teaching students tolerance and acceptance of religious beliefs that differ from their own, as well as (b) the possible reactions to the presence of Christian faith traditions by children of different faiths.

In conclusion, an analysis of three books found to contain Jewish traditions is completed to determine if there is an assumption of Christianity present. The effects of using literature found to contain an assumption of Christianity is discussed in light of two issues: the impact of that assumption on Jewish children in the classroom; and the

impact of that assumption on all children participating in a curriculum designed to teach them tolerance and acceptance of other cultures.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

We are a nation of many ethnic groups, resulting in our nation's classrooms being culturally diverse. And while cultures are not counted in the U.S. Census, ethnicities are. Per the U.S. Census Bureau as of 2002, 18% of the population included African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and American Indians; it is estimated that by the year 2050, nearly 50% of the U.S. population will be made up of "people of color" (Kim, Green, & Klein, 2006, p. 223). These changing demographics create situations in classrooms in which multicultural sensitivity is not just an ideal to strive for, it is a necessity. Multicultural sensitivity is demonstrated when individuals are able to communicate with, work collaboratively with, and show understanding and respect for people of cultural backgrounds different from their own (Hunter & Elias, as cited in Kim et al.). Multicultural sensitivity can be realized through teachers providing students with a multicultural education. The intent of this research is to look at one aspect of multicultural education: multicultural picture books used in classrooms, and more specifically the extent to which these books contain Christian faith or Jewish traditions.

*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines multiculturalism as "relating to, reflecting, or adapted to diverse cultures" (2003, p. 815); the definition of culture includes "the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group; also: the characteristic features of everyday existence . . . shared by people in a place or time" (p. 304). Multiculturalism and the concept of culture within it have clear definitions, but multicultural education does not; its definition, as well as how it is implemented, is an evolving process. In this section, the following topics are presented:

(a) the evolution of multicultural education, (b) contemporary issues arising as a result of the current implementation of multicultural education, and (c) the importance of using picture books in the classroom. In conclusion are comments about how I came to my topic: What evidence of Christian faith and Jewish traditions are found in children's multicultural picture books?

### The Evolution of Multicultural Education

Multiculturalism became a popular topic in the United States in the 1960s and 1970s (Mendoza & Reese, 2001) and has been evolving ever since. Initially, multiculturalism was reflected in books when minority characters ceased being depicted in overtly racist ways (Levinson, 2007, p. 634). Through the '80s and '90s research reflected the need for multicultural education to move beyond merely including non-stereotypical characters. It was argued that students needed to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for America to become a nation in which full participation by all minority groups could become a reality (Banks, as cited in Levinson).

In 2007, Nieto and Bode (as cited in Levinson, 2007) stated that multicultural education "challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism . . . that students, their communities, and teachers reflect" (p. 627). This statement, along with the recognition by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2004) that cultural context has a role in development and learning and hence ought to be included in developmentally appropriate practices, provides strong support for a multicultural focus in classrooms. Unfortunately, up to this point, many attempts at multiculturalism have served to marginalize communities that represent an alternative to the mainstream or majority culture (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).

### Contemporary Issues in Implementation of Multicultural Education

Many culturally diverse "schools neglect or even betray multicultural ideals" (Levinson, 2007, p. 626) in part because the higher the level of diversity within a school's population, the more difficult it becomes to provide educational materials representative of all cultures present. In addition, when a school's curriculum is inclusive of all cultures visibly present, cultural areas likely to be neglected are those not represented in the school population and groups not visibly different. Groups not visibly different include students whose religious beliefs and socioeconomic status differ from the majority of the student population as well as students with disabilities not visibly obvious (Kim et al., 2006).

Potentially neglecting invisible minorities is not the only issue teachers and administrators in culturally diverse schools face. These schools can become complacent about their inclusivity. They fail to think about whether the groups they choose to focus on because they are represented in the building are the most significant ones for students to learn about. . . and on the educational implications of neglecting certain kinds of diversity altogether, such as religion. (Levinson & Levinson, as cited in Levinson, 2007, p. 632)

And when religious diversity is included in the curriculum, lessons tend to include superficial information only and therefore marginalize the religious cultures they are about (Bredekamp, 1997).

"The occasional acknowledgment of a non-Christian religious holiday, or religious dietary restrictions communicates to children that non-Christian faiths are exotic or foreign, marginalized compared to the 'mainstream' or majority culture" (Bredekamp, 1997, p. 43). This is contrary to one goal of multicultural education: providing students with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain their individual cultural traditions

while living harmoniously and with understanding of others (Levinson, 2007). This goal of multicultural education comes by way of teaching cultural sensitivity—demonstrating “respect for and understanding of people of diverse cultural backgrounds” (Hunter & Elias, as cited in Kim et al., 2006, p. 224). One of the resources counselors use when called upon to assist elementary school children in attaining cultural sensitivity is picture books.

### The Importance of Using Picture Books

Picture books are frequently used at a point in children's lives when “they are especially impressionable . . . when they first begin to formulate ideas about culture” (Worland, 2008, p. 42). The influence picture books can exert on their audience is in large part due to the illustrations; “a picture can say a thousand words.” As elementary education curricula have expanded to include multiculturalism, a role has been created for multicultural picture books, those which “depict the variety of ethnic, racial, and cultural groups within U.S. society” (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

Beyond the roles picture books have historically played in elementary education, quality multicultural picture books help “healthy and positive interaction among cultures to occur, it is vital that people be exposed to, and be taught to appreciate, their differences and commonalities. One hopes that this will lead to greater sensitivity in the younger generation” (Firschein, 1993/1994, p. 102) and enable students to truly embrace and accept rather than just tolerate other cultures. My desire to help students accept other cultures comes from personal experiences which I provide background on in the next section.

## Background to the Study

My parents are originally from South Africa where, under the apartheid system, my father was categorized as coloured. To be coloured in South Africa means you are a "person of mixed decent" (Barker et al., 1994, p. 531), not belonging to any one racial group; "the only thing that made a coloured person different to a white person was the status that apartheid and its racial cornerstone, the Population Registration Act, gave him" (p. 393). When apartheid became government policy, laws were created segregating education, neighborhoods, drinking fountains, and public beaches; people of different races were not to mix. This government mandated segregation across multiple racial lines created a new culture, one resulting from the existence of apartheid that is nonexistent outside South Africa, a coloured culture.

When my father immigrated to the United States of America he filled out his forms stating that he was White; he was informed he was Black. In 1930 the U.S. census had implemented the one-drop rule: "A person of mixed White and Negro blood was to be returned as Negro, no matter how small the percentage of Negro blood" (Bennett, as cited in Snipp, 2003, p. 568). Under this rule, my father and his descendants are Black; it was not until the 2000 census that individuals were permitted to indicate a multiracial heritage.

Unlike South Africa, where people were segregated by Black, White, or "coloured," in the USA segregation and categorization occurred between Black and White without a third racial division. Given that I was in my late 20s before the option of selecting multiple races was available to persons of mixed heritage, I have spent the majority of my life unsure of what race I ought to categorize myself as on forms. The "coloured" race, which is what I truly identify myself as, is not recognized in America; and my race is not the only part of my identity with which I have struggled.

I was raised Christian in the loosest sense of the term, loose enough that I did not feel I belonged to a religious group growing up. When I had children I knew I wanted a strong religious base in their lives. Since my children's father is Jewish, I decided to delve into Judaism and ultimately decided to not only raise my children in the Jewish tradition, but also to convert to Judaism. Having been raised in a Christian home juxtaposed with having a Jewish home as an adult has made me extremely aware of the Christian traditions and artifacts that abound in America.

As part of my graduate studies I observed a 2-day lesson on seasons featuring extensive use of children's literature in a public school Kindergarten classroom. I noticed that the books read aloud contained references to Easter and Christmas. As expected, these occurrences were accepted with no comment from the students; but the teacher also did not comment about their presence or acknowledge any non-Christian holidays during the lesson. My awareness of the Christian faith tradition embedded in the lesson was likely heightened due to the multicultural makeup of my own family.

In the same semester that I observed the lesson on seasons, I was enrolled in a children's literature class. A large portion of class time was spent sharing books with each other covering the different genres of literature. Of the books being presented by other students, a large number of books contained implicit and explicit references to elements of Christian faith tradition. These were books being presented by future educators for use in classrooms—in both public and private schools; no mention of religion was made other than with books about a specific holiday.

Once I began teaching, I felt that the potential rewards from exposing a child to multiple cultures were too great to ignore; and a natural way to introduce different cultures was beginning with holidays; if a school acknowledged any holiday, my classroom would acknowledge all holidays, Christian and non-Christian. The lessons I

taught about the different holidays incorporated information about the history of the holidays, the people that celebrated the holiday, different ways the holiday was celebrated around the world, and if a religion was involved, additional factual information about that religion. In my search for picture books to use during the lessons, I was faced with the difficulty of finding quality picture books about non-Euro Christian holidays and cultures; one of the resources I turned to was the *Horn Book Guide* (n.d.) which is the source I used to locate the multicultural picture books in my analysis. It was these experiences, as a teacher in training and then as a teacher, that were the catalyst to my embarking on this study.

Initially I wanted to determine if religious traditions were present in the majority of children's picture books. The sheer quantity of picture books required that I establish parameters on the types of books I would include. Multiculturalism was a subject within education that I was continuously drawn to so I narrowed the books to be analyzed to multicultural picture books only. The second parameter to be narrowed was which religions to include in my analysis. I decided to focus on the presence of Christianity because it is the dominant religion in the USA; because I wanted to juxtapose the presence of Christianity with that of another religion, I chose Judaism because of my personal religious choices in life. In determining what representations of each religion I would consider in my analysis of multicultural picture books, I realized that the Jewish symbols I encounter on a daily basis are cultural as well as religious.

Judaism is not just a religion; it is a culture as well, and the "Jewish 'Diaspora law of talion' – a culture for a culture" (Dimont, 2004, p. 369) is the reason different Judaic cultures exist throughout the world. Jews not living in Israel are considered to be "in *Diaspora*, a word from the Greek meaning a 'scattering,' or 'scatter about,' and signifying

that body of Jews scattered about in the gentile world" (Dimont, p. 6). The rationale behind referring to the dispersed Jews as in Diaspora rather than exile is that

a people in exile . . . produces no culture . . . gradually dies out through assimilation. . . This has been the case with all other exiled peoples. The Jews were the only exception. The Diaspora produced new Jewish cultures. Though the inner core of each Diaspora culture always remained distinctly Jewish, each took on the dominant traits of the host civilization. It was always Jehovah and monotheism, no matter how each such Diaspora culture was packaged--in Greek tunic, in Arab mufti, or in American ivy-league. (p. 116)

The religion of Judaism, through the *Talmud* and *Tanakh*, has been a unifying force behind Jews worldwide, as have the atrocities survived by Jews as an ethnic minority (i.e., the holocaust). Jews in Diaspora have created multiple cultures throughout the world which vary from each other while maintaining commonalities that are both cultural and religious. Because of this, the visual and textual representation of symbols to be used as indicative of a presence of Judaism in multicultural picture books will be inclusive of both cultural and religious symbols.

In the review of literature, studies were available regarding the use of literature to scaffold the development of children's identities, as well as articles about teaching with literature containing assumptions of "Whiteness" and sexism. In this review, I noticed that research studies regarding religious assumptions in literature were sorely missing. A literature search on October 8, 2007, using two criteria, picture books and religion, yielded 12 articles and books. The resulting documents covered: using picture books to integrate social studies with philosophy and religion; an epic poem from India; a collection of Native American songs; the construction of gender within picture books; religion and its impact on university freshmen's attitudes with regard to gender roles;

using picture books as a method of teaching about social justice; five annotated bibliographies of picture books; and one article evaluating books with a Jewish interest component. While some of the articles are relevant to my topic and are included in my review of the literature, none provided insight into my topic.

I hoped to find articles acknowledging that issues concerning ethnic and cultural minorities, such as stereotypical portrayal in literature and exclusion from day-to-day curriculum, are also relevant to religious minorities. Additionally, I hoped to find literature that reflected that teacher preparation curricula teach how ethnic minorities benefit when their cultures are included in teacher education curriculum, and that the groups included within "ethnic minorities" were inclusive of religious minorities. Literature reflecting these ideas was not found. The benefits now provided to cultural minorities ought to be available for children who are not Christian too. The idea that religion is a valid part of a child's culture needs to be a part of teacher preparation as well as part of how multicultural education is approached in the curriculum. I feel an initial step to be taken in achieving this goal is to conduct a research study addressing the following question: What evidence of Christian faith and Jewish traditions is found in children's multicultural picture books?

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Since very little was found on religious diversity in children's literature as this review of the literature was completed, I reviewed the research related to the more general topic of multicultural aspects of children's literature. Within this category, I focused on six areas of research: (a) importance of using multicultural literature, (b) children's interest in multicultural literature, (c) using literature containing controversial issues, (d) issues encountered when using multicultural literature, and (e) ways to use multicultural literature with assumptions / bias.

#### Importance of Using Multicultural Literature

The goals of a multicultural education curriculum include "promoting social justice and equality, common civic membership, and mutual respect and understanding" (Levinson, 2007, p. 625) while "fostering all students' learning and academic achievement" (p. 628) regardless of racial or cultural background. The inclusion of multicultural resources into the classroom "as intrinsic components of the curriculum, not just add-ons" (Ladson-Billings, as cited in Levinson, p. 628) is essential in order to allow students from minority cultures to use their experiences from home in making connections with the classroom and better understand what they are being taught. One way to integrate multicultural education into the curriculum is through multicultural literature.

The importance of using multicultural picture books in our classrooms has grown in relation to the increasing diversity in our classrooms. The reason for this is threefold: (a)

all students, including those from minority cultures, should see themselves in the literature they are exposed to in the classroom, (b) culturally diverse books can be used at a time that children are developing their moral character and sense of identity, and (c) culturally diverse books can provide students with knowledge about cultures, their own and others.

"Children in the primary grades make great strides in cognitive development. This growth affects not only their academic work . . . but also their . . . moral reasoning" (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 147); the literature that teachers share with their students can impact this moral development, and hence their sense of identity. Per the NAEYC statement on developmentally appropriate practice for children ages 6 through 8, "culturally diverse . . . activities and material are provided to support individual children's development of self-identity" (p. 171). One type of culturally diverse material available is picture books, and "research shows that children translate the values and messages in books into attitudes and behavior. Children internalize messages in books to the point where they expect the real world to mirror the imaginary world of their favorite books" (Worland, 2008, pp. 42-43). It is important then that students see themselves and their cultures in those imaginary worlds.

Students need to see themselves in literature we share in the classroom because reading, specifically "aesthetic reading in which the person is drawn into the story and participates through identification with characters" (Mendoza & Reese, 2001), causes personal and emotional responses and reactions. Connections made on this visceral level may result in increased participation in classroom discussions. An additional benefit of students seeing themselves or their cultures in literature is that it "validate[s] the children's culturally different experiences at home" (Ada, as cited in Kim et al., 2006, p. 226).

Since it is believed that students use prior knowledge and their experiences to make meaning of text and connect with literature (Towell, Schulz, & Demetrulias, 1997), providing students from culturally diverse homes the opportunity to see their experiences reflected in classroom literature affords them the same benefits that students from culturally "mainstream" homes have typically had. These literary experiences can also help students develop their sense of identity.

Providing students with literature that portrays their culture in a positive manner is important because "in the typical course of development, children compare themselves to others favorably and unfavorably. This information becomes part of their self-concept. . . . Experiences that shape self-concept and self-esteem are especially important" (Bredenkamp & Copple, 1997, p. 155) and one way teachers provide an experience in the classroom is through literature. In addition, using culturally diverse literature is a benefit to all the students present, not just those whose culture is being presented.

Regarding the appropriate age at which to begin using multicultural literature, it was reported that children begin asking questions regarding differences between people by the age of 2 and that by the age of 9, the attitudes children have developed regarding cultures different from their own will remain "constant unless altered by life changing events" (Wham, Barnhart, & Cook, 1996, p. 1). Wham et al. completed research in an attempt to answer whether "children's attitudes toward multicultural diversity [are] enhanced by exposure to multicultural literature" (p. 2).

In the study which included two classes each of kindergarten, second-grade, and fourth-grade with one control group at each grade, Wham et al. (1996) found that the control groups showed attitudes that were more negative toward other cultural groups at the end of the year. While the groups whose literature was inclusive of different cultures showed increased positive attitudes toward diversity, the greatest changes, both positive

and negative, were at the second grade level. It was concluded that this is the time "when multicultural attitudes might be most modifiable" (p. 5). As a result of these findings, Wham et al. believe "it is critical for intervention programs to be implemented in order to enhance appreciation of individuals representing other cultures, circumstances or lifestyles" (p. 6) at a young age. While any quality multicultural literature can assist individuals in appreciating diverse cultures, picture books specifically are important because per Clark and Fink (as cited in Worland, 2008, p. 42) "picture books have ways of authenticating the experience of 'silenced' others that novels lack."

In addition to assisting in children's development of consciousness, multicultural literature can be used in other ways in the classroom. Huber and Clandinin (2004) have explored the use of literature to scaffold children's literary responses in developing their identity. During the study, one student's identity was demonstrably scaffolded through "different relationships, with different books, with different characters, with different storylines" (p. 146). The conclusion reached was that the different literature that is made available and used in the classroom helps children as they develop and discover their identities. It allows the teacher to help students "tell their identity stories . . . with new insights" (p. 148). Literature available in the classroom needs to be diverse enough to provide both students and teachers many ways in which to envision and see themselves and their own stories. "We created a rich literature environment, filled with fiction and nonfiction, cultural and family diversity, and diverse plotlines. This enabled us as teachers to create spaces where children could find a range of imaginative possibilities for themselves" (p. 157). As students from diverse cultures are exposed to literature reflecting their cultures, this exposure is shared by students belonging to "mainstream" American culture.

"Each time a child reads a book about a person of a different race, that race becomes demystified . . . [and] may promote a new awareness that leads to understanding and acceptance" (Holmes, Powell, Holmes, & Witt, 2007, p. 280). The social growth that can be achieved through multicultural education abounds. One aspect of this is that through better understanding of different cultures, students can improve their "ability to resolve conflicts with others across a range of situations" (Kim et al., 2006, p. 224); social-problem solving skills. The importance of obtaining social problem solving skills, and hence social competence across cultures is important given that America is becoming increasingly diverse. Hopefully, literature that promotes this growth will not be accessed only during teacher led instruction. Attainment of knowledge, pleasure, or a combination of the two are amongst the reasons people read, and "even recreational reading leads to unintended learning" (Holmes et al., p. 276). Teachers can provide culturally diverse literature, but will students choose to read it?

#### Children's Interest in Multicultural Literature

In a study of African American and White students in third grade, the selection of books based on cover art as well as the amount of time spent reading a book (assumed to be indicative of the level of interest) was compared with the "racial congruence, or lack thereof, of the characters in the books to the background of the reader" (Holmes et al., 2007, p. 278). After collecting data for girls and boys of both races, it was concluded that "the students appeared to disregard the race of the character(s) on the cover of the books in their selections. . . . [It was found that] Black students and White students do not differentiate by race in their preference for books" (p. 279).

In another study completed with 110 children in the primary grades, Towell, Schulz, and Demetrulias (1997) found that the response to books portraying Asian Americans, African Americans, European Americans, and Hispanic Americans indicated that the

ethnicity of the characters was not relevant to the children. Since the research indicates that culturally diverse characters do not deter students from being interested in books and the benefits of exposing them to such diversity are great, one other potential issue that may arise in peoples' minds is that multicultural books bring to light the "'undiscussables' related to race/ethnicity, class, and gender. *Undiscussables* are those subjects that people choose not to talk about because they have often been 'taboo' in educational settings" (Caruthers, Thompson, & Eubanks, 2004, p. 36).

### Using Literature with Controversial Issues

Whether contained in literature with characters from minority cultures or the mainstream culture, "undiscussables" are issues that people of all races, nationalities, and cultures experience; but parents and teachers may question whether children who have not encountered them should be exposed to this literature. Why introduce literature containing less than pleasant aspects of life into children's lives?

Lehr and Thompson (2000) completed a study with two fifth grade classes which showed that by this age students understand the multiple sides of moral dilemmas and problems faced by characters in literature. When confronted with these issues in literature featuring characters different from themselves, children may be more likely to consider the situation from a different viewpoint they would typically take. This is why teachers can and ought to "select multicultural books for their classes and allow time to discuss the issues that arise from them" (Bainbridge, Pantaleo, & Ellis, 1999). This includes books that may contain characters who work through difficult, "unmentionable" issues. The presence of such issues should not be cause to exclude a book from a lesson, rather, the presence of such "unmentionable" issues should be used as an opportunity to help students' understand these problems from multiple perspectives.

We know that children in the primary grades begin to “think about and reflect on rules of behavior and to understand right and wrong” (Shantz, as cited in Bredekamp & Copple, p. 153). They begin developing a “conscience”; and the adults in their lives, teachers and adults in their homes, have a lasting impact on their moral development (Bredekamp & Copple, pp. 152-154). If children are not provided with opportunities to explore and talk about controversial issues in a familiar environment, they will still encounter them, but without the guidance of an adult to help them understand. “Students at any grade level are able to recall a scenario in which they were involved in a situation of inequality. Role playing and follow-up discussions can help students explore their feelings and admit their roles in the situations” (White, 2008, p. 84).

#### Issues Encountered when Using Multicultural Literature

As our nations' classrooms have become more diverse, the need for multicultural literature has increased; and just as multicultural education has evolved, so too have multicultural picture books. Issues that existed prior to the popularization of the multicultural concept included stereotypical portrayals of women and ethnic minorities as well as providing inaccurate information about minority cultures. In addition to these issues, additional concerns have come to light: (a) who is present in the literature, (b) which cultures are excluded in the study of multiculturalism and its literature, and (c) the quality of writing and illustrations of the books. Newbery and Caldecott award winners as well as the review journal *Horn Book* are among the sources used by teachers to find quality children's literature. However, recommendations for multicultural literature from these sources do not necessarily guarantee quality.

### *Who is Present in the Literature Available?*

"Works by European American writers and illustrators . . . dominate the lists of winners of the two oldest prestigious awards-the Caldecott and Newbery Medals" (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). A study covering the Newbery award winners for the years 1922-1994 found that 90% of the books had White Anglo-Saxon characters while only 26% had Black characters (Gillespie, Powell, Clements, & Swearingen, 1994); and of the multicultural books that are available "a disproportionate percentage of the so-called 'multicultural' literature books that depict minority cultures in the U.S. are imbued with dominant Eurocentric ideologies and values" (Fang, Fu, & Lamme, 1999, p. 261). "In essence, children in the United States still experience an 'all white' world" (Fondrie, 2001, p. 10).

The above statistics indicate that historically there has been a lack of quality multicultural literature available. The 1960s and 1970s fostered a marked increase in interest in what we now refer to as multicultural literature (Mendoza & Reese, 2001). Authors and illustrators from minority cultures are now in print, and books are available with characters that are disabled, homosexuals, or practice religions other than Christianity. In addition to the prevalence and portrayal of minority cultures in literature, portrayal of genders was also of interest in the '60s and '70s.

When analyzing the manner in which women are portrayed in literature, a seminal study published in 1972 by Weitzman, Eifler, Hokada, and Ross strongly condemns Caldecott books as well as other highly regarded and highly popular picture books for perpetuating sex-role stereotypes and representing women and girls as inferior to men and boys. (Worland, 2008, p. 43)

The incidence of stereotypes of gender has diminished, but "because the analysis of gender portrayal is complex and somewhat subjective, results are not always

straightforward. When improvements exist in one area . . . other areas may continue to be inequitable" (p. 44). The progress made in how women are portrayed in literature has stemmed in large part "from the approach taken by liberal feminists. . . . From a contemporary perspective, while appreciating the progress that approach inspired, its limitations suggest the necessity for broader goals" (p. 44). This broadening of goals applies not only to the portrayal of women, but to the portrayal of both genders.

"The most commonly read and often award-winning picture books of the 1960s portrayed gender in very unequal and stereotypical ways. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, this situation improved, although inequality still existed" (Worland, 2008, p. 42); both men and women were portrayed in stereotypical manners but, in addition to appearing with greater frequency, males were portrayed as "more clever and adventuresome" (p. 43) while girls had more passive roles. The trend in Caldecott winners has been a decrease in sexism up until the 1980s at which point the trend stagnated. The impact of books with characters portrayed in non-stereotypical manner was conducted with a group of third graders (Rice, 2002). One problem the researcher encountered was "difficulty locating books in which males are portrayed with nontraditional gender characteristics" (p. 34).

The majority of the books matching Rice's (2002) criteria were out of print due to lack of demand. Once books were located and the research was conducted, Rice realized that "simply reading the story with the character in a nontraditional role did not enable the students to expand their definitions of masculinity and femininity" (p. 37). It was after group discussions that both boys and girls changed their perceptions of gender roles. Embracing new concepts of gender roles required discussing the literature, not just reading it. Teachers can influence topics of discussion by the questions they pose; and

in addition to topics regarding gender, questions can be posed to stimulate discussions regarding race as well.

Fondrie (2001) asks "Why does the main character have to be a white male? Why is a white male the one who solves all the problems and gets results?" (p. 9); these questions are not relevant in all contemporary books, but they are for the majority. "The Cooperative Children's Book Center estimates that out of the 4500 to 5000 books published in 2000, approximately 301 are by or about people of color (Horning, Kruse, & Schliesman, 2001). This represents, at best, seven percent of the books" (p. 10). In addition to the availability of culturally diverse books being an issue, how culture is defined within the context of multicultural education and multicultural books is as well.

Jacobs and Tunnell (2004) suggest that multicultural literature has typically been interpreted as being only about different ethnic groups "especially within the United States and Canada. . . . This definition is far too narrow. Our diverse population includes a variety of cultural groups that often cross color lines, such as religious groups" (p. 216). Regarding how one such religious group, Jewish-Americans, are viewed, "Jews are an ethnic group that is often culturally and socially different, as well as religiously different from the majority population of the United States; but . . . seem to be viewed today as part of the mainstream white population" (Firschein, 1993/1994, p. 103). This discounting of religious diversity spans the realms of other minorities within American society as well; Irish Americans are in part defined by their Catholicism, and a unifying factor among African Americans is their churches (Monsma, 2005, p. 44). Religion is a part of the cultures of these different groups of people and cannot be ignored. Multicultural educators need to be aware not just of what groups are included in studies of cultures, but also what groups are not. The manner in which books present information about these cultures and religions also needs to be considered.

### *Quality of Multicultural Literature*

Mendoza and Reese (2001) state that "teachers are sometimes caught by the unexamined assumption that a book is multicultural and worthwhile if it has non-European-American characters or themes and is critically acclaimed in well-known journals." However, "criticism of children's literature . . . has historically been the domain of European Americans." Gillespie et al. (1994) recommend that prior to using Newbery Medal books teachers read them carefully to ensure that the characters are accurately portrayed. "Teachers and librarians may find that rather than portraying a character as a complex human being, some of the Newbery Medal books portray the characters in a stereotypical light" (p. 48).

Regarding quality children's books about Jews or Judaism, Firschein (1993/1994) believes they ought to "transcend race and religion and, *incidentally*, communicate to the reader something about Judaism, as it is an integral part of a larger story" (p. 102). "Asher (1979) found that . . . children comprehended reading material more when the material was highly interesting" (Holmes et al., 2007, p. 277); and using multicultural books that approach the cultural subject matter as an integral part of a good story decreases the possibility that its use marginalizes the minority culture. When selecting books with which to teach about cultures, they ought to be of such quality that "a reader of any culture should be able to relate to the truth of the situation . . . and to characters whose human qualities surmount cultural differences" (Firschein, p. 102); the books ought to be "chosen for their universal appeal, that is for having themes common to all people" (p.102).

Given that some award winning multicultural books and others that have been favorably critiqued by review journals are "subsequently panned by reviewers from the group being portrayed" (Menodza & Reese, 2001), it stands to reason that "mainstream"

review journals and well-known literary awards are not necessarily good sources for locating quality multicultural literature. Mendoza and Reese state that the journals *Multicultural Journal*, *The New Advocate*, and *Multicultural Review* are likely to consider critical race theory in books they examine. It is important to go beyond looking at minority characters and determining whether they are portrayed in a stereo-typical fashion. Accuracy in all regards is important because "regardless of how engaging the stories are, or how important their themes, even their subtle inaccuracies may contribute to cultural misunderstanding and to potential discomfort for children whose cultures are inaccurately portrayed."

The following are awards that can be referred to in the hunt for quality multicultural literature: (a) awards given to Latino/Latina authors or illustrators: Americas Award, the Pura Belpre Award, and the Tomas Rivera Mexican American Children's Book Award; (b) awards given to African American authors or illustrators: Coretta Scott King Award and the John Steptoe Award for New Talent; (c) Jewish Literature Awards: National Jewish Book Awards, Louis Posner Memorial Award, Sydney Taylor Book Award; and (d) the Carter G. Woodson Award given for social science books depicting ethnicities in the USA (Ramsey, 2002). Additionally, the Anti-Defamation League provides lists of multicultural picture books and Barefoot Books, founded in 1993, was created with the mission to "celebrate art and story that opens the hearts and minds of children from all walks of life. . . . Taking our inspiration from many different cultures" (Barefoot Books, [www.barefoot-books.com](http://www.barefoot-books.com), as cited in Worland, 2008, p. 45).

#### Using Multicultural Literature with Assumptions / Bias

If, as Gillespie et al. (1994) warn, some authors of multicultural books may, "rather than portraying a character as a complex human being . . . portray the characters in a

stereotypical light" (p. 48), should a teacher use the book anyway? Yes; "books in which bias is openly and uncritically expressed can be used to good effect if teachers point out the flaws and discuss how and why such negative and inaccurate representations came to be" (Mendoza & Reese, 2001).

In a study with two groups of fifth graders, Lehr and Thompson (2000) focused on the interpretations and reactions of the students to literature that delved into morality issues. Lehr and Thompson were interested in what the students thought of the books, their honest reactions to them, rather than how they responded to questions with right and wrong answers. The resulting discussions progressed beyond the teacher's initial questions and the students' responses and discussion became more abstract indicating "that meaning is created in interactive discussions" (p. 485).

It was concluded that the role of the teacher, the way teachers ask questions in particular, has an impact on the students' responses and must be carefully considered. In Lehr and Thompson's (2000) study, teachers' questions were stated in a way that made it clear that the prejudices inherent in the story were wrong, but simultaneously were respectful of the students' ability to find the deeper meanings inherent and were not just a request for a litany of facts.

Fondrie (2001) believes that while using literature, the following ought to be used as guiding questions to determine if the "issues of privilege, power/powerlessness, and inter-group relationships" (p. 10) are present and ought to be discussed.:

If the authors include issues of race or ethnicity, do they use whiteness as the norm and place the burden of difference on other characters? Do the authors reveal the characters' whiteness overtly, or do they merely encourage the assumption of whiteness? What is the role whiteness plays in the story? (p.10)

These questions could also be beneficial in leading to discussions of biased literature that center around meanings versus asking students to simply regurgitate facts. In this way, they can be used to help students develop higher order skills of inference and interpretation (Lehr & Thompson, 2000).

The thought of knowingly using biased literature may cause unease; however, using it as a tool through the use of discussion can lead to many positive outcomes. An article based on a graduate level course on curriculum offered at York University in Toronto, Canada (Killoran et al., 2004) offers the following: "being aware of bias was not enough. The teachers needed to find a way to help everyone become more comfortable with talking about equity issues, and to give students the confidence and conviction to take action when they see discrimination" (p. 151).

### Conclusion

When using materials in a classroom, quality is always a factor; this rule applies to multicultural literature as much as any other resource. The body of literature reviewed clearly indicates that prejudices in picture books abound, and appear primarily in two ways: the majority of characters are White European, and the minority characters and cultures that are represented are frequently marginalized or portrayed in a stereotypical fashion.

Given that even award winning literature may contain bias, it may not be possible to avoid using biased literature in the classroom. The risk is that bias within literature that is unnoticed or unquestioned can lend itself to creating unwanted results in children's attitudes toward cultural diversity. When deciding what ought to be questioned, Fondrie (2001) states that "if we limit our focus to the multicultural aspects of children's literature, then we ignore the way whiteness provides white characters status and privilege not accorded to other characters" (p. 9). Should this same concept not be applied to the bias

of religion in literature as well? When considered within the concept of a Christian assumption in children's literature, it is important to note that the lack of representation of other religions may prevent children of minority religions from seeing themselves, and hence being able to make connections with their own "cultural identity" within the literature to which they are exposed.

Beyond connecting with literature, multicultural books and their ensuing discussions can be used in socially advantageous ways. The same methods that have been used to bring enlightenment about racial prejudices to our students may be applied to religious prejudices as well. The study by Lehr and Thompson (2000) in particular demonstrated that the introduction of literature caused reflection on racial prejudices by students; it also demonstrated the existence, even at the early ages of 10 to 11, of awareness of these prejudices' existence. The literature reviewed is extensive in analyzing racial and gender prejudices but there was none located that examined religious prejudice or bias. A starting point to determining if racial prejudice or bias exists is determining if minority religions are present within multicultural literature; I will be attempting to answer the following as an early childhood educator: What evidence of Christian faith and Jewish traditions are found in children's multicultural literature?

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODOLOGY

The topic of my research, Christian faith and Jewish traditions found in children's multicultural literature, required I complete a number of steps prior to starting to review picture books to be included in the analysis. The reason for this is that

in a qualitative study the investigator is the primary instrument for gathering and analyzing data and, as such, can respond to the situation by maximizing opportunities for collecting and producing meaningful information. Conversely, the investigator as human instrument is limited by being human—that is, mistakes are made, opportunities are missed, personal biases interfere (Merriam, 1998, p. 20).

Initially I needed to determine how to decide which books are "multicultural picture books"; I then had to develop a framework for analyzing the books. Once this framework was developed I was ready to begin the analysis. Because of the need to develop the framework, my research was completed in phases.

In Phase I the picture books to be analyzed were chosen, followed by developing the framework to be used in the analysis. To develop the framework I analyzed books known to contain traditions from Judaism and the Christian faith, and then reviewed those findings with theologians from each religion. With a completed framework with which to work, I entered Phase II: analyzing multicultural picture books for evidence of Christian faith and Judaic traditions. Once this was completed I populated a spreadsheet that enabled me to sort the data gathered in a variety of ways allowing me to draw conclusions. The steps which were followed in order to answer: "What evidence of

Christian faith and Jewish traditions are found in children's multicultural literature?" are detailed in this chapter.

### Phase I

The purpose of the initial phase of my research was to determine what visual representations most often represent Judaic cultural and faith traditions and Christian faith traditions within children's picture books. Because of this, the results of this first phase of research are included in this chapter, Methodology, rather than in Chapter Four, Results. Since the evidence of a presence of Christian faith or Jewish traditions was to be verified by theologians after analyzing a small selection of multicultural picture books, I identified the multicultural picture books to be analyzed at the beginning of Phase I.

In order to create the framework to analyze the multicultural picture books for evidence of each religion I analyzed two sets of books: (a) books known to contain Judaic traditions and Christian faith traditions and (b) 19 multicultural picture books. Prior to using the framework to analyze the multicultural books, I verified the findings with theologians of each religion. Upon verification of my findings, I created the final list of visual and textual representations to be used in the analyses to determine what evidence of Christian faith and Jewish traditions are found in children's multicultural picture books. I used this final list in the analysis of 19 multicultural picture books. I then returned to the theologians to verify these analyses.

#### *Locating Multicultural Picture Books to be Analyzed*

The books to be analyzed in Phase I of the research (Appendix A) were identified using the online *Horn Book Guide*. The "Horn Book Guide publishes short, critical reviews of virtually every hardcover trade book published in the United States for young

people. . . . The reviews are clear and honest, identifying strengths and weaknesses and rating the books on a scale from one to six" (*The Horn Book Guide*, n.d.). The books selected for analysis were located using criteria of grade levels "K-3" and "1-3," and ratings of "1-3." I selected ratings "1-3" out of "1-6" in order to analyze books that had received good ratings. Within these parameters I did two searches: one with two keywords, multicultural and picture books; and the second with one keyword, multicultural; the fiction criterion was set to picture books. The two searches allowed me to include multicultural picture books that are both non-fiction and fiction.

### *Selecting Books with Known Faith Traditions*

The Jewish books selected were ones my household has received over the past years from The PJ Library, Jewish Bedtime Stories & Songs for Families. "The PJ Library sends Jewish-content books . . . on a monthly basis to families with children through age six. . . to help create stronger Jewish homes — homes that foster children's curiosity about their Jewish heritage and help families explore their Jewish identity (The Harold Grinspoon Foundation, n.d.). I selected eight books with different authors. Four are about specific Jewish holidays or events: (a) Sukkot, (b) Shabbat, (c) placing a mezuzah on the doorways of your new home, and (d) contrasting the celebration of Jewish holidays in America and Israel. The remaining books cover different subjects: different things grandparents do; the story of an immigrant; and two midrashim, Rabbinic folk tales. I used sources outside of my home to locate books known to contain Christian faith traditions.

In order to locate quality Christian picture books, I referenced the Christian Book Awards (previously the gold medallion awards) from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association for the years 2000-2007. The finalist in the Preschool and Elementary Children categories from 2000-2005 and the Children and Youth categories from 2006-

2007, 14 picture books remained after excluding books over 75 pages in length and Bibles. Max Lucado was the only author with multiple titles and my local library had many of his works. Joni Eareckson Tada's work appears five times on the Awards list, including once as a finalist; I included a book she coauthored with Melody Carlson who is mentioned twice on the list. None of the books in the Christian selection are about holidays. One story is about the birth of Jesus Christ, but the remaining stories are lessons about character: feeling good about yourself; making your own choices about who to be friends with; and others.

### *Analyzing Books with Known Christian Faith and Jewish Traditions*

While analyzing these picture books (See Appendix B for a bibliography of books with known traditions), I noted occurrences of visual representations of Christianity or Judaism only. I expected to find the following: icons, crucifixes, mezuzahs, Shabbat candles, yarmulkes, churches, and synagogues. I also noted repeating images or themes within illustrations. This review was completed to identify visual representations of Christian faith or Jewish traditions in the illustrations.

The most easily recognizable religious symbols for both Judaism and Christianity are those associated with holidays. Given that none of the books in the Christian collection were about holidays, the incidence of visual symbols related to holidays was expected to be very minor. Four of the books making up the Jewish collection are about specific holidays or other Jewish religious events and so the number of easily recognizable symbols in this collection was expected to be high. Additional religious items, beyond those used during holidays were expected to be seen.

There are a number of symbols of Judaism that one expects to observe in a Jewish home or neighborhood. Some are obvious to people with only a passing familiarity with Judaism, Hebrew letters and the Star of David for example. Other Judaic items found in

many Jewish American homes include mezuzahs and items used in celebrating holidays: menorahs, Shabbat candlesticks, tzedakah boxes, Kiddush cups, and Seder plates. Most of these were present in the illustrations; the items used in celebrating holidays typically appeared only when that holiday was the subject of the book. The only Christian holiday symbol noted was of a small Christmas tree; additional Christian items expected to be seen were rosaries, crosses or crucifixes, and churches. Three obscure visual representations of Christianity were found repeatedly.

The three recurring obscure visual representations found in books with known Christian faith traditions are: (a) use of light to create a halo effect; (b) hands belonging to a person who is "the maker" holding a non-living object portrayed as the main character, such as a doll; and (c) acceptance or forgiveness transmitted to a person through "healing hands." Use of light to create a halo effect was found in four out of the six books. Two of these books contain an additional repetitive symbol, both books feature toys as the main characters, and both have illustrations in which the person who made the toys is holding the main character. The hands are oversized and the toys fit in the palms of the human. The last visual representation of Christian faith occurring multiple times, healing hands, occurs in the following manner: one man is receiving verbal affirmation of belonging in the world while another character has hands on him, and the other is a man being forgiven for previously behaving in an unethical manner while another character has a hand placed on him. I interpret illustrations in both of these books as being symbolic of ease of mind being handed down to individuals in need of mental reassurance from God. In both cases, if the human is not meant to be God or Jesus himself, the presence of light and/or reaching to the sky symbolizes a connection to heaven. I term this visual representation of Christian faith as "healing

hands." These visual representations were the only recurring representations of Christianity.

Determining the presence of these three Christian symbols is open to different interpretations because the use of light occurs outside of religious illustrations, non-religious books are written about making toys or other artifacts, and instances in which a character may place his or her hands on another may not be indicative of healing hands. The one Jewish cultural tradition found repeatedly is not likely to be questioned, food.

"Jewish food characteristically draws Jewish people together" (Emmer & Reitman, 1990, p. 9), and many of the foods recognized as Jewish culinary fare are associated directly with Jewish holidays. Four of the books from the PJ Library have Jewish foods in their illustrations. The food most often eaten in a Jewish home, and most easily recognized as Jewish fair, is challah, "the special braided loaves eaten at Jewish festive meals. This bread has become symbolic of Shabbat itself" (p. 38). Matzo, also associated with the Jewish religion, is flat, unleavened bread. It is "the food that most typifies the Seder meal" (Telushkin, 2001, p. 645) because during Passover, "we may not eat, derive pleasure from, or possess any *chametz*, leavened food" (Emmer & Reitman, p. 23). Chanukah, probably the most recognizable Jewish holiday to non-Jewish Americans, has its own foods associated with it. "Among American Jews, the latke, a pancake made of potatoes and onions fried in oil, is the food most associated with Hanukkah. . . . in Israel the most popular Hanukkah dish is the sufganiyah, a fried jelly roll" (Telushkin, p. 636).

I identified visual representations, such as mules and menorahs, representative of each religion. I took this list to theologians of each religion: a Rabbi of a local Reform Temple, and a Reverend from a local church. Each theologian reviewed the books that

contained traditions from their own religion; the symbols I found in the books were confirmed and the list was enhanced by the theologians.

#### *Applying the Framework to a Sample of Multicultural Picture Books*

I returned to the theologians for a second time with a subset of multicultural picture books. I selected 19 books from the complete list to be analyzed (Appendix A). I used the first 19 books, selected alphabetically by author, that were available at Wright Memorial Public Library in Oakwood, OH (Appendix C). The analysis consisted of three steps: (a) visual and textual representations of Christian faith and Jewish traditions; (b) the derivation of characters' first names in relation to Christian or Judaic faith; and (c) looking at patterns of daily life activities for contradiction of kashrut laws or Sabbath observance on Saturdays.

*Visual and textual representations of Christian faith and Jewish traditions.* The representations of Christian faith and Judaic culture and faith that were used in the analysis of books included: Christmas trees, crosses, crucifixes, icons, menorahs, the Star of David, Hebrew letters, mezuzahs, and yarmulkes (see Appendix D for definitions). These obvious representations were combined with illustrations featuring places of worship (synagogues or churches) and the four recurring symbols detected in the books known to contain faith traditions. Both visual and textual representations were noted.

*Derivation of names.* The derivation of characters' first names were analyzed to determine a connection with Christianity and/or Judaism. Per the NAEYC, developmentally appropriate practices for children ages 3 to 5 include having children recognize words in print "such as their names" (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 131). This basic personal connection with text is the first among many that teachers will ask

children to make throughout the school years. Beyond connecting with their own names, children also make connections when names belonging to classmates, friends, and family members are used in literature. Because of this, the derivation of characters' names is relevant to the research; for children whose families' and friends' names are connected to a religion other than Christianity, they are not given the opportunity to make these connections.

For Jewish children, the first religious ceremony they partake in is a naming ceremony. Jewish girls are named during the *Torah* reading following their birth while boys are named at their bris (Telushkin, 2001, p. 673). It is common for parents to keep the name of their child a secret until these ceremonies. Naming conventions within Jewish cultures are different: Ashkenazi Jews do not name babies after the living for fear that the Angel of Death will mistake the two people and take "the younger namesake and summon them to a premature death" (Weiss & Block, 2000, p. 69). Sephardic Jews do not believe this and will name children after living relatives. But the conventions for naming a baby after a person are loose; if the first initial of the names are the same, the child is considered to be named after someone.

The process of analyzing the first names of characters was threefold: (a) Lansky's (1995) *35,000+ Baby Names: The Largest Selection of Popular and Unusual Names from Around the World* was used to discover details such as whether each name is a foreign version of an Anglo name or derived from a different name; (b) I then cross referenced the original name from the picture book, as well as any discovered from referencing Lansky's book with *The New Strong's Compact Bible Concordance* (Strong, 2004) to determine whether the names were biblical, and if so, whether they appear in the *Tanakh* or Christian Bible; (c) the final step was cross referencing these same names with *Dictionary of Saints: Revised Edition* (Delaney, 1980) to determine if the

names belonged to saints. A chart was created as the quantity of names grew to avoid repeating the process for the same name located in different books.

*Contradiction of Kashrut laws or Sabbath observance.* Looking at patterns of daily life activities for Sabbath observance on Saturdays and elements in contradiction of kashrut laws was included in the analysis because observance of kashrut and keeping the Sabbath on Saturdays are key tenets of Judaism. If a character in a book is portrayed not following kashrut laws or not keeping the Sabbath on Saturday, that character is participating in an act that the Torah prohibits; it is breaking a pact that observant Jews feel was made with God. "Kashrut's laws regulate that Jews are not permitted to eat whatever they may want, and that even permitted foods must be prepared in a special way" (Telushkin, 2001, p. 700); and the fourth commandment "Remember the Sabbath day to make it holy" (p. 41) has been interpreted by Rabbis as making certain acts and behaviors unacceptable from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. Characters depicted not following kashrut or not observing the Sabbath are not just doing something a child from an observant Jewish home would not expect to see, they are portrayed doing something the child has been taught is wrong.

*Evidence used in a content and illustration analysis.* The evidence found was used in a content and illustration analysis to determine whether the books: (a) contained practices and images indicative of Christian faith or Jewish traditions, (b) contained no obvious evidence of Christian faith or Jewish traditions, or (c) contained elements in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance. While my categorization of all 19 books was verified, the theologians pointed out more obscure religious symbology than I had noted in my initial analysis.

The Reverend noted the use of water and/or the presence of fishermen as being Christian faith symbols while the Rabbi noted that a walled garden was representative of the Garden of Eden. I felt these more subtle nuances of religious symbology were extremely subjective: (a) not all fishermen are Christian, (b) all water is not associated with baptism, and (c) placing a wall around a garden could be done for protection purposes. Due to the amount of subjectivity already inherent in my research, I decided to use more overt symbols in the analyses going forward.

Regarding the derivation of names, because the *Tanakh* is the foundation of Christianity, the presence of a name that is present solely in the *Tanakh*, in combination with being a saint's name, or being present in the Christian Bible is not necessarily indicative of a book containing Jewish faith traditions. In the books in which names with these religious associations appear I looked at the presence of other symbology as well as the characters' role in the story as to whether the name qualifies the book as containing Jewish faith traditions. The categorizations of the books were verified by the theologians so I continued my analysis of the remaining books using the framework developed (see Appendix E for the complete list of symbols).

## Phase II

Verification of my findings for the initial 19 books marked the point at which I began reviewing the remaining multicultural picture books and recording the information. I recorded the data for the 19 books already reviewed then obtained access to the rest of the books in Appendix A through the Wright Memorial Public Library. The list is sorted alphabetically by author's last name and I proceeded accordingly; I pulled 20 books at a time from the shelves. To access the books not available at the Wright Memorial Library I used the Ohio Libraries Share: MORE system which accesses libraries throughout the state (State Library of Ohio, 2008).

Of the 151 books on my list, only 3 were unavailable: *Estela's Swap* by O'Neill; *Little Cliff and the Cold Place* by Taulbert; and *The Butterfly Seeds* by Watson. The analyses of each book consisted of: (a) reviewing the illustrations for Christian faith and Judaic symbols; (b) reviewing for textual references to Christian faith or Judaic traditions; (c) analyzing characters' names to determine derivations, presence in the Hebrew or Christian Bibles, and if they are saints' names; (d) reviewing the text and illustrations for Sundays or Saturdays presented as days of reverence, worship, or workdays and incidences of non-kosher items or meals.

### *Data Collection*

I followed the same procedure for each. I recorded the bibliographic information by starting with my initial list of books retrieved from the *Horn Book*; I moved the book's entry from this document into the bibliography where I recorded all the required information. In this manner, I ensured that I had a record of which books still needed to be analyzed and which had been analyzed. In a notebook I recorded the author's name and the title on one line. I then proceeded to read the book viewing the illustrations simultaneously. After reading the entire book I then noted what characteristics the book contained that were multicultural in nature, such as African American characters, a story about Nahuatl Indians, Russian immigrants, or a Cajun family. I then reviewed the book more carefully recording appearances of symbols from the previously developed framework for analysis as they appeared; I simultaneously recorded names appearing in the book and whether it was the main character, a secondary character, or a name that appeared in a different context, such as a name tag, name of a restaurant, or part of a list.

*Analysis Tool*

In Microsoft Excel I created a chart with the following columns: author, title, illustrator, publisher, Jewish, Christian, Contradictory, Reverend, Rabbi, Names, and Additional. I used Microsoft Excel because I am proficient with this software and knew that I would be able to sort the completed chart in a variety of ways that would make an overall analysis possible.

The first four columns were populated using the bibliography which had been completed as I received and reviewed each picture book. In order to populate the remaining columns, I went through the notebook in which I had recorded evidence of traditions or instances of elements in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance and completed the fields one book at a time. The columns Jewish, Christian, and Contradictory are representative of the three main categories the books fell into: Containing Jewish Traditions, Containing Christian Faith Traditions, and Containing Elements in Contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath Observance; I placed an X in the appropriate columns. "Rabbi" is the column used to record occurrences having to do with Jewish traditions while the "Reverend" column was used to record specific Christian symbols; in these fields I made notations regarding what primary item from the framework had appeared to warrant being categorized in any of the three main categories. The "additional" field I used to record details regarding the names column as well as other symbols that appeared in the book; for example, if a halo effect appeared multiple times in the illustrations of a book that also contained an illustration with a church steeple I put "halo" under "Reverend" and made a note of the church steeple in the "additional" column.

To record the religious connotations of names I created a code (Appendix F). Once I had completed recording the information for approximately 15 books I realized that I was

looking up names repeatedly. At this point, I created a chart of names in which I recorded the information. Going forward, I referenced this chart as my first step and if a name was not present I continued with my original three steps and created a new entry in the "Names" chart. An example of the entries appears in Table 1.

Table 1

*Christian and Judaic Context of Names*

Derived From or Derivations of		C1	C2	H	CM
sasha Sandro	alexander	x	x		
Frederick Manfred	alfred				
alice Alicia	alyse		x		

\*Note. See Appendix F

With all of the fields populated I was able to sort the records into groups based on the categories to which they belonged: containing Christian faith traditions; containing Jewish traditions; containing visual or textual references in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance; and not containing references to any of the three categories. I was then able to create additional spreadsheets to better interpret the data.

### Separation of Data Based on Primary Categories

I created one spreadsheet for the picture books categorized as "Christian" and one other for the categories "Jewish" and "In Contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath Observance." With both of the new charts I retained the columns previously populated but added a substantial number of additional columns.

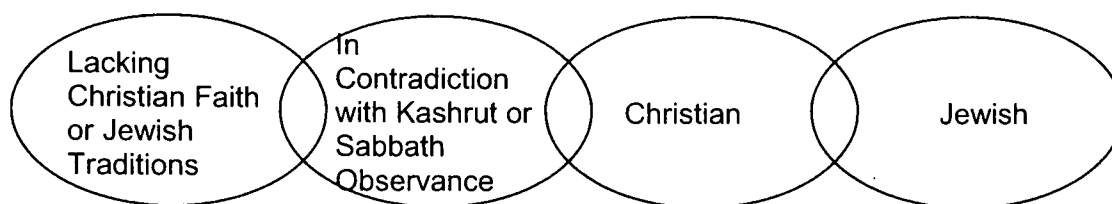
The additional columns in both spreadsheets were created to help ascertain what symbols were evident to warrant placement in the different categories; I used the information from the "additional" column to begin this process and then returned to the

original notebook in which I had recorded the raw data to ensure the analyses were complete. The added columns correspond with the symbols identified with the theologians (Appendix E). With the charts now complete, I added one additional column, "# of categories"; I populated this column based on the number of symbol columns marked. The spreadsheet in which books categorized as containing Jewish traditions or containing elements in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance required an additional column. I added a column to document whether it was the way Saturday had been used in the picture book or the presence of non-kosher food or meals that had qualified the book as containing elements in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance. At this point the collection of data was complete.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The categories of traditions that I found within the picture books analyzed are: Christian Faith Traditions; Jewish Traditions; Lacking Christian Faith and Jewish Traditions; and In Contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath Observance. A number of the books contained elements within more than one category resulting in a total of six categories: Christian and In Contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath Observance, Christian and Jewish, Lacking Christian Faith and Jewish Traditions and In Contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath Observance, and the initial four listed above. Figure 1 is a representation of how the initial four categories overlap creating three additional categories.



*Figure 1.* Four categories overlapping to create three additional categories.

The first analysis was to determine the percentage of books in each category. Table 2 shows the results of that analysis.

Table 2

*Number of Books by Category*

Faith Traditions Present	Number of books	Percent
Christian faith traditions	85	57%
Christian & in contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath observance	23	16%
Lacking Christian faith or Judaic traditions	18	12%
Christian faith and Judaic traditions	13	9%
Lacking traditions while in contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath observance	7	5%
Judaic traditions	2	1%
<i>n = 148</i>		

Of the 148 books analyzed, 128 contain Christian faith traditions. Books not containing Christian faith traditions total 27; books containing neither Christian faith nor Jewish traditions (this includes books with elements in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance) total 25 books. The following sections present detail about the books analyzed. Due to the overlap of categories illustrated in Figure 1, two topics are presented prior to discussion about the six categories presented in Table 2: (a) detail about the visual and textual representations of Christian faith and Judaic traditions (Appendix E) that appear in the books and, (b) books found to contain Christian faith and Judaic traditions based on the religious connotation of names. The remaining sections are presented in the order of frequency with which they appear based on the traditions

present, the lack of traditions, and the presence of visual and textual representations in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance.

### Visual and Textual Representations of Traditions, Christian and Judaic

Fourteen of the 19 Christian symbols included in the framework for analysis appear in 57 books. Table 3 shows the number of Christian symbols found in individual books.

Fourteen of the 19 symbols included in the framework (Appendix E) as being indicative of Jewish traditions appear in the picture books analyzed. Nine are found in one book, five in one book, four are present in 2 books, three in one book, two in one book, one symbol in 3 books, none of the symbols are present in 6 books.

Table 3

#### *Number of Christian Symbols Present in Individual Picture Books*

Symbols found	Number of books	Percentage
Six	1	0.83%
Five	3	2.48%
Four	1	0.83%
Three	8	6.61%
Two	19	15.70%
One	25	20.66%
Zero	64	52.89%

Table 4 provides detail regarding the frequency with which the Christian visual and textual representations appear; representations of Christmas have been consolidated. The representations of Judaic faith and cultural traditions are displayed in Table 5.

Menorahs, seen as visual representations and only used during Chanukah, have been combined with the textual representations Chanukah.

Table 4

*Frequency of Visual or Textual Representation in Books with Christian Faith Traditions*

Symbol	Number of books	Symbol	Number of books
Church	23	Halo effect	21
Christmas	11	Cross	10
Angel	8	Hands lifted to sky	5
Saint	4	Jesus in text	2
Icon	4	Prayer in text	1
Bible	2	Candles, 1 or 3	1
Madonna and Child	1	Holy water	1

Table 5

*Frequency of Visual or Textual Representation in Books with Jewish Traditions*

Symbol	Number of Books	Symbol	Number of Books
Hebrew or Yiddish	6	Chanukah / Menorah	3
Yarmulke	2	Israel	2
Sabbath candlesticks	2	Latkes	2
Challah	2	Synagogue	1
Kiddush cup	1	Mikvah	1
Sabbath prayer	1	Torah	1
Tu B'Shvat	1	Dreidle	1

One of the most obvious Christian symbols, churches (textually represented or visually represented as steeples, onion domes, or actual churches) is the most prevalent symbol. The halo effect is the second most prevalent. Because the halo effect is created through the use of light in an illustration rather than being an object, it is also the visual representation of Christianity subject to the most interpretation.

Two Jewish languages, Hebrew and Yiddish, "a Jewish language based largely on German and Hebrew" (Telushkin, p. 215), are the most frequently occurring representations of Judaism in the picture books analyzed. As the national language of Israel (Bar-Ilan University, n.d.), Hebrew is one of the most recognizable representations of Judaism; textual representations occur as transliterations using the Latin or Roman alphabet while visual representations occur when Hebrew letters are used. Another recognizable representation of Judaism is a yarmulke, a head covering seen frequently in reform temples on men and occasionally on women, and also worn more frequently by orthodox and conservative men. References, either visual or textual, to the State of Israel, also appear twice. The remaining symbols appearing in multiple books are all associated with Jewish holidays.

Chanukah, while not one of the major holidays of Judaism, is probably the most recognizable by non-Jews in the United States of America. Menorahs (appearing three times) and Latkes (seen twice) are both associated with Chanukah; latkes specifically for Jews in The U.S.A. The final two symbols found in multiple picture books, Sabbath candlesticks and challah are both associated with Shabbat, occurring every Friday, and hence the most often occurring religious celebration in observant Jewish homes. While challah, a bread which, due to its braided shape, is easily recognized, the presence of Sabbath candlesticks is more difficult to determine as they can be in any shape or size.

### Books Found to Contain Traditions Based on Names

Of the 64 books in the Christian category with no symbols present, 63 contain Christian names as determined by the analysis. The remaining book uses the name "Baptiste" which, although not defined by Lansky (1995), is French for Baptist and hence was categorized as containing Christian faith traditions. One book also contains a textual reference to the final supper which was not a part of the framework although I do feel it is a clear enough reference to a Christian tradition that it could have been.

The 26 books containing names found in the Hebrew Bible require additional explanation as to categorization. In order to understand the categorization of these books it is important to note that the Hebrew Bible, also known as the *Tanakh* is made up of: "the *Torah*, the Prophets, and the Writings; known as the *Old Testament* in Christianity" (Osborne, 1996, p. 73). Because of this tie to Christianity, a name from the Hebrew Bible does not necessarily mean there is a Jewish faith tradition present. Each of these books had additional factors taken into account in determining their category.

- Six contain elements that are in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance.
- Two have over 20 names in them; in both, all of the main characters, as well as a majority of the others, have names with no Jewish faith connotation.
- Eight contain names with roots in the Hebrew Bible but the names are in either the Christian Bible or a saint's name as well. In all of these books either the majority of the names are Christian based with no Jewish connotation or the primary characters' names are Christian based only.
- One contains one name that is only found in the Hebrew bible, but three other names are saints' names.

- One contains the name Gracie as well, which is derived from Grace, "a word that appears often in the Bible. It can mean beauty, friendship, a favor, God's mercy, or even a Christian virtue" (Tropea, 2006, p. 237). The strong Christian connotations of this name override the presence of a name with Jewish roots.
- Eight are categorized as containing both Christian faith and Jewish traditions.

The last 8 books above are a portion of the 13 books categorized as containing both Christian faith and Jewish traditions; their inclusion in the Jewish Traditions category is discussed in the next section.

#### Elements in Contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath Observance

There are 30 books found to contain elements in contradiction with kashrut or Sabbath observance. Two Jewish laws were used in determining placement in this category: observance of the Sabbath and kashrut. Eight of the books are in this category based on the Sabbath, activities occurring on Saturday; 21 of the books were categorized based on the presence of non-kosher foods or meals; one book contains both non-kosher foods and has Saturday as a work day.

Of the 8 books categorized due to characters not observing the Sabbath on Saturday, 7 are evident in their use of Saturday as a workday. The eighth book was included in this category because Saturday is used as a day to just have fun and play. While these activities could be acceptable activities for children on the Sabbath, the book presents Sunday as the end of the week, a day when people are resting; typical of how a family would be expected to observe the Sabbath.

In looking at the books categorized due to the presence of non-kosher food or meals it is important to note the multiple facets of maintaining a kosher diet. Exclusion of specific food items (pork and shellfish) are the most recognizable by non-observant Jews, as well as eating "only fish that have both *fins* and *scales* are kosher" (Emmer &

Reitman, p. 145), and a meal is kosher only if meat and dairy are not served together.

There are many more rules in keeping kashrut, but for the purposes of this research we will just consider the basics. Twenty-two books were placed in this category due to non-kosher content, either in illustrations or textual references.

#### Books Found to Contain Christian Faith Traditions

Of the 85 books found to contain Christian faith traditions, 43 contain Christian names as their qualifying factor. Eighteen books have one textual or visual representation of Christian faith and 24 contain between two to five representations of Christian faith.

#### Books Found to be Christian and in Contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath Observance

Of the 30 books in this category, 23 were found to contain references to Christian faith traditions. Six representations of Christianity are found in one book, five are found in one book, four are found in 2 books, and one representation is found in 6 books. The remaining 11 books contain names with Christian connotations.

#### Books Lacking Christian Faith or Jewish Traditions

Eight books were found to contain no representation of Christian faith or Jewish traditions.

#### Books Found to Contain Christian Faith and Judaic Traditions

Of the 13 books within this category 5 books contain one name connected with Christian and Judaic faith traditions: a name that is in both Bibles as well as being a saint's name. One more book contains three names with religious connections: one in both Bibles and a saint's name, one in both Bibles, and one in the Christian bible and a saint's name. The remaining 7 books all contain visual or textual representations of Judaism that are obvious: 3 have Jewish holidays in their subject matter; 2 contain

multiple Jewish symbols; the last 2 contain only one symbol but they are textual references so they are obvious in nature.

Of the books containing multiple Jewish symbols, 4 refer to Jewish holidays. Two of the books feature a Jewish character sharing either the celebration of holidays, or the history of the holiday with a Christian friend or acquaintance. The Christianity of the characters is implied through the names which are from the Christian Bible, saints' names, or a combination thereof. The third book containing a reference to a Jewish holiday has numerous strong Jewish symbols including a mikvah scene; three of the four names used are connected to Christianity: three names are in the Hebrew Bible but two of these are also in the Christian Bible and one of them is a saint's name as well and the fourth name is a saint's name. The last book containing references to a Jewish holiday has two characters with names; one name is non-religious and the other name is a Christian saint's name.

An additional book references a holiday, Easter. The book in its entirety contains visual representations of both religions. The story takes place around Easter and has Christian main characters and although a non-kosher meal is served, the presence of a Jewish concentration camp survivor as a primary character, using Yiddish phrases and wearing a yarmulke and a prayer shawl warrants the book being categorized as containing Jewish traditions as well.

The last 2 books in this category are geographically multicultural. One contains Christian faith and Jewish traditions because the word saint is used as well as the author using a Hebrew word transliterated into English. The second book contains illustrations by children about birthday celebrations around the world. Included is an illustration by an Israeli and in a different illustration two women have on necklaces with crosses on them.

The remaining books categorized as containing both Christian faith and Jewish traditions contain names with Jewish connotations.

#### Books Found to be Lacking Traditions while in Contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath Observance

Seven books were found to contain no representations of Christian or Jewish Traditions while containing elements in contradiction with Kashrut or Sabbath observance. Three books contained references to pigs or ham, one contained a reference to shellfish, 2 had Saturday as a workday, and one juxtaposed Saturday as a day of play with Sunday as a day of rest and relaxation.

#### Books Found to Contain Judaic Traditions

Of the 2 books found to contain Jewish traditions only, one contains a Yiddish phrase, used to name an animal, as its sole representation of Judaism. The second is about the Jewish holiday Tu B'Shvat and in addition to a textual reference to the holiday itself, contains three more Jewish symbols.

#### Conclusion

The answer to the question "What evidence of Christian faith and Jewish traditions is found in children's multicultural picture books?": A majority of the multicultural picture books contain Christian faith traditions. A small number contain Jewish traditions with a greater number containing elements found to not be reflective of Jewish kashrut or Sabbath traditions as defined by the Talmud.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

I was drawn to the subject "What evidence of Christian faith and Jewish traditions is found in children's multicultural picture books?" when I observed a Kindergarten lesson about seasons in which books with reference to Christian holidays were used. Having completed my research, I know that the majority of multicultural books teachers have access to contain some level of Christian symbology. I completed my research using multicultural picture books exclusively because they are intended to be inclusive of minority cultures. While some American minority groups practice Christianity, given that it is the religion practiced by the majority of Americans I felt the chances were higher that books representing minority cultures would reflect minority religions.

Because teachers in public schools teach diverse populations, it is important that teachers be aware of the presence of this Christian symbology and address it. I do not recommend avoiding literature with Christian faith traditions, but I do believe teachers need to keep it in mind when planning lessons and determining what sources to use with their students. This research is relevant for some of the same reasons that research about racial diversity and gender representation in picture books is: how the presence of Christian faith traditions in picture books supports creating an atmosphere that is not just tolerant, but is accepting and welcoming of other religious beliefs; and how the presence of Christian traditions embedded in picture books in the classroom can affect children of different religions. I feel that the findings regarding Christianity juxtaposed with Judaism can be applied to all minority religions; the impact of how Christian symbolism

embedded in the curriculum has on teaching acceptance of Judaism has the same impact for acceptance of Islam, Buddhism, and other religions.

Last, an analysis is completed of three of the books found to contain Jewish traditions using the approach Fondrie (2001) presents in her discussion of assumptions of Whiteness in multicultural books. Prior to discussing the pertinence of the findings for teachers, the subject of religion in public education needs to be addressed.

### Religion in Public Education

"The mere mention of the terms *religion* and *public education* in the same sentence has both educators and parents gasping aloud" (Ayers & Reid, 2005, p. 14); however, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) clearly feels religion ought to be a part of the curriculum. The *Ohio Academic Content Standards: K-12 Social Studies* (ODE, n.d.) lists culture among "the ten themes that form the framework for the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)" (p. 17). Within this theme, it is written that students ought to be able to answer "how . . . belief systems, such as religion or political ideals, influence other parts of the culture" (p. 17) and standards exist throughout the grade levels that are designed to further students' knowledge and enable them to answer this question. Within standards for Grade 3 there are two regarding religion and culture: "Describe changes in the community over time including changes in . . . religion. . . . [and] compare some of the cultural practices and products of various groups of people who have lived in the local community including . . . religion" (p. 126).

While one might think that lessons covering the standards related to changes in local communities do not need to incorporate religion, within the United States of America it is estimated that there are over 216 denominations of Christianity, just under 10% of the population are Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindi, or another minority religion, and "at least 15 percent of the population are self-consciously nonreligious, or secular" (Monsma,

2005, p. 43). The mandate to learn about our own cultural heritage requires covering religion, and the desire to educate the next generation about our history ought to transcend concern of separation of church and state in deciding what to teach about.

Teaching tolerance of other religions is an additional goal that ought to be a part of lessons dealing with religion. "As educators, we can begin to erase the ignorance of the unknown and the misunderstood . . . by educating young minds, the intolerance and prejudice often associated with that type of ignorance can be alleviated" (Ayers & Reid, 2005, p. 14). The mantra "we learn from our mistakes" is a way of stating that understanding history keeps people and countries from repeating past mistakes. World history demonstrates how religious tensions have brought countries to war; understanding how this occurred and how these wars shaped the world we live in today can help students understand contemporary issues.

I believe a quote by a sixth grade student following a unit on world religions states it best. "Many people confuse teaching religion and teaching about religions. When the Supreme Court said that teaching religion in public schools was illegal, teachers stopped teaching about religions because they did not know the difference between the two. That is why many people are against teaching about religion – Jeremy" (Ayers & Reid, 2005, p. 15). The legality of teaching about religions need not be a concern. "Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark stated, 'One's education is not complete without a study of comparative religion or the history of religion and its relationship to the advancement of society'" (p. 16).

The following are some of the guidelines created by a coalition of organizations in 1988 to teaching about religion in public schools: (a) religion should be taught in an academic, not devotional manner; (b) do not push students to accept religion, just educate them about it; (c) expose students to diverse religious views without attempting

to impose any; (d) teach about all the religions without promoting or besmirching any (Ayers & Reid, 2005, p. 16).

### Relevance of Findings

Since this research is about the presence of Christian faith and Judaic traditions in multicultural picture books, the discussion of the findings are presented from the standpoint of the minority religion and culture, Judaism, juxtaposed with Christianity. I believe the relevance of the findings crosses religions: statements regarding the effects that a presence of Christian faith traditions in picture books has on Jewish children, or students being taught about Judaism, extends to Islam, Hinduism, Buddhist, and so forth.

#### *The Impact of Christian Faith Traditions on Teaching Acceptance of Other Religious Beliefs and on Children who are not Christian*

The age at which we share picture books with students on a daily basis occurs at a time when they are extremely impressionable: the elementary school years. Through the lessons we teach, how we behave, and the behaviors we acknowledge as acceptable in the classroom we help students develop their sense of identity as well as understandings about different cultures (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Worland, 2008). So what understanding of religious practices are we giving them if we consistently present literature that contains textual and visual representations of Christianity?

We know presenting children with only the tangible artifacts of a culture such as foods, music, and holiday celebrations does not provide them with the information about the material traits of that culture necessary to develop a true understanding and acceptance of that culture. We have reached a point where a variety of cultures are

found throughout the curriculum; multiculturalism now needs to move us to a point where different religious cultures are found throughout the curriculum as well.

By embedding ethnic multiculturalism throughout the curriculum, we hope to achieve a more tolerant and accepting attitude towards people of various ethnicities within our students. I believe embedding diverse religious traditions within the curriculum could have the same effect for tolerance and acceptance of people who practice a variety of religions. If the only time students hear about religions other than Christianity is during a lesson specifically addressing that religion, they will recognize the non-Christian religion as something out of the ordinary, different from their own, to be viewed through a microscope as if it were a foreign object or concept rather than as something to accept as having a place in their world. And if they have classmates whose religions are different from their own, what message is sent to those "different" children?

In our culture, Christians have the benefit of seeing their religious culture validated on a regular basis. During the holiday season, it is impossible not to realize Christmas is coming given its prominence in a retail environment. This is not so for Jewish children and Chanukah. There are dreidles and menorahs available *if* you look hard enough, but if Jewish children are allowed to watch television, they know who that man in the bright red suit is who is sitting in the mall waving to them. If you ask a Christian child what a dreidle is, or what you do with a menorah, unless they have been specifically taught, odds are he or she will not be able to answer correctly.

The fact that Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, the Jewish high holy days, are neither commercially visible nor educational topics sends the message to Jewish children that the only valid Jewish holiday is Chanukah, which is not a major holiday. This is not indicative of something being wrong with our society; it is representative of Christianity

being the religion of most Americans. But one of the responsibilities of a teacher is to validate each child's culture and religion in the classroom.

One way to validate a child's culture is by allowing him or her to see himself or herself in the literature in the classroom (Kim et al., 2006). Just as it is unacceptable to include aspects of African American culture only during the month of February, I hold that it is also unacceptable to include aspects of different religions only during lessons designed to teach about that religion specifically. One way for teachers to embed different religions into the curriculum is through the use of multicultural picture books. When using these books it is important to determine whether they will help attain this goal, or hinder the process.

#### *Assumptions of Christianity in Multicultural Picture Books*

To determine if assumptions of Whiteness are present in literature, Fondrie (2001) suggests using the following questions:

If the authors include issues of race or ethnicity, do they use whiteness as the norm and place the burden of difference on other characters? Do the authors reveal the characters' whiteness overtly . . . or do they merely encourage the assumption of whiteness? What is the role whiteness plays in the story? (p. 10)

These questions are designed to assist people in determining whether there is an assumption of Whiteness present. Rephrasing these questions to assist in determining whether there is an assumption of Christianity, they become: (a) If religious content is included, is Christianity the norm, is the "burden of difference on" the characters that are non-Christian? (b) Is there an assumption that characters are Christian, or is it made clear in an obvious forthright manner? and (c) What role does Christianity play in the story?

As a demonstration of the applicability of these questions to multicultural literature with regard to religion, I have applied these questions to 3 books. Two of the books are about Jewish holidays. I selected the books because I assumed the books would contain minimal Christian influence. The third book is about three children befriending an old store owner. The books are: *Northern Lights: A Hanukkah Story*, by Diana Cohen Conway (1994); *The Never-Ending Greenness: We Made Israel Bloom*, by Neil Waldman (2003); and *Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco (1992).

Conway's (1994) book tells the story of Chanukah, a Jewish holiday about which many non-Christians are knowledgeable, told by a young girl to people of a different faith. *The Never-Ending Greenness: We Made Israel Bloom* (2003) is about Jewish refugees coming to Israel and the holiday Tu B'shvat. The word Tu B'shvat is a compound word: Tu is the Hebrew word for 15, shvat is a month in the Jewish calendar; the holiday Tu B'shvat is thousands of years old and is currently celebrated by American and European Jews by donating funds to be used to plant trees in Israel and by eating foods that are representative of Jewish-Israeli culture; "specifically the seven types of fruits and grains mentioned in Deuteronomy 8:8" (Telushkin, 2001, p. 636). Polacco's (1992) book takes place during the Easter holiday and is about three children who befriend a Jewish store owner.

*If religious content is included, is Christianity the norm, is the "burden of difference on" the characters that are non-Christian?*

- Waldman's (2003) depiction of a Jewish immigrant family contains the following textual Jewish references: synagogue, torah, and Tu B'Shvat; Hebrew letters appear in some illustrations. There is no representation, visual or textual of Christianity. The question is not relevant.

- Conway's (1994) narrative explaining Chanukah is presented as a young girl explaining the holiday to people she has just met. Christianity is the norm in this book as it is the Jewish holiday that requires explanation. The "burden of difference" is on the non-Christian child.
- Polacco's (1992) story contains the following visual and textual representations of faith: Judaic representations are that the man speaks Yiddish, wears a yarmulke, wears a tallit, and has a tattoo of numbers from a concentration camp on his arm; Christian representations include an angel, the inside of a church, icons, a Bible, and praying hands. The answer is yes. The main characters are celebrating Easter; the secondary character is Jewish.

*Is there an assumption that characters are Christian, or is it made clear in an obvious forthright manner?*

- The response to this question for Waldman's (2003) book is no. There is no assumption of Christianity.
- In Conway's (1994) book, the religion of the characters who are not familiar with Chanukah is not mentioned; however, two of their names are Joe and Mark, names that have strong enough Christian ties that it is assumed that the majority of Christians with even a small amount of Biblical knowledge would recognize them as Christian. The answer to this question is yes, there is an assumption that characters are Christian.
- In Polacco's (1992) book, it is made obvious in the character's observance of Easter and attendance of church. The answer to the question is no, there is not an assumption, it is made clear that characters are Christian in an obvious manner.

*What role does Christianity play in the story?*

- Christianity plays no role in Waldman's (2003) book.
- In Conway's (1994) book the fact that the Jewish character has to explain Chanukah to people who are Christian, as determined in the response above, sets Christianity as the religion practiced by the majority. Judaism is projected as being the minority religion, the one that needs to be explained.
- In Polacco's (1992) book Christianity plays a primary role in the story. If it were not for the Easter holiday, the children would not have continued to interact with the Jewish character, there was an Easter hat in his store that the children wanted to give to someone.

*Conclusions based on Fondrie's questions.* The answers to these questions demonstrate the usefulness of the questions developed from the framework provided by Fondrie (2001). *The Never-Ending Greenness: We Made Israel Bloom* (Waldman, 2003) does not contain an assumption of Christianity. The story itself is written well and holds the interest of its audience. It is a story that meets the expectation to which Firschein (1993/1994) holds picture books: that the book provide information about a culture incidentally, the focus is on the story itself rather than the information imparted.

While *Northern Lights: A Hanukkah Story* (Conway, 1994) is also a good read, the information about Chanukah is imparted in a manner that makes it apparent to both children and adults that there is an educational purpose to the book: to teach about Chanukah. In addition, the book approaches the subject with a Jewish child coming into a community in which there is no one else who shares her religion, her culture. For a Jewish child to hear this story in a classroom, it could make him or her feel that he or she is not a part of the "mainstream" population. Even given this, the book has value; it provides a thorough lesson on Chanukah.

The inclusion of representations of both Christianity and Judaism in *Chicken Sunday* (Polacco, 1992) creates the necessity for further discussion before a conclusion is drawn. The book represents both religious cultures. Easter being a part of the story and the Jew accepting a Christian holiday into his shop, as well as having the main characters be Christian, are indicative of a Christian book. To use this book in a Jewish lesson, the Christianity would need to be discussed in addition to the Judaism, rather than accepting its presence as expected. In addition, the book would need to be supplemented by discussion and sources providing more detail about World War II, the Holocaust, and concentration camps (applicable because of the tattoos on the Jew's arm). If these issues were addressed, the book could be a source in teaching a quality Jewish lesson. There are, however, two issues to be discussed in regard to creating a potentially negative environment for Jews in the classroom.

*A closer look at Chicken Sunday (Polacco, 1992).* Information regarding Polacco's personal choice of religion, and how she was raised would have made the analysis of her book more straightforward. Patricia Polacco's family is "part Jewish and part Christian" (Polacco, n.d.-b). Both sides of her family are immigrants, her father's side is from Ireland and although her mother's family's geographic origins were not made clear, they are Jewish. Polacco's own cultural background is inclusive of both of the religious faith traditions present in her book, Judaism and Christianity. It is of import to note that Jewish tradition holds that Judaism is passed through the maternal line. If your mother is Jewish, as Polacco's is, you are Jewish, regardless of your father's religion. It is also important to note one of the most obvious differences between Judaism and Christianity: Jews believe that Jesus Christ lived, but they do not believe he was the messiah, or the son of God. This is an easy, elementary way of explaining why Jews do not celebrate Easter or Christmas.

Just as there are varying degrees of religious fervor among Christians, there are among Jews too. The degree to which a child has observed Judaism would impact the effect of two specific occurrences in Polacco's (1992) book: a non-kosher meal and the Jewish man wearing tzitzit. Some Jewish households keep kosher, others do not; some Jews who keep kosher do so at home but not outside the house; these differences do not make you more or less Jewish but I have not personally met a Jew who is not aware of the basic rules of kashrut. The second symbol relevant in discussing *Chicken Sunday* is the Jewish prayer shawl, or tallit, which appears in an illustration of the Jewish man. Because of the presence of so many Jewish symbols, *Chicken Sunday* appears to be a book that could be used to integrate a Judaic cultural lesson into other areas of the curriculum. The following discussion determines if issues presented earlier as common pitfalls when using multicultural literature are present.

The first question to address in considering the use of *Chicken Sunday* (Polacco, 1992) as a tool to be used in teaching about Jewish traditions is determining whether the information provided assists in true understanding of Judaic culture. There are gleanings of information that could aide children in a deep understanding of Jewish culture if a teacher were to expound on the grandmother's brief explanation to the children of why the Jewish man is grumpy. The fact that he has had a hard life is an understatement. Polacco's inclusion of concentration camp number tattoos provides instant understanding to people young and old who are familiar with the holocaust, a subject that the Jewish preschools in Dayton cover as part of their curriculum. The harshness of his life is semi-explained, but not in a manner that adequately represents the horror of what he lived through.

The second issue is whether the book creates a negative environment for minorities. The inclusion of a non-kosher meal, serving butter for your corn with a chicken dinner, is enough that to a Jewish person brought up in a household that maintains kashrut, it is clear the book was not written by someone who observes Talmudic law in the traditional manner. Patricia Polacco is Jewish, but based on the presence of this non-kosher meal I assume she was not raised in a kosher household.

One of the Jewish symbols in *Chicken Sunday* (Polacco, 1992), the prayer shawl, or tallit, worn by the old Jewish man is presented in a manner differing from what rabbinic law espouses. The portion of the tallit that is a religious item is the tzitzit; these are ritual fringes that are to be attached to any four-cornered garment worn by a male. During prayer services, the fringes are affixed to a large prayer shawl and known as a *tallit*. . . . The fringes themselves are attached to two different kinds of garments. During the day, they are worn under the shirt . . . . During . . . services, a *tallit*, a garment with fringes at the four corners, is worn over the shoulders like a cape. (Telushkin, 2001, p. 725)

Prayer shawls similar to the one in *Chicken Sunday* (Polacco, 1992) are not worn out of the synagogue except during religious ceremonies. When an observant Jew wears tzitzit outside of the synagogue, all that is seen are the tzitzit, the fringes, not an actual shawl. While it is nice that a prayer shawl, a less well known symbol of Judaic faith, is present, if this book were presented to a class with a Jewish child whose family is either observant, or is well rehearsed in aspects of their faith, the non-kosher meal, in addition to the improper use of a tallit could cause discomfort.

The last issue to address is how the majority culture is represented in *Chicken Sunday* (Polacco, 1992). The main characters are Christian and the book is set around the time of Easter. The minority character, the Jew, allows the children in the book to sell

a type of decorated egg in his store to raise money to buy a gift. The Jew is opening his store to Christianity. There is no reciprocity seen; the main characters are not seen to embrace or accept the Jewish culture or religion into their lives.

*Chicken Sunday* (Polacco, 1992) is indubitably a good read; the Commonwealth Club of California has given it the Recognition of Excellence and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators gave it the Golden Kite Award for Illustration (Polacco, , n.d.-a). Yet even this book, written by a woman whose heritage includes Judaism, contains an inappropriate use of a Jewish religious item as defined by rabbinic law, and contains elements found to be in contradiction with kashrut laws. Even if used in the classroom as a read aloud for pure pleasure, not as a book to provide information regarding Judaism, the unorthodox manner in which the tallit is worn ought to be pointed out; and once the subject of Judaism is raised, it would be equally important to discuss the issue of kosher meals. The task teachers are presented with, finding quality multicultural picture books that are true to the cultures they represent, and then using them in an educationally advantageous way, is not an easy one.

*How to Use the Knowledge of Religious Content, Lack of Religious Content, or Elements in Contradiction with Religious Tenets in Literature*

Teachers are trained to be aware of how their life experiences impact the way they view students from other backgrounds; they are trained in how to approach students based on the different schemas students bring to the classroom that result from their ethnic backgrounds; teachers are sensitized to race, but not typically religion. When students are present whose religious backgrounds differ from their teacher's, it is the teacher's job to familiarize himself or herself with that student's religion. Once a teacher is familiar with the religion, the teacher should impart the information gathered in a manner that allows the other children in the classroom to be accepting of the differences

that exist and reflect that acceptance in their actions. Indications that this has occurred would be if a child were absent during Rosh Hashanah, the other students understood the child was Jewish; and during December, if a Jewish child were to tell others that he or she celebrates Chanukah rather than Christmas, the response should be "Okay," rather than one of incredulity. It is important that the fundamentals of the cultures of all children in the class be presented *by the teacher* in a manner that allows for acceptance and understanding of the right of students to have beliefs differing from the majority. Students should not be placed in the role of teacher; they should not be asked to explain or defend their culture to individual students, the teacher, or the class as a whole.

With the knowledge that teachers have attained regarding the minority religion, after applying the bias questions used above the teacher would be sensitized to existence of bias in literature used in the classroom. If bias exists it is important that the teacher take the lead in acknowledging it. Fondrie (2001) states that we should not "ignore the way whiteness provides white characters status and privilege not accorded to other characters" (p. 9); just as I adapted Fondrie's questions to determine Christian bias rather than White bias, I adapt her statement to reflect why it is important to address Christian bias in literature: we should not "ignore the way [Christianity] provides [Christians] status and privilege not accorded to other characters" (p. 9). Applying this comment to books containing elements in contradiction with kashrut and Sabbath observance, pointing out the existence of these elements may ease any potential discomfort a Jewish child may feel.

Books containing no references to Christianity or Judaism are tools that can be used to help children better understand the status and privilege inherent in being Christian in American culture. Juxtaposing this literature with literature that does contain bias can help point out how present this bias is. Further, leading students in discussions about

how a member of a culture not represented in any literature would feel will further their awareness of the privilege with which the majority of them are born. While preparing for this discussion, it is important that teachers use a culture that is not represented in the classroom student body to ensure that a student is not put into the role of the teacher. The lesson could be taught with students or the teacher role-playing a minority culture member once a thorough lesson has been taught regarding that culture.

### Conclusion

In order to assist children in retaining information, previous lessons are reinforced throughout the year. Language Arts and mathematics lend themselves to this easily; cultural lessons and other social studies lessons should be treated with the same respect and given the same importance if we are to pass along tolerance and acceptance of other cultures. Integration of curriculum is always desirable, and when teaching about cultures of any sort, especially in an elementary classroom, one would expect to see this occurring through the use of picture books; they are an excellent integrating tool for reading and social studies.

When deciding which picture books to use for cultural lessons that include religions, it is not enough to select books with that religion as their main theme; what needs to be available are books with themes integrated across the curriculum that happen to impart information about the underlying customs and habits that brought about the visible products of the religions being studied. Allowing discussions to springboard off these books would provide opportunities to share information about different religious cultures in a more authentic way than out of a textbook. When planning to teach about a culture, teachers ought to locate books classified as multi-cultural within a theme that encompasses multiple disciplines.

In addition to their use as a tool in teaching about religious cultures, another reason to use multicultural picture books in classrooms is the fundamental belief that children should see themselves, their cultures, in the books they read and have read to them. Making a connection between home culture and school through literature enables children to use their schema to better comprehend meanings within stories (Towell et al., 1997). The overwhelming presence of Christianity in this collection of multicultural picture books is indicative of a lack of characters representative of children from other religions in the books readily available to teachers in the US. Children whose religious traditions are either misrepresented, or have books read to them containing elements not in accordance with their traditions, may be made to feel like outsiders, unaccepted by the majority; their faith is marginalized.

In past decades racial stereotypes were focused on and progress has been made. Initially, in both illustrations and story lines, African Americans were routinely portrayed in a negative manner if they were portrayed at all. When I was in elementary school, February, Black history month, was the only month we were taught about African Americans and their contributions to society. It is now understood that this is not enough, African American people and culture are included in the curriculum throughout the year. The assumption of Whiteness that once existed in our classrooms is being addressed; now the assumption of Christianity in North American classrooms needs to be addressed as well.

## APPENDIX A

## Multicultural Picture Books Analyzed

- Ada, A. F. (2002). *I love Saturdays y domingos*. (E. Savadier, Ill.). New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Adoff, A. (2002). *Black is brown is tan*. (E. A. McCully, Ill.). New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Agell, C. (1994). *Dancing feet*. New York: Gulliver Books: Harcourt Brace & Company.
- Allen, D. (2000). *Dancing in the wings*. (K. Nelson, Ill.). New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- Altman, L. J. (2002). *Singing with Momma Lou*. (L. Johnson, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Argueta, J. (2003). *Xochitl and the flowers / XŃchitl, la niŃa de las flores*. (C. Angel, Ill.). San Francisco: Children's Book Press: Editorial Libros Para Ninos.
- Badoe, A. (2002). *Nana's cold days*. (B. Junaid, Ill.). Berkely, CA: Douglas & McIntyre.
- Battle-Lavert, G. (2000). *The shaking bag*. (A. B. L. Robinson, Ill.). Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company.
- Bearden, R. (2003). *Li'l Dan the drummer boy: A Civil War story*. (Foreword by H. L. Gates Jr.). New York: Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Belton, S. (2003). *Pictures for Miss Josie*. (B. Andrews, Ill.). New York: Greenwillow Books.
- Best, C. (1999). *Three cheers for Catherine the Great!* (G. Potter, Ill.). New York: DK Publishing.

- Blanc, E. S., & Eagle, G. (2003). *Long johns for a small chicken*. (T. Dixon, Ill.). Volcano, CA: Volcano Press.
- Bodkin, O. (2001). *The Christmas cobwebs*. (T. Widener, Ill.). New York: Gulliver Books  
Harcourt, Inc.
- Bolden, T. (2001). *Rock of ages*. (R. G. Christie, Ill.). New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Bunting, E. (1999). *I have an olive tree*. (K. Barbour, Ill.). New York: Joanna Cotler  
Books: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Byrd, D., & Kuklin, S. (2001). *The Harlem nutcracker*. New York: Hyperion Books for  
Children.
- Chapra, M. (2004). *Amelia's show-and-tell fiesta / Amelia y la fiesta de "muestra y  
cuenta"*. (M. Aviles, Ill.). New York: HarperCollins.
- Cline-Ransome, L. (2000). *Satchel Paige*. (J. E. Ransome, Ill.). New York: Simon &  
Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Cohen, M. (1998). *Down in the subway*. (M. H. Greenberg, Ill.). New York: DK  
Publishing, Inc.
- Conway, D. C. (1994). *Northern lights: A Hanukkah story*. (S. O. Haas, Ill.). Rockville,  
MD: Kar-Ben Copies, Inc.
- Cox, J. (2003). *My family plays music*. (J. Cox, Ill.). New York: Holiday House.
- Coy, J. (2005). *Around the world*. (A. Reonegro and T. Lynch, Ill.). New York: Lee &  
Low Books Inc.
- Crews, N. (1998). *You are here*. New York: Greenwillow Books.
- D'Arc, K. S. (2001). *My grandmother is a singing yaya*. (D. Palmisciano, Ill.). New  
York: Orchard Books.
- Dawes, K. (2005). *I saw your face*. (T. Feelings, Ill.; map ill. C. Calderhead). New  
York: Dial Books.

- dePaola, T. (2002). *A new Barker in the house*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- English, K. (2004). *Hot day on Abbott Avenue*. (J. Steptoe, Ill.). New York: Clarion Books.
- Falwell, C. (2003). *Butterflies for Kiri*. New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Falwell, C. (2001). *David's drawings*. New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Feldman, E. B. (1996). *Birthdays!: Celebrating life around the world*. (Children's art provided by Paintbrush Diplomacy). Mahwah, NJ: BridgeWater Books.
- Fleming, C. (2004). *Gator gumbo: A spicy-hot tale*. (S. A. Lambert, Ill.). New York: Melanie Kroupa Books: Farrar Straus Giroux.
- Frame, J. A. (2003). *Yesterday I had the blues*. (R. G. Christie, Ill.). Berkely, CA: Tricycle Press.
- Freschet, G. (2001). *Beto and the bone dance*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.
- Gilchrist, J. S. (2007). *My America*. (A. Bryan and J. S. Gilchrist, Ill.). New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Godard, A. (2000). *Mama, across the sea*. (G. Wen, Adapted from French). New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- Gray, L. M. (1993). *Miss Tizzy*. (J. Rowland, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster Books.
- Greenberg, P. (2002). *Oh Lord, I wish I was a buzzard*. (Aliko, Ill.). New York: SeaStar Books.
- Grifalconi, A. (1999). *Tiny's hat*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Grimes, N. (2002). *Danitra Brown leaves town*. (F. Cooper, Ill.). New York: HarperCollins.
- Hartfield, C. (2002). *Me and Uncle Romie: A story inspired by the life and art of Romare Bearden*. (J. Lagarrigue, Ill.). New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

- Havill, J. (1999). *Jamaica and the substitute teacher*. (A. S. O'Brien, Ill.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Havill, J., & Savadier, E. (1992). *Treasure nap*. (E. Savadier, Ill.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Helldorfer, M. C. (1999). *Silver Rain Brown*. (T. Flavin, Ill.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Herold, M. R. (1995). *A very important day*. New York: Morrow Junior Books.
- Hershenhorn, E. (2002). *Chicken soup by heart*. (R. Litzinger, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Hesse, K. (1999). *Come on, rain!* (J. J. Muth, Ill.). New York: Scholastic Press.
- Hopkinson, D. (2002). *Under the quilt of night*. (J. E. Ransome, Ill.). New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Howard, E. F. (2000). *Virgie goes to school with us boys*. (E. B. Lewis, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Ichikawa, S. (2006). *My father's shop*. La Jolla, CA: Kane/Miller Book Publishers.
- Iijima, G. C. (2002). *The way we do it in Japan*. (P. Billin-Frye, Ill.). Mroton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company.
- Jimenez, F. (2000). *The Christmas gift: El regalo de Navidad*. (C. B. Cotts, Ill.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Johnson, A. (2003). *I dream of trains*. (L. Long, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Johnson, A. (2004). *Just like Josh Gibson*. (A. Johnson, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Johnson, A. (1999). *The wedding*. (D. Soman, Ill.). New York: Orchard Books.
- Johnson, D. (2000). *Quinnie Blue*. (J. Ransome, Ill.). New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Johnson, D. (1999). *Sunday week*. (T. Geter, Ill.). New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Johnston, T. (2001). *Uncle Rain Cloud*. (E. VandenBroeck, Ill.). Watertown, MA:

Talewinds.

Jones, J. (1999). *Tambourine moon*. (T. Widener, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster

Books for Young Readers.

Joose, B. (2004). *Hot city*. (R. G. Christie, Ill.). New York: Philomel Books.

Joose, B. (2002). *Stars in the darkness*. (R. G. Christie, Ill.). San Francisco, CA:

Chronicle Books LLC.

Joseph, L. (1998). *Jump up time: A Trinidad carnival story*. (L. Saport, Ill.). New York:

Clarion Books.

Katz, K. (1999). *The colors of us*. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Keats, E. J. (2000). *Dreams*. New York: Viking.

Keats, E. J., & Cherr, P. (1999). *My dog is lost!* New York: Viking.

Keats, E. J. (1972). *Pet show!* New York: Viking.

Kimmelman, L. (2003). *Happy 4th of July, Jenny Sweeney!* (N. Cole, Ill.). Morton Grove,

IL: Albert Whitman & Company.

Krull, K. (1994). *Maria Molina and the days of the dead*. (E. O. Sanchez, Ill.). New

York: Macmillan Publishing.

Kurtz, J. (2000). *Faraway home*. (E. B. Lewis, Ill.). New York: Gulliver Books

Harcourt.

Lakin, P. (2001). *Fat chance Thanksgiving*. (S. Schuett, Ill.). Morton Grove, IL: Albert

Whitman & Company.

Lee, M. (2001). *Earthquake*. (Y. Choi, Ill.). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Lester, A. (2001). *Ernie dances to the didgeridoo*. Boston: Houghton Miller Company.

Lewin, T. (2001). *Big Jimmy's Kum Kau Chinese take out*. New York: HarperCollins.

- Lin, G. (2001). *Dim sum for everyone!* New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Lin, G. (2004). *Fortune cookie fortunes*. New York: Dragon Fly Books/ Random House Children's Books.
- Lindsey, K. D. (2003). *Sweet potato pie*. (C. Riley-Webb, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Look, L. (2001). *Henry's first-moon birthday*. (Y. Heo, Ill.). New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Look, L. (1999). *Love as strong as Ginger*. (S. T. Johnson, Ill.). New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Lowell, S. (1992). *The three little javelinas*. (J. Harris, Ill.). Fortworth, TX: Northland Publishing.
- Mathis, S. B. (2001). *Ray Charles*. (G. Ford, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- McBrier, P. (2001). *Beatrice's goat*. (L. Lohstoeter, Ill.). New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- McKissack, P. C. (2001). *Goin' someplace special*. (J. Pinkney, Ill.). New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- McKissack, P. C. (2000). *The honest-to-goodness truth*. (G. Porter, Ill.). New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers.
- Medearis, A. S. (2000). *Seven spools of thread: A Kwanzaa story*. (D. Minter, Ill.). Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company.
- Miller, W. (2001). *Rent party jazz*. (C. Riley-Webb, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Modarressi, M. (2000). *Yard sale!* New York: DK Ink.
- Monk, I. (2001). *Family*. (J. L. Porter, Ill.). Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.
- Mora, P. (1999). *The rainbow tulip*. (E. Sayles, Ill.). New York: Viking.

- Myers, W. D. (2004). *I've seen the promised land: The life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* (L. Jenkins, Ill.). New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- Nelson, V. M. (2003). *Almost to freedom.* (C. Bootman, Ill.). Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books.
- Noguchi, R., & Jenks, D. (2001). *Flowers from Mariko.* (M. R. Kumata, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Nolen, J. (2003). *Thunder Rose.* (K. Nelson, Ill.). New York: Silver Whistle/Harcourt.
- Pak, S. (1999). *Dear Juno.* (S. K. Hartung, Ill.). New York: Viking.
- Park, F., & Park, G. (2002). *Good-bye, 382 Shin Dang Dong.* (Y. Choi, Ill.). Washington, DC: National Geographic.
- Partridge, E. (2001). *Oranges on Golden Mountain.* (A. Sogabe, Ill.). New York: Dutton Children's Books.
- Patrick, D. L. (1993). *The car washing street.* (J. Ward, Ill.). New York: Tambourine Books.
- Pegram, L. (2000). *Daughter's day blues.* (C. Van Wright and Y. Hu, Ill.). New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- Perez, A. I. (2002). *My diary from here to there / Mi diario de aqu  hasta all ;* (M. C. Gonzalez, Ill.). San Francisco: Children's Book Press.
- Perez, A. I. (2000). *My very own room / Mi propio cuartito.* (M. C. Gonzalez, Ill.). San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.
- Pinkney, A. D. (2001). *Mim's Christmas jam.* (B. Pinkney, Ill.). New York: Harcourt.
- Polacco, P. (1992) *Chicken Sunday.* New York: Philomel Books.
- Polacco, P. (1992). *Mrs. Katz and Tush.* New York: Bantam Books.
- Raschka, C. (2005). *New York Is English, Chattanooga is Creek.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

- Raven, M. T. (2004). *Circle unbroken: The story of a basket and its people*. (E. B. Lewis, Ill.). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Ray, M. L. (2002). *All aboard!* (A. Hirao, Ill.). New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- Recorvits, H. (2003). *My name is Yoon*. (G. Swiatkowska, Ill.). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Robles, A. D. (2003). *Lakas and the Manilatown fish / Si Lakas at ang isdang Manilatown*. (C. Angel, Ill. & E. D. de Jesus & M. de Guzman, Trans.). San Francisco: Children's Book Press.
- Rosa-Casanova, S. (1997). *Mama Provi and the pot of rice*. (R. Roth, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Ryan, P. M. (2002). *When Marian sang*. (B. Selznick, Ill.). New York: Scholastic Press.
- Say, A. (2004). *Music for Alice*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Say, A. (1999). *Tea with milk*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Sayre, A. P. (2001). *It's my city!: A singing map*. (D. Roche, Ill.). New York: Greenwillow Books.
- Scruggs, A. (2000). *Jump rope magic*. (D. Diaz, Ill.). New York: Scholastic.
- Sis, P. (2000). *Madlenka*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.
- Slate, J. (1998). *The secret stars*. (F. Davalos, Ill.). Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.
- Smalls, I. (1999). *Kevin and his dad*. (M. Hays, Ill.). Boston: Little, Brown and Company.
- Smith, P. (2003). *Janna and the kings*. (A. Boyd, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Smothers, E. F. (2003). *The hard-times jar*. (J. Holyfield, Ill.). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Soto, G. (2002). *If the shoe fits*. (T. Widener, Ill.). New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- Spalding, A. (2000). *Me and Mr. Mah*. (J. Wilson, Ill.). Custer, WA: Orca Book Publishers.

- Stanley, S. (1993). *The rains are coming*. New York: Greenwillow Books.
- Strom, M. D. (1999). *Rainbow Joe and me*. New York: Lee & Low Books Inc.
- Sugarman, B. O. (2006). *Rebecca's journey home*. (M. Shapiro, Ill.) Minneapolis, MN: Kar-Ben Publishing.
- Tarbescu, E. (1998). *Annushka's voyage*. (L. Dabovich, Ill.). New York: Clarion Books.
- Tarpley, N. A. (2002). *Bippity bop barbershop*. (E. B. Lewis, Ill.). New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- Taulbert, C. L. (2001). *Little Cliff's first day of school*. (E. B. Lewis, Ill.). New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- Taylor, D. A. (2004). *Sweet music in Harlem*. (F. Morrison, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Terasaki, S. T. (2002). *Ghosts for breakfast*. (S. Shinjo, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Thomassie, T. (2000). *Cajun through and through*. (A. Glass, Ill.). New York: Little, Brown and Company.
- Thong, R. (2001). *Red is a dragon: A book of colors*. (G. Lin, Ill.). San Francisco: Chronicle Books.
- Torres, L. (2004). *The kite festival*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux.
- Trivas, I. (1992). *Annie . . . Anya: A month in Moscow*. New York: Orchard Books.
- Uegaki, C. (2003). *Suki's kimono*. (S. Jorisch, Ill.). Tonawanda, NY: Kids Can Press.
- Vaughan, M. (2001). *The secret to freedom*. (L. Johnson, Ill.). New York: Lee & Low Books.
- Vizurraga, S. (2000). *Miss Opal's auction*. (M. Graham, Ill.). New York: Henry Holt and Company LLC.
- Waldman, N. (2003). *The never-ending greenness: We made Israel bloom*. New York:

Morrow Junior Books.

Walker, A. (2002). *Langston Hughes: American poet*. (C. Deeter, Ill.). New York: HarperCollins.

Wells, R. (1998). *Yoko*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children.

Wiles, D. (2001). *Freedom summer*. (J. Lagarrigue, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster.

Williams, S. A. (1999). *Girls together*. (S. S. James, Ill.). New York: Harcourt Brace & Company.

Winslow, B. (1995). *Dance on a sealskin*. (T. Sloat, Ill.). Anchorage, AL: Alaska Northwest Books.

Wong, J. S. (2000). *The trip back home*. (B. Jia, Ill.). New York: Harcourt Inc.

Wong, J. S. (2000). *This next new year*. (Y. Choi, Ill.). New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Woodson, J. (2002). *Our Gracie Aunt*. (J. J. Muth, Ill.). New York: Jump at the Sun: Hyperion Books.

Woodson, J. (2001). *Sweet, sweet memory*. (F. Cooper, Ill.). New York: Hyperion Books.

Wyeth, S. D. (1998). *Something beautiful*. (C. K. Soentpiet, Ill.). New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group.

Yee, P. (2002). *The jade necklace*. (G. Lin, Ill.). New York: Crocodile Books.

Zidrou, & Karvoskaia, N. (1996). *Dounia*. Brooklyn, NY: Kane/Miller Book Publishers.

Zolotow, C. (2000). *Do you know what I'll do?* (J. Steptoe, Ill.) New York: HarperCollin Publishers.

Not Located

O'Neill, A. (2002). *Estela's swap*. New York: Lee & Low Books.

Taulbert, C. L. (2002). *Little Cliff and the cold place*. (E. B. Lewish, Ill.). New York:

Dial Books for Young Readers.

Watson, M. (1995). *The butterfly seeds*. New York: Tambourine Books.

## APPENDIX B

## Bibliography of Books Known to Contain Christian Faith and Jewish Traditions

## PJ Library Picture Books

Abraham, M. S. (2007). *My cousin Tamar lives in Israel*. (A. D. Koffsky, Ill.). New York: URJ Press.

Goldin, B. D. (2002). *Night lights: A Sukkot story*. (L. Sucher, Ill.). New York: UAHC Press.

Hyde, H. S. (2007). *Mendel's accordion*. (J. VanDerSterre, Ill.). Minneapolis, MN: Kar-Ben Publishing.

Meltzer, A. (2007). *A mezuzah on the door*. (J. Fried, Ill.). Minneapolis, MN: Kar-Ben Publishing.

Rosenbaum, A. W. (2006). *A grandpa like yours; A grandma like yours*. (B. Bjornson, Ill.). Minneapolis, MN: Kar-Ben Publishing.

Schwartz, A. (1983). *Mrs. Moskowitz and the Sabbath candlesticks*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society.

Schwartz, H. (2005). *Before you were born*. (K. Swarner, Ill.). Brookfield, CN: Roaring Brook Press.

Shulevitz, U. (1978). *The treasure*. China: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

## Christian Faith Tradition Books

Lucado, M. (2000). *All you ever need*. (D. Klauba, Ill.). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Lucado, M. (1994). *The children of the king*. (T. Goffe, Ill.). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Lucado, M. (with Lucado, J., Lucado, A., & Lucado, S.). (1994). *The crippled lamb*. (L. Bonham, Ill.). Dallas, TX: Word Publishing.

Lucado, M. (1994). *Just in case you ever wonder*. (T. Goffe, Ill.). Dallas, TX: Word Publishing.

Lucado, M. (1997). *You are special*. (T. Goffe, Ill.). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Tada, J. E., & Carlson, M. (2000). *Forever friends*. (D. Klauba, Ill.). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

## APPENDIX C

## Bibliography of Books Reviewed with Reverend and Rabbi

- Allen, D. (2000). *Dancing in the wings*. (K. Nelson, Ill.). New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.
- D'Arc, K. S. (2001). *My grandmother is a singing yaya*. (D. Palmisciano, Ill.). New York: Orchard Books: An Imprint of Scholastic.
- Frame, J. A. (2003). *Yesterday I had the blues*. (R. G. Christie, Ill.). Berkeley, CA: Tricycle Press.
- Grifalconi, A. (1999). *Tiny's hat*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Grimes, N. (2002). *Danitra Brown leaves town*. (F. Cooper, Ill.). New York: HarperCollins: Amistad.
- Hopkinson, D. (2002). *Under the quilt of night*. (J. E. Ransome, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Joosse, B. (2004). *Hot city*. (R. G. Christie, Ill.). New York: Philomel Books.
- Lee, M. (2001). *Earthquake*. (Y. Choi, Ill.). New York: Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- McKissack, P. C. (2001). *Goin' someplace special*. (J. Pinkney, Ill.). New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Medearis, A. S. (2000). *Seven spools of thread: A Kwanzaa story*. (D. Minter, Ill.). Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Company.
- Modarressi, M. (2000). *Yard sale!* New York: DK Ink.

Nelson, V. M. (2003). *Almost to freedom*. (C. Bootman, Ill.). Minneapolis, MN:

Carolrhoda Books, Inc.

Patrick, D. L. (1993). *The car washing street*. (J. Ward, Ill.). New York: Tambourine

Books.

Ryan, P. M. (2002). *When Marian sang*. (B. Selznick, Ill.). New York: Scholastic Press.

Soto, G. (2002). *If the shoe fits*. (T. Widener, Ill.). New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Spalding, A. (2000). *Me and Mr. Mah*. (J. Wilson, Ill.). Custer, WA: Orca Book

Publishers.

Wells, R. (1998). *Yoko*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children.

Wyeth, S. D. (1998). *Something beautiful*. (C. K. Soentpiet, Ill.). New York: Bantam

Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.

Zolotow, C. (2000). *Do you know what I'll do?* (J. Steptoe, Ill.) New York: HarperCollins

Publishers.

## APPENDIX D

## Glossary

**apartheid:** racial segregation: *specif:* a former policy of segregation and political and economic discrimination against non-European groups in the Republic of So. Africa

**Ashkenazi:** a member of one of the two great divisions of Jews comprising the eastern European Yiddish-speaking Jews – compare SEPHARDI

**bris:** the Jewish rite of circumcision performed by a mohel

**coloured:** person of mixed decent (Barker et al., 1994, p. 531) as defined by South African government

**challah** *also challa or hallah:* egg-rich yeast-leavened bread that is usu. braided or twisted before baking and is traditionally eaten by Jews on the Sabbath and holidays

**Chanukah** *also Hanukah or Hanukkah:* an 8-day Jewish holiday beginning on the 25<sup>th</sup> Kislev and commemorating the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem after its defilements by Antiochus of Syria

**Diaspora:** the Jews living outside Palestine or modern Israel

**dreidle:** 1: a 4-sided toy marked with Hebrew letters and spun like a top in a game of chance 2: a children's game of chance played especially at Hanukkah

**Gemara:** commentary on the Mishnah forming the second part of the Talmud

**gentile:** a person of a non-Jewish nation or of non-Jewish faith

**grogger:** a noise maker used during Purim; it is used when the "Hamen" is said during the reading of the Scroll of Esther (author definition)

**haggadah:** the book of readings for the seder service

**halacha** a/so **halakha**: the body of Jewish law supplementing the scriptural law and forming esp. the legal part of the Talmud

**Hebrew**: the official language of Israel; examples of Hebrew letters: ש ל ם (shalom)  
(author's definition)

**icon**: a conventional religious image typically painted on a small wooden panel and used in the devotions of Eastern Christians

**Jerusalem stone**: the specific type of stone the wailing wall is made of (author's definition)

**kiddush cup**: the cup used to hold the wine when the Kiddush is said: a ceremonial blessing pronounced over wine or bread in a Jewish home or synagogue on a holy day (as the Sabbath)

**klaf**: the parchment on which a Sofer writes (found inside a mezuzah) (author's definition)

**latkes**: fried potato pancakes typically served at Chanukkah with applesauce and sour-cream (author's definition)

**lulav**: a palm branch which, along with an etrog (citron fruit) is waved during Sukkot; it is a mitzvah to perform this act (author's definition)

**kashruth** or **kashrut**: Jewish Dietary Law

**kosher**: "food ritually fit according to Jewish law"

**matzo** or **matzoh**: unleavened bread eaten especially at Passover.

**menorah**: a candelabra with seven or nine lights that is used in Jewish worship;  
menorahs used in celebration of Chanukah have nine lights: eight for each night that the oil lasted, and one, the shamash which is used to light the other eight (author's note)

**mezuzah or mezuzah:** a small parchment scroll inscribed with Deut: 6:4-9 and 11:13-21

and the name Shaddai and placed in a case fixed to the doorpost by some Jewish families as a sign and reminder of their faith; also: such a scroll and its case

**midrash or midrashim:** a rabbinic tale (author's definition); a haggadic or halakic exposition of the underlying significance of a Bible text

**mikveh:** a ritual bath that Jews use to purify themselves in a religious manner. This is required for use by women after their menstrual cycles prior to having relations with their husbands as well as for women and girls who are converting to Judaism. "Most *mikva'ot* (plural) are located in buildings, although a lake, river, or ocean – in fact, any body of natural water – can serve as a valid *mikveh*" (Telushkin, p. 681).

**Mishnah or Mishna:** the collection of mostly halakic Jewish traditions compiled about A.D. 200 and made the basic part of the Talmud

**Mitzvah:** 1: a commandment of the Jewish law 2: a meritorious or charitable act

**Mohel:** a person who performs ritual Jewish circumcision

**Passover:** a Jewish holiday beginning on the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nisan and commemorating the Hebrew's liberation from slavery in Egypt

**Purim:** a Jewish holiday celebrated on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of Adar in commemoration of the deliverance of the Jews from the massacre plotted by Haman. Everyone, adults and children, dress up in costumes and attend the reading of the Scroll of Esther. It is common practice to give "Purim baskets" to friends, filled with sweets and treats (author's note).

**Rosh Hashanah:** the Jewish New Year observed on the first day and by Orthodox and Conservative Jews also on the second day of Tishri

**Rugelach:** a cookie made during Purim because it is shaped like Haman's hat.

**Sabbath:** the seventh day of the week observed from Friday evening to Saturday evening as a day of rest and worship by Jews and some Christians

**Scroll of Esther:** a scroll that looks similar to a *Torah* but has only one wooden side. It has the story of Purim on it, so called the Scroll of Esther because it is she, a Jewish Queen, who saves the Jews from Haman (author's definition)

**Seder:** a Jewish home or community service including a ceremonial dinner held on the first or first and second evenings of the Passover in commemoration of the exodus from Egypt

**Seder plates:** a plate used during a Seder (author's definition)

**Sephardi:** a member of the occidental branch of European Jews settling in Spain and Portugal and later in the Balkans, the Levant, England, the Netherlands, and the Americas; *also:* one of their descendants – compare ASHKENAZI

**Shabbat:** the Jewish Sabbath

**Shabbat candlesticks:** candlesticks used to hold the Shabbat candles; two candles lit prior to the beginning of Shabbat to welcome the holiday (author's definition)

**shofar:** a ram's-horn trumpet blown by the ancient Hebrews in battle and during religious observances and used in modern Judaism, esp. during Rosh Hashanah and at the end of Yom Kippur

**Sofer:** a Jewish scribe

**sufganiyah:** Hebrew word for the fried jelly donuts served at Chanukkah (author's definition)

**Sukkah:** "a booth or shelter with a roof of branches and leaves that is used, esp. for meals during the Sukkoth" (p. 1249); it is to remind Jews of the time that their ancestors had no permanent dwellings while they wandered in the wilderness.

**Sukkot or Sukkoth:** a Jewish harvest festival beginning on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Tishri and commemorating the temporary shelters used by the Jews during their wandering in the wilderness

**Talmud:** the authoritative body of Jewish tradition comprising the Mishnah and Gemara

**Tanakh:** "rhymes with Bach . . . an acronym for the three categories of books that make up the Hebrew Bible: *Torah*, *Nevi'im* (*Prophets*), and *Ketuvim* (*Writings*). Observant Jews do not commonly refer to the Hebrew Bible as the Old Testament-that is a Christian usage" (Telushkin, 2001, p. 1).

**Torah:** "first five books of the Jewish scriptures, also called the Law; the holiest part of the Jewish *Tanach*" (Osborne, 1996, p. 73)

**transliterated Jewish word:** rather than the word being written in Hebrew letters it is written phonetically (author's definition)

**Tree of life:** a conventionalized and often ornate representation of a tree used as a decorative motif

**Tu B'Shvat:** "the fifteenth day of *Shvat* . . . the New Year for trees. . . . Many American and European Jews observe the holiday by making contributions to the Jewish National Fund, which uses the funds to develop forests in Israel. The holiday, however, is an old one, predating the State of Israel by thousands of years" (Telushkin, p. 636).

**tzedakah:** derives from the Hebrew word *tzedek*, "justice." Performing deeds of justice is perhaps the most important obligation Judaism imposes on the Jew. This is commonly used to refer to money that is put into a tzedakah box before the start of Shabbat and then annually given to a charity (author's note).

**tzedakah boxes:** the box used to hold *tzedakah*

**wailing wall:** a surviving section of the wall which in ancient times formed a part of the enclosure of Herod's temple near the Holy of Holies and at which Jews traditionally gather for prayer and religious lament

**Yarmulke:** a skullcap worn esp. by Orthodox and Conservative Jewish males in the synagogue and the home

**Yiddish:** "a Jewish language based largely on German and Hebrew" (Telushkin, p. 215)

**Yom Kippur:** a Jewish holiday observed with fasting and prayer on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Tishri in accordance with the rites described in Leviticus 16 – called also Day of Atonement

**Zionism:** an international movement orig. for the establishment of a Jewish national or religious community in Palestine and later for the support of modern Israel

*Note.* Unless otherwise noted definitions are from *Merriam–Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 2003.

## APPENDIX E

## Complete Framework of Visual and Textual Representations

Christian	angels	Bibles with crosses
	one or three candles	Christmas
	mules	churches/steeple/onion domes
	icons	number seven
	sets of three	crosses and/or crucifixes
	sheep/lambs	halo effect/transference of light
	manger scenes	hands lifted to the sky/divine hand
	priest/minister	Madonna and child poses
	a pitcher in a bowl	people looking up towards heaven
	shepherd's crook	
Jewish	challah	dreidle
	Groggers	Hebrew letters
	Jerusalem stone	Kiddush cup
	Latkes	menorahs
	mikvah scenes	myrtle
	oil containers	Sabbath candlesticks
	the scroll of Esther	shepherd with a crooked staff
	synagogues	torah
	tree of life	windmills
	yarmulkes	

## APPENDIX F

## Codes for Derivations of Names

- C1 Christian Bible name
- C2 Saint's name
- H Hebrew Bible/Tanakh
- C12 In both the Christian Bible and a saint's name
- C12H In the Christian and Hebrew Bible as well as a saint's name
- C1H In both the Christian and Hebrew Bible's
- C2H A saint's name and in the Hebrew Bible

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