

# “Especially Special”: Learning About Jews in a Fundamentalist Christian School

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*Based on the premise that private religious schools function sociologically as crucibles for collective memory work, this study examined the image of Jews conveyed through a Holocaust unit as taught at a fundamentalist Christian school. After presenting an analysis of both the enacted and experienced curricular dimensions of the unit, we argue that studies of abstracted others—others studied about rather than interacted with—within communal religious schools potentially pose problematic implications for students’ multicultural sensibilities. Moreover, we claim that, given these implications, religion, as a category, ought to be both more consistently included within multicultural education frameworks and more closely examined within lived, classroom practice.*

In the fall of 2000, the U.S. Department of Education reported that more than five million students were attending religious private schools (National Center for Educational Statistics 2000). To meet these enrollment demands, religious elementary school construction has increased by 234 percent over the last decade, nearly twice the rate of public school construction.<sup>1</sup> During the same period, the number of parents home-schooling their children more than doubled, largely due to parents’ religious convictions (Apple 2001; Bauman 2001).<sup>2</sup> Although it remains to be seen how the Supreme Court decision on school vouchers in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2002) will affect educational policies nationally, it seems likely that public monies will be used to support various kinds of religious education in the near future.

Despite this growth in religious schooling, the inclusion of religion within multicultural education paradigms has been irregular. Among educational scholars, debates about multiculturalism have tended to focus primarily on inequities and differences based on race (Delpit 1988; Ladson-Billings 1994; Lee 1996; Wade 1998), class (Lareau 1993), gender (American

Association of University Women 1999; Sadker and Sadker 1994; Connell 1995), sexual orientation (Loutzenheiser 1996), and disability (Linton 1998).<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Christine Sleeter and Carl Grant's (2003) fourth edition of *Making Choices for Multicultural Education* encapsulates the categories that have governed multicultural education to date: "race, language, social class, gender, disability and sexual orientation" (p. iv). Only recently have multicultural educators, as distinguished from advocates of teaching about religion in history or social studies, taken account of religious differences (Banks and McGee Banks 2001; Grant and Gomez 2001). While Jewish perspectives and anti-Semitism have been touched upon (Banks 1997; Grant and Ladson-Billings 1997), few theorists have explored religious identities and minority religions as influential dimensions of multicultural education. (Schoem 1991; Brettschneider 1996; Eisenlohr 1996; Biale et al. 1998; Stratton 2000).

Following the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Towers, that situation shifted abruptly (as indeed many educational discourses shifted in the shadow of September 11th). Multicultural educators responded with astonishing speed to the events of 9/11, almost immediately incorporating Muslim identities and worldviews into their educational paradigm (Alavi and Seikaly 2001; Sarroub 2001). Notwithstanding this recent interest in religion, what has tended to remain constant in educational discourse about multiculturalism is the fundamental enlightenment ideal that multicultural awareness—here defined as a profound "recognition" (Gutmann 1987/1999) of cultural others—is unbounded in its possibilities. Underlying the efforts to educate toward a multiculture (Ellsworth 1999) has been both the notion that a "culturally pluralistic mainstream" (Sleeter and Grant 2003, p. iv) can exist and that it might best be approximated through education that is multicultural (Sleeter and Grant 2003). The case reported on below proposes a limitation to such utopic educational visions, for rather than implying that competing cultural narratives can coexist peaceably in a multiculture, our research suggests that, at least occasionally, particular religious groups' governing narratives—that is, the stories they tell about themselves—not only efface other groups' narratives but potentially efface particular others altogether.

The study from which the case derives examined the construction of collective memory (Halbwachs 1992) within a private religious school, focusing on students' learning and the implications of that learning for their notions of others. By collective memory, we mean that constellation of meanings a people generate in reference to their past by which they understand their present.<sup>4</sup> As opposed to a study of history, which "because it is an intellectual and secular production, calls for analysis and criticism," (Nora 1989) and for "complexity, ... detachment ... and ambiguity" (Novick 1999), collective memory we understand to hold meanings which,

while ascribed to history, are nonetheless “impatient with ambiguities of any kind [and which] reduce events to mythic archetypes” (ibid). Following those writers whose works treat history, collective memory and collective occlusion (Wineburg 2001) as mutually interpenetrating categories (Funkenstein 1989; Nora 1989; Bartov 1993; Gillis 1994), we were interested in the sociological dimensions of collective memory, that is, the ways in which religious education enlists particular communal loyalties, imagined (Anderson 1991) and otherwise, and at the same time delimits communal loyalties, defining *otherness* by default, if not by intention. Put briefly, our theoretical framework positioned religious education as communicating collective memory, which in turn bounded its adherents’ multicultural awareness and, moreover, constrained possibilities for a utopist multiculturalism.

Specifically, we investigated what fundamentalist Christian students enrolled in a religious school learned about Jews through study of the Holocaust. We situated the study within an Evangelical Christian school because there, religious students’ social worlds were encompassed almost wholly within the larger church community. None of the students in the school were Jewish, and the enrolled students rarely, if ever, interacted with Jews outside of school. Our study thus investigated the inevitable tensions that arise in studying an abstracted other—an other learned about rather than interacted with.

We studied students’ learning about the Holocaust both because the Holocaust is a primary vehicle for students to learn about Jews and because it is such a widely available symbol in American culture. Over the last few decades, the Holocaust has become a dominant metaphor, a cultural touchstone and a moral reference point for widely disparate groups (Novick 1999), each of which employs the Holocaust toward radically different ends.<sup>5</sup> The Holocaust has thus become or shown itself to be eminently flexible, its meanings determined by its contexts. Such plasticity provided a rich venue through which to study students’ religiously infused perceptions. The teaching of the Holocaust, in other words, formed the vehicle through which to study the inculcation of collective memory. Because we agreed with Sam Wineburg (1999) that people’s understandings of history bear consequences for “coming to know others, whether they live on the other side of the tracks or the other side of the millennium” (p. 9), we studied the teaching and learning of Holocaust history to expose patterns of social relations in the present (Wills 1994). Positioning the study within a fundamentalist school promised to embolden the outlines of religious imprints on students’ and teachers’ perceptions of this event, themselves, and others.

Within fundamentalist movements generally, Richard Antoun (2002) categorized two types of others: internal and external “enemies” (p. 52) against which fundamentalists define themselves. As Antoun writes, for fundamentalist Christians, “the internal ... enemies are the non-funda-

mentalist Christians who claim to be followers of Jesus but accept the norms laid down by the state and other nonreligious institutions ... and [who] cavort with members of the secular society” (p. 56). External enemies, by contrast, are non-Christians, “particularly the communist, the atheist, and the secular humanist—and often members of other faiths” (p. 56). According to Antoun (2001), internal enemies are typically perceived by religious fundamentalists as the greater threat. The position of Jews within fundamentalist Christian thought, however, necessarily complicates Antoun’s paradigm since Jews occupy a liminal status, simultaneously insiders and outsiders, insiders for being God’s first chosen and the forebears of Jesus, outsiders for having rejected Jesus as the messiah. By researching fundamentalist Christian students’ learning about the Holocaust, we hoped to ascertain their understandings of Jews as others, glimpse their perceptions of history as collective memory, and, in the end, consider the implications of fundamentalist religious schooling in either fostering or curtailing this country becoming a fuller multicultural.

#### METHODOLOGY

We generated data for this part of the project mostly between September and December, 2001. In a team of three,<sup>6</sup> we conducted classroom observations, taking field notes on every class session during the Holocaust unit. The class sessions were tape-recorded and transcribed, as were individual interviews with the teacher and a select group of five eighth graders. Both the students and the teacher were believers, those who embraced fundamentalist Christianity.<sup>7</sup> In addition to interviewing the small group of students, we also collected theirs and their peers’ work as well as all curricular material associated with the unit. We coded the transcripts and all written materials using a modified version of “grounded theory” (Strauss and Corbin 1990).<sup>8</sup> We triangulated across document types—looking for consistencies across student remarks, teacher interviews and curricular materials—and within document types—for example, across class sessions and across student interviews—to check for analytical reliability. We then constructed a case, primarily using Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis’ notions of portraiture (1997).

Sara Lawrence Lightfoot writes, “The researcher brings her own history—familial, cultural, ideological, and educational—to the inquiry” (1997, p. 95). As Jewish researchers in a Christian fundamentalist school, we continually attempted to identify our own positions vis-à-vis this research. Our religious identities, our links to a university, and our lack of genuine connections to the school and church community distanced us from the students and their teacher, allowing us a measure of anonymity while in the

classroom and a sense of separateness from the classroom's goings on.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, our Jewish identities—as various as they are—were ever-present, investing us personally in the consequences of the subject matter representation. Like Alan Peshkin's experience of conducting an ethnography at Bethany Baptist Academy (1986), each of us felt distinctly Jewish in the midst of a Christian class engaged in study of the Nazi Holocaust.

Recognizing the complexities of our own religious identities, we attempted to consider our interviewees as individuals with similarly complex religious identities of their own. In much of the educational research to date, fundamentalist students' conceptions of self and other have been neglected (Peshkin 1986; Parsons 1987; Rose 1988 are exceptions) except as targets at which to aim critiques of religious extremism more broadly (DeFattore 1992; Gaddy and Hall 1996; Dwyer 1998; Miner 1998; Detwiler 1999; Apple 2000, 2001; Kennedy 2001). Despite authors' concessions that categories of race, gender, and sexual identity shift and change, fundamentalist Christians are typically conceived of, or at least written about as an unvariegated, monolithic block.<sup>10</sup> While it is tempting to hang on to fixed categories, especially perhaps when considering fundamentalist religions, religious identities are as unstable and complex as categories based on race, gender, and sexual identity (Wuthnow 1989; Hunter 1991; Marsden 1991; Sarroub 2001; Lester 2002). In pursuit of adequately representing dimensions of that diversity, we did invite two members of the school community to check our analysis.

#### THE SETTING: ETERNAL GRACE SCHOOL

Located on the rural outskirts of a midwestern city, Eternal Grace School (EGS)<sup>11</sup> is a K–12 school associated with a charismatic, fundamentalist Christian church. The school had approximately 475 students enrolled the year we observed, and, as reflective of the growth in the population of fundamentalist Christians nationally, the administrators expected its enrollment to expand by one-third the following year. The building itself is stunning. Sitting on twenty-eight acres of sculpted landscape, the 3.1 million dollar facility houses a daycare center; elementary, middle, and high school classrooms; music rooms; gymnasias; a cafeteria; a state-of-the-art computer lab; and an impressive library.

The educational mission at Eternal Grace is twofold: while preparing students academically, the staff teaches students to live “in the way of the Lord.” Their promotional materials elaborate what this means. Training at Eternal Grace calls for

teaching both the Truth of God as found in His Word, the Bible, but also truth as it exists in God's world. [The staff] recognize that God is

the author and source of all truth, and that true education is gaining this perspective and integrating it into all teaching. This perspective is theistic (God-centered), not humanistic (man-centered) and, as such, is opposed to atheism, evolution, permissiveness (an “open attitude” in matters of morals and ethics), and existentialism (experience of “phenomena-orientation” as the only reality). It stands in direct opposition to any thinking that is anti-Biblical or extra-Biblical.

Of the school’s two main educational goals, academic preparation serves the aim of religious training, or, put differently, all teaching at Eternal Grace is geared toward creating strong Christians.

In a fundamentalist Christian belief system, Jesus was sent by God to save sinners, and through belief in Jesus sins are forgiven and people thus experience redemption. As John Stott (1971), a writer of numerous fundamentalists guides, explains:

Jesus of Nazareth is the heaven-sent Savior we sinners need. We need to be forgiven and restored to fellowship with the all-holy God, from whom our sins have separated us. We need to be set free from our selfishness and given strength to live up to our ideals. We need to learn to love one another, friend and foe alike. This is the meaning of “salvation.” This is what Christ came to win for us by his death and resurrection. (p. 9)

All fundamentalist Christians are thus born-again. As Alan Peshkin (1986) summarized concisely, “To such Christians, all men are born once of the flesh; if they accept Jesus Christ as their personal savior, they are born once again, but the second time as new men in him” (p. 1). The Bible serves as a guide to both salvation and citizenship to born-again Christians. As the record of God’s deeds, it is viewed as an inerrant text, meant to be interpreted literally and followed exactly. In contrast to the larger American society against which fundamentalists define themselves, the teachers at Eternal Grace encourage their students to submit fully to God, a God whom they view as omnipotent, omniscient, loving and good, and a God whom they view as fully directing their lives.

To foster such a relationship to God, the teachers in the school typically stand at the front of their rooms, and, from a very young age, their students are taught to learn by listening. Their desks sit in neat rows facing the blackboards. References to the Bible occur during class in every school subject, not only in religion classes, and it is typical for prayers to open class sessions. A strict dress code is enforced at the school; the students wear khaki pants or skirts and solid colored jerseys every day except Wednesdays when, in honor of the weekly chapel sessions, the boys don white button-

down shirts and ties, and the girls wear skirts. As occurs in many dress-code schools, the students accessorize carefully to express their individuality, the boys donning rope bracelets and stylized sneakers, the girls, hair ornaments and dangling earrings.

Upon walking into the school building, we were struck by the clean-cut atmosphere. There is no graffiti, even in the bathroom stalls (at least not in the girls' room), and wide banners, proclaiming, "God, protect us" and, "Expand our providence," adorn the main hallways. Through both the physical surroundings and classroom teachings, Eternal Grace fosters the characteristics of good fundamentalist Christian children: they are to be clean, obedient, respectful, polite, humble, and dedicated to their faith. The students we interviewed initially impressed us as fitting that description. In answer to our first interview question, to "describe yourself, your age, your religion, your family," Dean, for example, answered by saying matter of factly, "Alright. I'm fourteen. My religion is I'm a Christian, and I believe in God. He died for my sins." The teaching of all school subjects at Eternal Grace impressed upon students what this kind of "proper relationship to God" demands.

#### THE TEACHER: EMILIA BARRETT

Emilia Barrett had been teaching eighth through twelfth grades at Eternal Grace for three years. Somewhere in her late forties, Mrs. Barrett had a warm smile and an easy laugh. She identifies herself simply as "Christian," the self-designation preferred by fundamentalists.<sup>12</sup> A mother of four, she began teaching only after her youngest left home for college. She taught public high school first but jumped at the chance to teach at Eternal Grace. Though she is not a charismatic evangelical—she doesn't believe that faith ought to be based on emotion or primarily emotional in substance—she is evangelical and has felt very much at home teaching at Eternal Grace.<sup>13</sup> The spiritual mission of the school is close to her heart.

When asked, for example, why she begins the year with a quarter-long unit on the Holocaust, Barrett's response foreshadows the inculcation of faith in her eighth-grade students. She teaches about the Holocaust by having her students read *The Hiding Place* (1984), the personal memoir of Corrie ten Boom, a Christian concentration camp survivor.<sup>14</sup> The book describes the extensive rescue work of its author and her family, her resultant incarceration and loss, and the vicissitudes and triumph of her Christian faith throughout these ordeals. One of Mrs. Barrett's primary goals for teaching *The Hiding Place* is to infuse her students with a similar kind of faith. She hopes that Corrie ten Boom will serve as a role model for her students; just as ten Boom's faith grew stronger during her

imprisonment, so Mrs. Barrett wants her students to turn to Jesus in their times of distress, whatever forms that distress may take in their lives. As she explained:

I teach *The Hiding Place* [because] I believe it's a story which not only has historical significance but teaches us many lessons about the persecution of others and about persecution that we, as Christians, may someday face. To be truthful, I fully expect as a Christian, whether in my lifetime or my children's life times . . . that there will be, that we will have to deal with some type of persecution.

In Mrs. Barrett's vision, then, suffering during the Holocaust prefigures the future persecution of Christians and hence, this history is instructive, its teaching, instrumental.<sup>15</sup> The memoir, Mrs. Barrett feels, doesn't teach only vague lessons about loyalty or ethics but rather specific strategies for handling persecution and thriving spiritually; here, history is a "cultural tool" (Wertsch, 1998) that functions more like a manual than a guide.

Elaborating her hopes for student learning in the unit, Mrs. Barrett continued:

I hope that the students become more sensitive to others, have more empathy and compassion for people with different beliefs. I hope, too, that they gain great boldness and willingness to stand up for what's right and not just go along with something that's wrong. I hope they learn the truth about this history, that they will understand what it was like to live in a concentration camp. . . . But they will see that God can give us hope in any situation, that physical suffering is horrible and we all want to avoid it and we wouldn't be honest to say, "Oh, it would have been easy for me to go through that." It wouldn't have been easy for any of us to go through that. . . . It would have been tormenting. And yet, we can find God in those times, in those places, whenever and wherever they are. And, if we give Him our pain, give Him our suffering, whether He preserves us in our physical lives or not, that we can experience Him being with us, His closeness, and we can, only through God, find forgiveness and go beyond the situation to contribute to a world so that it would not happen again.

While Ms. Barrett considered the Holocaust a venue for instilling multicultural goals, she considered multicultural difference to refer not to categories of racial or ethnic identity, but to "people with different [religious] beliefs." Moreover, the sensitivity to such others that she hoped to instill in her students bore no hints of any larger project of social justice or socioeconomic reform. Primarily, Mrs. Barrett saw the import of the

Holocaust in its relevance to her identity as a Christian, and she hoped that learning about it would bolster her students' Christian identities. Ideally, she hoped that, through learning about Corrie ten Boom, her students would implant God more deeply in every facet of their lives. If the Holocaust itself was not interesting or important subject matter on its own terms, neither was any other history or any other subject matter in the school curriculum. Rather, all were subsumed into the work of building a strong Christian identity in each student and thus building a strong collective of Christians with a shared memory.

#### WHERE ARE THEY? LOSING JEWS IN THE OFFICIAL CURRICULUM

Mrs. Barrett typically assigned the students to read two to three chapters of *The Hiding Place* and to answer a list of accompanying questions each week. Drawn from a packet published by Progeny Press, a Christian publishing house, the questions amplified the religious content of the memoir, asking students, for example, to look up and explain Biblical passages cited in the book. In most class sessions, Mrs. Barrett would first quiz the students on the pages she had assigned them to read, then have them report their marks orally to her for recording, and subsequently have them read aloud the answers they had written in their packets for homework. The packet format mimicked Mrs. Barrett's pedagogy; characteristically, she sought direct quotations, precise answers, and short responses. Although the main text here was a memoir rather than a textbook, the teacher-dominated, textbook-driven, IRE-structured<sup>16</sup> (Mehan 1979) discourse that characterized Mrs. Barrett's classroom was a religiously driven pedagogical choice, meant to highlight the authority of the text and the submission of its beholders.

The centrality of Christianity, the importance of faith, and the role of salvation through belief in *The Hiding Place* should not be surprising. Published by Chosen Books, a Christian Press, its title does not refer only to the room in which ten Boom and her family hid Jews but, according to the book's preface, derives also from ten Boom's "world-wide ministry of comfort and counsel ... begun ... in the concentration camp where she ... found, as the prophet Isaiah promised, 'a hiding place from the wind'" (p. i). *The Hiding Place* is mostly about Christianity—indeed, about a certain kind of Christianity; it is less about the room in which Corrie ten Boom hid Jews. Ten Boom's rescue work, though important in propelling her experiences at Scheveningen prison and Ravensbruck concentration camp, is certainly secondary to the primacy of her faith as the driving force in the book. In fact, in the book, ten Boom's rescue work in Holland becomes so eclipsed by her missionary work in the camps that as the students in Mrs. Barrett's class were reaching the final chapters, one of the boys raised his hand to ask,

“Did the Jewish people get ... Are they still in that ... Where are they?” This student had no idea what had happened to the Jews whom the ten Boom’s had hidden. “Well, we’re not exactly told that,” Mrs. Barrett responded, “but we know that they were all caught except for one.”

As the student’s question implies, the Jewish characters in *The Hiding Place* remained nameless, with only two exceptions. The first is a character the ten Boom family calls The Bulldog for having a “rolling, short-legged gait” like the pets he loves. Even after introducing himself by name, Harry de Vries is referred to by the ten Booms as The Bulldog. This character “had become a Christian some forty years earlier,” according to the author, “without ceasing in the least to be a loyal Jew.” He described himself as a “completed Jew, ... a follower of the one perfect Jew,” (p. 7) Jesus.

The other Jewish character named in the memoir is Meyer Mossel, whose “features are especially Semitic,” which makes hiding him especially risky. Mossel had been a cantor before coming to the ten Booms and, when asked to read from the Hebrew Bible one evening, his wailing is described as “half-sung, half-pleaded ... so feelingly and achingly” that it recalled “the cry of the Exile itself” (p. 97). While evoking the image of an “ancient prophet,” Mossel’s characterization simultaneously suggests the modernity of a man shrugging off the constraints of tradition. Presented with the possibility of eating pork while in hiding, Mossel jokes that “Of course ... there’s a provision for this in the Talmud”—that is, a provision for what to do when the only available food is unkosher and thus prohibited under Jewish law. While chewing the meat, “eyes heavenward in pure pleasure.” Mossel adds, “I’m going to start hunting for it, too, ... just as soon as dinner’s over” (p. 98). The characterizations of Jews within the textbook thus teetered between being witty, cosmopolitan, modern, and Christian on the one hand or mournful, insular, and ancient on the other.

#### BETWEEN EXOTIC AND MUNDANE: THE ENACTED CURRICULUM

The tensions embedded in the representation of Jews in the book’s text necessarily played out in the classroom, for they do not emanate from Corrie ten Boom’s memoir alone but instead originate in fundamentalist Christian eschatology. Jews were in a sense doubly displaced in Mrs. Barrett’s unit: first superseded in Christian doctrine and then persecuted during the Holocaust. In the following excerpt, Mrs. Barrett illuminates her explanation for Jewish persecution after unearthing students’ confusions about who is Jewish in *The Hiding Place*. It may well be that ten Boom’s characterization of The Bulldog as simultaneously a Christian and a

completed Jew produced some of the befuddlement that Mrs. Barrett confronted. She begins by discussing a line from ten Boom's memoir:

*Mrs. Barrett:* Page 69, the last sentence before the break in the page, Corrie writes something that her father says. Would you read that to us, Trace? Nice and loud for us.

*Trace:* "I pity the poor Germans, Corrie. They have touched the apple of God's eye."

*Mrs. Barrett:* What does that mean, "the apple of God's eye," Dean?

*Dean:* The Jews were God's chosen people.

*Mrs. Barrett:* How do we know that?

*Dean:* The Bible says it.

*Mrs. Barrett:* Where does the Bible say that? How do we know that?

*Dean:* The Bible says it. [He doesn't know the specific answer, so instead repeats his earlier claim more emphatically.]

*Mrs. Barrett:* Okay, so the Bible says it. And we believe everything in the Bible is true. My question is, where in the Bible does it say so, in the Old Testament or the New Testament. Bessie?

*Bessie:* The Old.

*Mrs. Barrett:* The Old Testament, right. The Israelites were God's chosen people. They had special favor with God. What else did God do for Jews that was special? In what other ways did God favor the Jews? Dean?

*Dean:* He released them from slavery and all that stuff...

*Mrs. Barrett:* Okay, How about in the New Testament? Bessie?

*Bessie:* Jesus was a Jew.

*Mrs. Barrett:* Yes, Jesus was born as a Jew, wasn't he? Here's another sentence on page 74. Turn to page 74. Trace ... On page 74, if you look from the bottom of the page... the third paragraph up. Corrie is moved to pray this prayer to God. Do you see the first paragraph on the bottom? It begins with "Lord Jesus I offer myself." What are the next three words, Reba?

*Reba:* "For your people."

*Mrs. Barrett:* "For your people." Again, Corrie is recognizing the Jewish people as God's special people, favorite people, people that God has a very, very strong love for. Yes Jason?

*Jason:* as she Jewish?

*Mrs. Barrett:* No, she was not Jewish. She was Christian. Her family has never been Jewish that I know of. They were Christians.... They respected the Old Testament as well as the New Testament as we who are Christian should.... Turn to page 73 and while you're turning to that page, I want you to think about something: The Jewish people were God's favorite people. They were God's chosen people. He had stayed with them. He had delivered them. He had answered their prayers at different times. He also allowed them to be hunted by enemies.... Okay. Jesus was born as a Jew. What happened to Jesus and his relationship with the Jewish people? ... Justin? Did the Jews accept Jesus as the Son of God? As the Messiah?

*Justin:* Yeah.

*Mrs. Barrett:* Pardon, they did?

*Justin:* I don't know.

*Mrs. Barrett:* Put your book down, this isn't in your book. Was Jesus accepted by Jewish people? Did Jewish people believe that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah?

*Justin:* No.

*Mrs. Barrett:* No. Okay. And sooo Jewish people rejected Jesus.

Hinted at, but never stated explicitly, Mrs. Barrett's conception of Jewish persecution rests on the Jewish rejection of Jesus as the messiah, which for Christians, supplants Jews as the chosen people in God's eyes. As Jews "abandoned" God by rejecting Jesus during the first century (CE), so God abandons or punishes them during the Holocaust. The Holocaust, for fundamentalists, thus affirms Biblical judgment in our modern experience. In Mrs. Barrett's teaching, then, both the victimization of Jews and the rationale for their rescue is lodged in their special status of being chosen. In other words, Jews were not to be saved during the Holocaust because they were people but because they were God's chosen people. Jewish identities as individuals as well as their simple humanity as a collectivity are somewhat shrouded in this view. Corrie ten Boom prays, "Lord Jesus, I offer myself for Your people. In any way. Any place. Any time" (p. 73). "Your people," capitalized as it is in the text, can refer only to Jews.

Despite their status as a chosen people, which confers on Jews a kind of exoticism, a spectacular, divinely driven differentiation, Mrs. Barrett nonetheless made significant attempts to normalize Jews for her students, to locate their rituals within the realms of the familiar. During a classroom

discussion of Meyer Mossel's dietary dilemma, for example, Mrs. Barrett took pains to explain for her students the practices of keeping kosher, notwithstanding her own lack of knowledge about traditional Jewish dietary practices. Responding to a question about what distinguished non-kosher foods like pork from kosher ones, Matthew answered:

*Matthew:* Hmm, in the Old Testament, I believe, God made a rule about that stuff and the Jews, what they can and can't eat.... But then I think he took it away. When he gave Peter, I think, that dream of all the animals and the sheep.

*Mrs. Barrett:* In the New Testament, they didn't have to follow all the rules and rituals of the Old Testament because in the New Testament, the old law was no longer in place. Now we had Jesus.

*Barbara:* They also can't have milk and meat together.  
[Mrs. Barrett's look of wonderment showed that Barbara's information was new to her, prompting her to solicit Simone Schweber's advice.]

*Mrs. Barrett:* Well, I know that if you buy—Professor Schweber, maybe you can help us out with this?—I know that certain things are kosher. Certain things are pure, like Dannon yogurt has that symbol. So what does that mean? Would there be some kinds of yogurt that isn't purified so it wouldn't be? Or what's the difference?

*Schweber:* Usually the difference [for yogurt] is whether it has a rabbi's approval on it or not. But Barbara is right about milk and meat needing to be separate.

*Mrs. Barrett:* Now, not all Jews follow this because not all Jews are kosher, or have kosher households. All Jews aren't as strict about this as others are. Matthew?

*Matthew:* I think God did that because they were God's chosen people and back then, when they cooked meat and everything, they just had to do it over a fire and it didn't get cooked very long and there were a lot of diseases going around.

*Mrs. Barrett:* That's right. Whenever God makes a law, He does it for our own good, doesn't He? He does it to protect us,... so now we know there was a scientific, maybe a scientific explanation to why that was important. Also, pork often had maggots in it.

At the thought of vermin-infested meat, the students groaned loudly, ending the exchange. Although Mrs. Barrett had noted that Dannon yogurt is kosher, a food that would be familiar to her students, Matthew's comment

transported Jews into an ancient setting, to “back then,” when Jews were God’s chosen people, cooking food over open fires in unsanitary environments with “a lot of diseases.”

The following day, Mrs. Barrett attempted to pull her students’ image of Jews out of this distant past by bringing in a kosher food from Eastern European Jewish tradition. Holding up a brightly colored box of Dumpling and Matzo Ball Mix, Mrs. Barrett captured her students’ attention:

I wanted to bring you in an example of something that is considered kosher. ... Now, I’ll pass this around and you can take a look at it.... This is Dumpling or Matzo Ball Mix, it’s called. It’s really good. I make it all the time. It’s used with chicken broth. How many of you like chicken noodle soup? Instead of putting noodles in your chicken broth, you can make these dumplings. And this mix has the ingredients. You have to add eggs and oil, and they’re just delicious ... really good.

One student followed up this description by asking Mrs. Barrett if she would make matzah balls and bring them in for the class, and the rest of the students yelled out encouragement for the idea. Despite the students’ enthusiasm and Mrs. Barrett’s endorsement, though, the box of matzah balls ultimately concretized Jewish marginality in a kind of catch-22; the more normalcy Mrs. Barrett attempted to bestow on Jews, the more foreign they became. It is hard to imagine, after all, how to convey Jewish normalcy through kosher dietary laws, considering that adherence to the laws mark Jewish separateness from non-Jewish society. As the students passed the box around, pointing to the Hebrew letters printed on the package, it became clear that they were unfamiliar with this food. Jewish practices, for these students, seemed alien and backwards, even if including purportedly delicious foods.

In sum, the tensions in the representation of Jews emerged as a confluence of contextual factors, among them the weight of fundamentalist Christian doctrine, the text of ten Boom’s memoir, the biases of Mrs. Barrett’s teaching, and of course Holocaust history itself wherein Christian rescuers and those considered Jews were persecuted. Whether Mrs. Barrett and her students turned to excerpts from *The Hiding Place* or to their own constructed notions of Jewish people, the representations that arose in the unit shifted uneasily between Jews as modern city dwellers and ancient wanderers, as familiar neighbors or exotic others, and as the chosen people, specially loved but nonetheless superceded.

#### WITNESSING IN THE HOLOCAUST: THE EXPERIENCED CURRICULUM

Just as Christian theology considers Christians to have displaced Jews as the chosen people, so Christian suffering displaced Jewish persecution in *The*

*Hiding Place* and in Mrs. Barrett's unit. The casting of Christians as persecuted rather than persecutors in turn framed students' understandings. When asked to identify what groups were persecuted during the Holocaust, Quincy, for example, replied with two main groups, "the Jews and the people who helped them out like the ten Booms." He paused to think for a moment, adding "all the people in the underground," by which he meant not only Christian rescuers, like ten Boom and her family but also Christians who aided them in their pursuits. Because for Quincy, the persecution of Jews and Christians was commensurate, the idea that Christians could have perpetrated atrocity became inconceivable, not only to Quincy but to the other students as well.

Dean's logic elaborated this kind of thinking. He explained, "I believe the Nazis were atheists.... They didn't believe there was a God, or it was just your life and that was it, basically." In other words, to perpetrate atrocity, people either had to be atheists or had to dismiss the possibility of an afterlife where eventual judgment was a certainty for Dean. Jews, according to Dean, were persecuted, "probably because they had a God and they believed in it. They really believed in it and they wouldn't give it up." In Dean's thinking, then, Nazi atheists persecuted Christians and Jews alike for their adherence to God. Ironically, Dean is partly right, of course, considering that Nazi ideology embraced a neo-paganism that condemned Christianity as well as Judaism. But Dean's thinking was presumptive rather than informed; he didn't reach his conclusions out of a familiarity with Nazi ideology but out of the conviction that belief in God (or its antithesis) was a central determinant in behavior.

Kira, in explaining God's role during the Holocaust, revealed an orientation similar to Quincy's and Dean's. From Kira's perspective, though, Jews and Christians were persecuted equally by the Nazis not only for their beliefs but also for their expressions of that belief—what fundamentalist Christians call witnessing and what Antoun (2002) defines as "pronouncing their own firm belief to ... nonmembers" (p. 78). Kira likened those persecuted during the Holocaust to Christians persecuted during the Roman Empire. Indeed the "background narrative" (Mosborg 2002) of Christians martyred by the Romans illuminated Dean's and her interpretations of the Holocaust. Kira explained:

*Kira:* I think [God,] He was ... kind of testing their faith, the Jews ... because if they said that ... they weren't Jews, then they wouldn't have been arrested and all that. So a lot of people were martyred there by saying they were Jews or saying they were Christians.

*Susan (interviewer):* What do you mean by martyred? What does that mean to you?

*Kira:* They died because of their faith, because they said they believed in God. Like the old Christians who said they believed in God and then they were nailed on the cross and burned or whatever. All those ... I can't name them all off but ... that they said they believed in God and then they died for it.

The importance of belief in these students' lives, their fundamentalist Christianity and its accompanying narratives, shaped their historical understandings so thoroughly that other explanations for persecution during the Holocaust—such as biological racism (Burleigh and Wippermann 1991) or Church-based anti-Semitism (Carroll 2001), economic depression or modern functionalism (Bauman 1991)—were “occluded” (Wineburg 2001), rendered invisible as possibilities. Jews, of course, were not persecuted during the Holocaust on account of their beliefs; if the students' theocentricity had been less dominant, they might have realized that those who, like The Bulldog, had converted to Christianity were still considered Jews under Nazi racial legislation. In considering belief and its expression all-important, Quincy, Dean, and Kira inadvertently elided the differences between Jews and Christians and between their differing circumstances in Holocaust history. Alongside neglecting the possibility that Christians were perpetrators, such an orientation allowed students to completely overlook other groups persecuted during the Holocaust. The centrality of a chosen people in their collective memory had narrowed their gaze to focus only on Christians and Jews, equating their experiences in the process.

#### INTERPRETING CHOSENNESS

When asked what constituted chosenness, the students' replies were vexed, inflected with the idea of Jewish instrumentality to Christian existence, confused about the distinctions between modern Israelis and ancient Israelites, and plagued by age-old stereotypes of Jews. Reba, for example, mentioned that Jews were “really smart” as a consequence of being chosen, which, for her, partly explained why Nazis felt the need to eradicate them. As she put it, “Well, they're God's chosen people, and they'll always be special to God, and I guess [Hitler] felt like he wasn't special to God.” For Reba, the Holocaust stemmed from Hitler's personal insecurities, which necessarily derived from his relationship to God. She added that “maybe he [Hitler] was afraid of not getting the power he wanted because Jews were smart, and maybe they could run for prime minister or whatever they have in Germany.” Obviously, Reba had little sense of how Hitler rose to power, as this was not covered in either ten Boom's memoir or in classroom discussion. Indeed, generally speaking, historical trends were

only important within this classroom as expressions of God's will. Thus, to Reba and the other students, it was chosenness that trumped history in explaining both Jews' situation during the Holocaust and their supposedly permanent attributes.

When asked what being the chosen people meant, Dean and Rebekah had the following exchange:

*Dean:* Well, it doesn't mean to me that God has a favorite people, but God chose those people so he could teach us through them and also He just chose them because ... I don't know, because they weren't exactly ... I'm not judging them, but they aren't exactly the ... most purest ... humblest people in the world. If you mess with them, you're going to actually get pay back.

*Rebekah:* What do you mean?

*Dean:* Well, throughout all the wars and everything—me and my dad listen to a lot of war stuff—If you fight Israel, Israel is going to get you right back, right where it hurts. There's going to be trouble.

*Rebekah:* Do you think they were able to get back during WWII, at the Germans, the Nazis?

*Dean:* I don't think there is any way they can get back that bad. I mean they... First of all, after that, they're ... the people, the size of the country, was just like shrunk. Tons of Jews, just absolutely tons of them were took to [those] camps.

In Dean's thinking, chosenness wasn't an expression of favoritism as much as instrumentalism. Israel was chosen to teach Christians; that Jews were murdered during the Holocaust was divinely driven for its power to instruct. While the content of that instruction is left unexplicated, Dean implies it has something to do with diminishing the hubris of Israel, the arrogance that accompanies chosenness. The Biblical Israelites are so present in Dean's thinking that he imagines that Israel existed as a Jewish nation-state in Europe during the 1930s and 1940s; his understanding of Biblical events funnels his imagination of European history.

#### “ESPECIALLY SPECIAL”: THE UNIQUENESS OF JEWS WITHIN FUNDAMENTALIST CHRISTIAN SCHOOLING

Throughout the unit, Mrs. Barrett and her students thus constructed an image of Jews from their official curriculum, *The Hiding Place*, from the enacted curriculum, what occurred in class, and perhaps most importantly from their own Christian collective memory, garnered from years of

religious training. On one level, their faith supplied background narratives to which students could refer in considering the events they were studying. Hence, Kira likened the incarceration of ten Boom and the persecution of Jews during the Holocaust to the crucifixion of “old Christians” in ancient Rome. On a deeper level, though, their faith framed their historical imaginations in much more subtle ways. The students’ very logic, the structure of their thinking, was fundamentalist in its theocentrism. By considering God all-important, the students made Nazis into atheists and imagined Jews “witnessing.” Even had Mrs. Barrett or ten Boom’s memoir provided students with more historical information—how Hitler rose to power or who was considered a Jew under Nazi legislation, for example—it is likely that the bounds of their belief system would have molded the information to support that theocentrism, ruling out the role of contingency in history as simply ‘extra-biblical.’

The centrality of a fundamentalist Christian rescuer’s story in teaching about the Holocaust not only eclipsed the teaching of this history more generally but also obfuscated both the considerably more complex role of Christians during the Holocaust and the deeply problematic complicity of Christianity as an institution in the perpetration of this atrocity (Carroll 2001). The exclusive focus on Corrie ten Boom’s experience compounded what has come to be called colloquially the Schindler syndrome. Named for Stephen Spielberg’s epic pseudodocumentary *Schindler’s List* (Zaillian 1993), the syndrome refers to the centralizing of a rescuer’s story in representing Holocaust history (see, e.g., Loshitzky 1997); though the story of *Schindler’s List* was based on fact, it was nonetheless unrepresentative of Holocaust history as a whole since Christian rescue activity during the Holocaust was highly unusual (Oliner and Oliner 1988). In both *Schindler’s List* and ten Boom’s memoir, then, rescue redeems victimization, and triumph overshadows tragedy. In both, too, Jews become supporting players to the main characters of the story, props rather than people. Despite being physically rescued, their existence becomes ontologically instrumental rather than existentially normative. The distinctiveness of a Jewish story is denied, dwarfed and supplanted by a Christian one.

John and Elizabeth Sherrills’s introduction to Corrie ten Boom’s memoir metonymically encapsulates this trend. Describing the experience of hearing Corrie ten Boom speak, after which they convinced her to write her memoir, the Sherrills conflate not only the collective experiences of Jewish victims and Christian rescuers under Nazi fascism but even the individual experiences of a Jewish and Christian survivor:

It was in May, 1968, that we attended a church service in Germany. A man was speaking about his experiences in a Nazi concentration camp. His face told the story more eloquently than his words: pain-

haunted eyes, shaking hands that could not forget. He was followed at the lectern by a white-haired woman, broad of frame and sensible of shoe, with a face that radiated love, peace, joy. But—the story that these two people were relating was the same! She too had been in a concentration camp, seen the same savagery, suffered the same losses. (p. 5)

The broken man, the downcast and nameless Jew, plays the alter ego here to ten Boom's fullness as an uplifted and uplifting Christian. With the memoir prefaced this way, it is not surprising that the various images of Jewish normalcy vying for students' attention lost out to the more exoticized images of Jews as the ancient chosen and the modern abandoned.

Ironically perhaps, it might well be argued that had the students gotten a fuller picture of Holocaust history, they may well have admired ten Boom's faith all the more, simultaneously serving Mrs. Barrett's goals and potentially enriching their notions of others. In other words, had the students studied this history in greater depth, learned the distinctions between Christian rescuers, Christian bystanders, Christian perpetrators, and Jewish victims, and some of the myriad complexities involved in the act of drawing such categorizations, they may well have been all the more awed by ten Boom's choices. Whether being supplied with more information could alter their notions of Jews, however, remains questionable. Within this instantiation of fundamentalist schooling, Jews were incomplete, subpar, lesser than, precluding the students from conceiving of Jews as whole, equal, and fully formed in their practices and beliefs. As long as fundamentalist dogma considers anyone who has not embraced Christ as necessarily compromised, such schooling bars the possibility of multicultural awareness.

Nonetheless, we did view subtle incursions of what might be considered multicultural awareness into some of the students' thinking. Just as Alan Peshkin (1986) found gentle opposition to certain school norms among believing students at Bethany Baptist Academy, we detected in a few of the students' remarks what might be called an unarticulated sense of multicultural uniformity, the sense that all people, including Jews, were equal in God's eyes. It revealed itself in the discomfort some of the students expressed when asked if they knew any Jewish people. Though their replies were straightforward, their tones sometimes betrayed embarrassment. Dean, for example, answered apologetically that he didn't know any Jews, and Betsy answered defensively, explaining that she did not interrogate the religious identities of friends whose religions she didn't know. Underlying these answers, it seemed to us, was the students' gnawing sense that they ought to interact with Jews even if they didn't have such opportunities.

The following remarks of Reba's crystallize the multicultural sensibilities of Mrs. Barrett's believing students, the simultaneity of otherness and normality that Jewishness evoked for them, and the ultimate triumph of such otherness. Asked what constitutes chosenness, Reba explained:

It says in the Bible that Abraham would be blessed with many children, and he didn't believe it because he and Sarah were really old. So Abraham went with his servant and they had a baby that way—Ishmael—and then he sent Hagar [the servant] away. And then he had Isaac. Isaac was the one that God had promised to Abraham, not that Ishmael wasn't special, everybody's special, but Isaac was the one chosen by God.<sup>17</sup>

*Simone:* Do you think of yourself as being special even though you're not Jewish?

*Reba:* Everybody's special, but maybe one way to say it is that Jews are especially special.

Chuckling a little awkwardly, Reba crystallized the peculiar situation of Jews within this type of fundamentalist Christian schooling.<sup>18</sup> And her account of Jewish chosenness, her succinct summary of its Biblical roots, illuminates not only the basis of her understanding of Jews but also the basis for the currently strong support that Christian fundamentalists provide for the state of Israel. The modern state of Israel, seen as the direct progenitor of the Biblical Israelites, is "especially special" to Christian fundamentalists.

## REFLECTIONS

On the fifty-fourth anniversary of the founding of the modern state of Israel, in the midst of what has come to be known as the Al-Aksa Intifada, the Anti-Defamation League published an editorial in the *New York Times* written by Ralph Reed (senior advisor to the Bush campaign and former leader of the Christian Coalition). Under the title, "We people of faith stand firmly with Israel" (May 2, 2002), Reed eloquently condensed fundamentalist Christian support for the state. "Regardless of one's eschatology—and there are as many theological strains as denominations," Reed wrote, "There is an undeniable and powerful spiritual connection between Israel and the Christian faith." Elaborating, Reed lodged his reasons within the bedrock of the Holocaust and the lesson he draws from it:

Following World War II and the shocking revelations of the Holocaust, Christians joined the humanitarian impulse to support

the creation of Israel out of the British mandate in the Middle East. Few could deny that such a state was a moral imperative in a world whose lexicon now included names like Auschwitz and Dachau. Stigmatized by historical anti-Semitism in Europe, renounced as “killers of Christ” by the medieval church, haunted by the hoof-beats and horrors of Russian pogroms, hunted down by Hitler’s Gestapo and shipped to death camps, the Jews who sought refuge in the modern state of Israel needed no theoretical argument for a homeland of their own.

Christians, meanwhile, saw support for Israel through the prism of a proud tradition that included Corrie ten Boom and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who sacrificed their own lives while resisting Nazi tyranny and protecting Jews from the Holocaust. The depth of such feeling in the Christian community is difficult to overestimate.

I recall as a child my mother participating in a Methodist Bible study in which she read the works of Bonhoeffer and other Christians who resisted Hitler, passing on a formative lesson that standing up for my faith meant defending the right of Jews to practice theirs.

Reed’s graceful narrative was worded sparingly enough, his lesson generalized enough (Novick 1999), to garner support from across a wide swath of readers. Disregarding that support for the state of Israel is not identical with the “right of Jews to practice their religion,”<sup>19</sup> Reed’s reading of the Holocaust nonetheless ought to appeal to Americans’ democratic sensibilities, masking a far more troubling relationship of fundamentalist Christians to Jews and Judaism.

According to Paul Boyer (2001), a historian of prophetic traditions in this country, there are “millions of conservative Christians—perhaps 30 to 40 percent of the U.S. population as a whole—who embrace a distinctive interpretation of the prophetic and apocalyptic portions of the Christian Bible” (p. 3). The largest denomination Boyer calls dispensationalism, after the system its founder, John Darby, created, in which history is divided into divine dispensations (Boyer 1992). As Boyer carefully notes, there exists currently a range of dispensationalist positions on the Holocaust, and, as such, on the nature of Jews and Jewishness. On the far side of this continuum are those who, according to Boyer, are “intensely philo-Semitic”: “insistent on the Jewishness of Jesus, unsparing in their denunciations of Christianity’s long history of anti-Semitism, glowing in their unqualified praise of the modern nation of Israel, ... and fierce in their denunciations of Israel’s enemies and critics” (2001, p. 8). Even philo-Semitic fundamentalists, however, believe in the ultimate downfall of Jews and Judaism—though they consider such obliteration to be salvation. Boyer

summarizes the case of Rev. James Hagee, a Texan televangelist with a large popular following, who “foresees terrible destruction in Israel’s future.” Boyer continues, citing Hagee as saying that

“The attacks against Israel, against Jerusalem, and eventually against the Jews themselves will escalate toward Jerusalem’s darkest hour.” And at the end of time, [Hagee] believes, the Jews who survive their final holocaust will at last turn to Christ: “The two Israels [i.e., Christianity and Judaism] will merge together on the day when the Messiah literally enters the physical city of Jerusalem” (Boyer, 2001, p. 109).

The status of being especially special, even if masked in Reed’s multicultural language to garner political support for the modern state of Israel, is nonetheless underpinned by an especially troubling theological status within fundamentalist Christianity as a whole, one in which the obliteration of Jews worldwide is preordained for the divine purpose of their ultimate conversion.

From our vantage point, there is nothing to suggest that this state of affairs will change any time soon. Indeed, given the Biblical interpretation at the roots of this orientation, the globalization of fundamentalist Christianity (Yates 2002), the large percentage of Americans who identify themselves as fundamentalist Christians<sup>20</sup> and their likely widening bases of support (*Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* 2001), we consider it likely that the trends we have identified will only gain strength in the coming years. While it is of course unfair to generalize too broadly from a single classroom in one fundamentalist Christian school, it seems fair to assume that within the swelling ranks of fundamentalist Christian schools, Jews will be taught and learned about as some variant of especially special, if not utterly foreign, then at least remarkably other: chosen, abandoned, punished by God, eventually to be converted and redeemed through the acceptance of Jesus. It is likely, too, that in such schools, historical subject matter will continue to be shaped through the funnel of collective memory in order to mint strong Christians, Christians who understand the past and consider the present only, in Ralph Reed’s words, “through the prism of a proud [Christian] tradition.” Such a tradition, while rightfully lauding the rescue efforts of Corrie ten Boom, bears potentially terrible consequences for the descendants of those whom she rescued and for the health of our democracy at large. For in insular worlds, there are checks and balances neither on the constructions of collective memory nor on the images of abstracted others conveyed within them.

Ironically, perhaps, we have used this case—this case of religious instruction dedicated ultimately to fostering a monoculture—to argue that

religion, as a category, deserves careful consideration within multicultural education paradigms. In other words, we are arguing that being truly committed to the notion of a multicultural will require us to investigate fully the ways that religious communities, fundamentalist and nonfundamentalist, teach and with what effects. Religions certainly, but fundamentalist religions especially, have the power, symbolically and consequentially to delimit the boundaries of multicultural tolerance in the public sphere, to inhibit its possibilities or to expand its potentialities. To understand the ramifications across religious fundamentalisms, we call for more studies investigating the particular dimensions of collective memory propagated within different religious communities.

### Notes

1 Specifically, religious school construction rose from \$728 million in 1993 to \$2.4 billion in 1999. By comparison, public schools' construction costs rose by 131% (Johnson and Davis 2001). Although these statistics do not tell us what kinds of religious schools were being erected—they include liberal as well as orthodox schools of various faith orientations—they nonetheless serve as an indicator of the rise in religious school enrollments overall.

2 Nearly two million children are home-schooled in the United States (Bauman 2001). More than 50 percent of their parents feel that they “can give [their] child [a] better education at home,” 33 percent home-school for “religious reasons,” and 29.8 percent deem public schools a “poor learning environment.”

3 These examples, all prominent works of educational scholarship, represent a small sample of the work that has contributed to multicultural education reform. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to list in its entirety the body of work that constitutes the corpus of multicultural education, these few examples highlight the pattern of focusing primarily on one cultural ‘identity,’ or in some cases, to the intersections of two, such as that between race and class.

4 For a fuller and more nuanced discussion of “the historically laminated meanings of collective memory,” see James Wertsch’s (2002) book, *Voices of collective remembering*, pages 18–29.

5 The following examples should help illustrate the range of politicized uses of the Holocaust: People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) compares the slaughter of animals to the murder of Jews and others during the Holocaust on their Web-based slide show entitled, *Holocaust on Your Plate* (<http://www.peta-online.org/>); Operation Rescue West, an organization opposed to maintaining the legality of abortion procedures in the United States publishes photographs of aborted fetuses under the title “American Holocaust: See Inside an Abortion Death-Camp” (<http://www.operationrescue.org/abortion/deathcamp.asp>); and the National Rifle Association’s (NRA) main Web site (<http://www.mynra.com/>) has in the past referred to the Holocaust as preventable had Nazi legislation not disallowed Jews from owning guns. For a nuanced discussion of the problematic dimensions of these and other parallels, see Peter Novick’s (1999) book *The Holocaust in American Life*.

6 In addition to Simone Schweber and Rebekah Irwin, the third researcher was Susan Gevelber, in whose debt we remain for her work on this project.

7 We were unsuccessful in our vigorous efforts to recruit students who did not volunteer to be interviewed. The five students we ended up following through this unit were all

volunteers, all willing and engaged interviewees, and all faithful adherents of the school's religious doctrines. None were, to use Alan Peshkin's (1986) terminology, "scorners," though indeed there were a few such students in the class we observed.

8 Our use of grounded theory was modified insofar as we didn't use the intermediary step Charmaz (2000) identifies as memo writing (p. 517) but instead modified drafts of our analysis as memos-in-action.

9 This was more consistently the case with Rebekah and Susan's roles as researchers; on occasion, because Simone was a professor of education and Jewish studies, she was called on as an authority on things Jewish during class time or outside of it.

10 Thus far, feminists and educational scholars of color have explored and documented these complex intersections across and between identities. See, for example, hooks 1981; Anzaldúa 1987; Trinh 1989; Weis and Fine 1993; Bhabha 1994; Brettschneider 1996; Kumashiro 1999. For a compelling look at intersections between race and fundamentalist Christianity, see Re'em (2001) *The Politics of Normalcy: Intersectionality and the Construction of Difference in Christian-Jewish Relations*. For the intersections between social class and fundamentalist Christianity, see Rose (1988), *Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan: Evangelical Schooling in America*. For a close look at the intersections between religious identity, race, and cultural differences, see Gibson (1988), *Accommodation Without Assimilation: Sikh Immigrants in an American High School*.

11 Eternal Grace, like all the proper names in this article, is a pseudonym.

12 In the remainder of this paper, we use the term *Christian* to refer to fundamentalist Christians.

13 The term, Charismatic, derives from the movement in a group of U.S. churches to reinvigorate Christian worship by including the "charismata or spiritual gifts (especially speaking in tongues and prophecy)" (Oxford English dictionary online).

14 Corrie ten Boom's memoir, along with the associated question packet, served as the only sources of information the students received about the Holocaust in Mrs. Barrett's class.

15 That instrumentality is more concrete, in a sense, than the instrumentality of history in forming heritage according to Lowenthal's (1996) distinction.

16 IRE refers to the tripartite unit of discourse that typifies classroom instruction: Initiation (by a teacher), Response (from a student) and Evaluation (of the response by the teacher). For a more nuanced discussion of this pattern, see Cazden (1988).

17 Moshe Re'em, in his unpublished doctoral dissertation (1998), points out that the history textbooks used in Pentecostal church schools portray the descendants of Ishmael, commonly considered to be Moslems, as followers of a "false religion" (p. 179).

18 If there were aberrations in this student's orientations towards Jews—that is, moments where her sense of Jewish normalcy trumped Jews' exoticism—one can't help but wonder whether the teaching of other atrocities in history might yield similar results. In teaching about Native American history, the enslavement of Africans, or the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia, as examples, would Mrs. Barrett have shown the same kind of benevolence or admiration for nonchosen people undergoing atrocity? Would the students have felt a similar social embarrassment at not knowing nonchosen others? While beyond the scope of this research, it seems important to raise these questions.

19 The parallel Reed draws is especially vexed when considering the treatment within Israel of nonorthodox Jewish traditions by ultra-orthodox Jews. A list of violent acts and provocative proclamation would be too large to include here. See, for example, the Union of American Hebrew Congregationists Website for an introduction to the issues involved: <http://uahc.org>. (Search the site for the entry *Jewish Pluralism*).

20 According to a recent editorial in the *New York Times*, approximately 46 percent of Americans identify as evangelical or born-again Christians (Kristof 2003).

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