Duquesne University
Duquesne Scholarship Collection

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Spring 5-10-2019

Multifaith Families and their Narratives within Society

Josh Friedberg

Follow this and additional works at: https://dsc.duq.edu/etd

    Part of the International and Intercultural Communication Commons, and the Interpersonal and Small Group Communication Commons

Recommended Citation

MULTIFAITH FAMILIES AND THEIR NARRATIVES WITHIN SOCIETY

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Joshua Friedberg

May 2019

MULTIFAITH FAMILIES AND THEIR NARRATIVES WITHIN SOCIETY

By

Joshua Friedberg

Approved January 11th, 2019

_____
Erik A. Garrett
Associate Professor
Communication & Rhetorical Studies
(Committee Chair)

_____
Janie Harden Fritz
Professor
Communication & Rhetorical Studies
(Committee Member)

_____
Craig T. Maier
Associate Professor
Communication & Rhetorical Studies
(Committee Member)

_____
James Swindal
Dean, McAnulty School of Liberal Arts
Professor of Philosophy

_____
Ronald C. Arnett
Chair, Department of Communication &
Rhetorical Studies
Professor of Communication

ABSTRACT

MULTIFAITH FAMILIES AND THEIR NARRATIVES WITHIN SOCIETY

By

Joshua Friedberg

May 2019

Dissertation supervised by Erik A. Garrett

The goal of this project is to nudge the conversation about interfaith families in a direction that examines the family post–interfaith dialogue. The term multifaith better represents this new aim because it encompasses all interactions and does not limit the family to the constraints of the moniker interfaith. I apply Walter Fisher's concepts of coherence and fidelity, in coordination with family communication literature, to structure this project and to study the various aspects of a multifaith family and narrative. I also use three typologies of multifaith family (Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active) to better understand the variations of this family. The project includes a discussion of the multifaith family, the extended family, and the interaction with the faith community. Furthermore, I include examples of multifaith representation in popular culture because this illustrates the inclusion of this family type in media. The multifaith

family is a distinct and growing type of family, and this project tries to better understand

them and their narratives.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family. To my parents, Jay and Denise Friedberg, your love and support has been invaluable to me all of my life, and without you, this project would not exist. To my late grandparents, George and Josephine Repasky and Marvin and Bertha Friedberg, I know you would be proud of me and, hopefully, you would have gotten a kick out of this project too. To my brother, Matt Friedberg, my sister-in-law, Marisa Friedberg, and my nephews, Andrew, Joey, and Nick, I would like to thank you for supporting me, distracting me, and making me laugh throughout this entire process. Finally, I would like to dedicate this to Jennifer Lawer, who has been by my side for this whole journey.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge my dissertation committee for their help and guidance. To Erik Garrett, thank you for being patient with me and having confidence in my work, as well as for making me laugh on numerous occasions when we talked about all the little details of this project. To Janie Harden Fritz, thank you for your kind spirit, energy, and belief in me as person and a scholar. To Craig Maier, thank you for always getting my references to popular culture because they were my best examples for theories and concepts, and for taking the time to help and offer advice on my work. I would also like to acknowledge Rita McCaffrey. She always was willing to take the time to answer my questions, offer kind words of encouragement, and just have a conversation with me about my life. Finally, I would like to acknowledge David and Ann Wilkins. Their generosity, humor, and love for their students put me on this path all those years ago in Rome.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Interfaith families are becoming more and more prevalent within our society (Kalmjin, 1998). The term interfaith is the main reference for a family that contains parents of separate faiths (Chinitz & Brown, 2001; Curtis & Ellison, 2002; Hughes & Dickson, 2006). The term interfaith has been used in most communication literature, but I feel there should be a move toward using the term multifaith. I am turning toward the work of Paul Weller to help extrapolate the term multifaith. Weller is the Professor of Inter-Religious Relations and Senior Research Fellow and Head of Research and Commercial Development at the University of Derby in the United Kingdom. Weller (2009), from his chapter in *Faith in the Public Realm: Controversies, Policies and Practices,* states:

> When a society or an event or a project is described as 'multi-faith", it usually means that it includes a variety of religious groups. While the use of 'multi-faith' highlights variety, use of the term 'inter-faith' points more to the relationships between religions and the people who belong to them. . . . The term 'inter-religious' is occasionally used interchangeably with 'inter-faith'. . . 'inter-religious' can sometimes be used in ways that denote the simple state of encounter between different religions in a religiously plural context, whereas 'inter-faith' tends to be used in circumstances which involve 'dialogue' between the religions and the faiths. The unhyphenated term 'interfaith' is found but some prefer to avoid this for fear of giving the impression of a movement that blurs the distinctiveness of the religions involved. (pp. 63–64)

This quotation demarcates the separation of the terms multi-faith and inter-faith. I will use the term multifaith (unhyphenated) because it better encompasses the communication and experience of the family.

Multifaith families comprise a small segment of family communication, but it still allows for more investigation. A study by Carlye Murphy (2016), written for the Pew Research Center, reveals that in all marriages after 2010, 39% of couples would be classified as interfaith. This is up from 1960, which had only 19% of marriages being interfaith (Murphy, 2016). Another Pew Research Center study recognizes that 20% of adults were raised in interfaith family homes (One-in-five, 2016). These studies highlight the need for further exploration. The hope for this project is to describe the interactions of the individuals within these families, the influence of the extended family, the interaction with the religious communities, and the representation of multifaith narratives in popular culture.

Multifaith families are important to me because I come from one. My father is Jewish, and my mother is Byzantine Catholic. They were married in the 1970s when interfaith families were not a common occurrence. They have been married for nearly 40 years, and I feel like my family illustrates the complexity of and the positive experience for a multifaith family. One of my favorite stories comes from my childhood. I was in kindergarten and tasked with describing my Easter holiday. I told the class that my grandparents served ham (a common tradition among Eastern European families) and Kentucky Fried Chicken for Easter dinner. My teacher and the class thought this to be an odd menu. I tried explaining to the class that my dad could not eat certain foods on Easter. Since I was only five years old, I was not able to explain the different religious

2

tenets involved to my class, like keeping kosher for Passover. This event in my life stayed with me because it was the first time that I realized I stood out in my class as different. However, it also highlighted a part of my family I most enjoy: My maternal grandparents were accommodating to my father and his religious beliefs and made him feel included at Easter dinner. This positive experience is a part of my family, and I think many more interfaith families have these experiences, which should be explored in more detail.

Statement of Problem

As mentioned in the beginning of the introduction, I come from a multifaith family. The family communication literature has detailed the challenges facing an interfaith couple and their subsequent family (Chinitz & Brown, 2001; Curtis & Ellison, 2002; Eaton, 1994). However, with another generation coming to marriage age (20–30), there are more interfaith families. The purpose of my dissertation is to describe the interactions of the multifaith family by examining the interaction of the parents and the interaction of the parents with their children. I will work through the immediate family, the extended family, the religious community, and the representation of multifaith narratives in popular culture. There have been more studies and surveys conducted that are starting to address the positive aspects of a multifaith family (Horowitz, 1999; Hughes & Dickson, 2006; Parsons, Nalbone, Killmer, & Wetchler, 2007; Reiter & Gec, 2008). I would like to describe the experience of the individual in relation to the multiple levels of a family. Many studies have focused on the discourse of interfaith families, but my goal is to also describe the events and traditions that are brought about because of the interfaith relationship that shapes a multifaith family.

I will be using a narrative framework to help explain the traditions a child will have within a multifaith family. From there, I will look at the interactions with the religious communities, popular culture, and businesses. One of the questions that guides this project comes from my own experience. There are people from the faith community who will ask questions like, "So which [faith] are you?" I even had a person try to trick me with "What language do you pray in?" as a secondary question. All of these questions are why I find this topic relevant to communication.

Significance of Problem

My goal for this research is to further the current literature of interfaith families within communication. Interfaith communication has already been written about quite a bit from the perspective of two faiths each entering into a dialogue with the other. Furthermore, this has translated into interfaith relationships and marriage. I feel that my research will benefit the newly emerging literature on the communication interactions of interfaith families.

I hope that the focus on interaction(s) can open up the sociological information about multifaith families and better illustrate the growing population of multifaith families. I find that this research is beneficial because it focuses on the multifaith individual in three different groups. The first part of this research will center on family and the emergence of a multifaith identity. The second part will focus on this newly identified multifaith person and the religious communities he or she inhabits.

The other part of the research will focus on the representation of a multifaith person within popular culture. This is important because popular culture exposes a wider

audience to a certain identity and also gives a voice to people within that ingroup who do not feel represented by the normal groups of society.

Methodology

The methodology for this work comes from Walter Fisher. I am going to use his narrative paradigm that includes narrative rationality. I feel this method allows me to look at the different dimensions of the family and the narratives they bring to creating a multifaith family. Fisher's work makes the distinction that narratives are a manner in which humans will constantly create and recreate their position within the world.

When it comes to narratives, Fisher (1987) describes the narrative paradigm with narrative rationality. Here, he believes that the two parts of narrative rationality are coherence and fidelity. Coherence is the structure of the narrative and the ability for it to make sense within the structures of society. Fidelity is the process of comparing the narrative to our beliefs and experiences and seeing if it will hold up against those qualities (Fisher, 1987).

I feel this methodology will work well with my topic. The narrative paradigm brings the monolithic religions of the world together for a multifaith identity/perspective. I will also use relational dialectics to help illustrate the fusing together of these narratives and traditions (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). For example, if a person is Methodist and Catholic, the different narratives are held within the person but at the same time create a unique multifaith imprint for that individual.

I am going to work through the different chapters of this project with Fisher's narrative structure but also incorporate more specific literature and examples that pertain to the overall challenge of being a multifaith individual. I will also be using a typology,

which I introduce in Chapter 4 to help explain the different parental dyads that make up a multifaith family. The hope is to illuminate societal issues related to challenging or constructing a multifaith family and identity.

Preview of Chapters

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Chapter 1, the introduction, proposes a change in the terminology of interfaith to that of multifaith, and this sets the tone for the project. I also outline the current understanding of interfaith family because it provides a foundation for the movement towards a multifaith reinterpretation. I include the reason I am focusing on this topic and incorporate my own story to establish the importance of this project.

Chapter 2 – Narrative Coordinates

The second chapter takes a look at the narrative research of Paul Ricoeur, David Carr, and Walter Fisher. I examine Ricoeur's and Carr's phenomenological discussion of narrative, and then I shift my focus to the literature of Fisher. His work is fundamental to the field of communication, and it becomes a major theme in this project. The two pillars of my project come from Fisher's narrative paradigm. These concepts are coherence and fidelity. For the rest of the work, coherence and fidelity are themes for discussing a multifaith narrative.

Chapter 3 – Family and Interfaith Literature

Chapter 3 investigates family communication literature and, more specifically, highlights the interfaith communication research. In the first section, I work through the system, dyadic, and individual levels of theories in family communication, and then I

examine some of the different ways that the concept of narrative is used in family communication in the second part of the chapter. The third section looks at intergenerational literature and its discussion of the influence of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and in-laws on the family. The fourth part of the chapter focuses on religious community and the family. This is also the time when I examine the literature on interfaith families. The final section of the chapter discusses some of the family communication literature on family in television. This is included in this chapter because it is family communication literature, and it will be applied in Chapter 7 of this dissertation.

Chapter 4 – Multifaith Family

Chapter 4 is a key part of this project. In this chapter, I put forth a structure for the multifaith family, which revolves around parental dyads that, in turn, create the multifaith family and multifaith narrative. These types are the Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active combinations. Each one of these types provides the blueprint for the communication of faith narratives in the family. The Passive/Passive family has parents not engaging a faith narrative. The Passive/Active family has only one parent engaging his/her faith narrative, and the Active/Active family has both parents acting out their faith narratives. The chapter does not only examine the parental roles but also the effect of these typologies on the children. The children also play a role in the cultivation of a multifaith family, and this is examined throughout the chapter. The whole chapter follows a pattern using coherence and fidelity because the goal of Chapters 3 to 5 is to challenge the quality of the narrative as set forth by the narrative paradigm.

Chapter 5 – Multifaith Extended Family

The fifth chapter uses the three typologies (from Chapter 3), coherence, and fidelity to examine the role of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and godparents in a multifaith family. The chapter explores the possibility of the extended family playing a major or minor role in the narrative formation of the multifaith family. It also tries to look at the acceptance or rejection of the extended family's take on a multifaith family. This affirmation or denial can be a massive issue for the multifaith family and the extended family.

Chapter 6 – Multifaith Family and the Faith Community

Chapter 6 looks at the coherence and fidelity of a multifaith family and its narrative in relation to the faith community—more specifically, the faith community to which at least one of the parents belong. I chose the five most known faiths and their opinions on interfaith marriage as a starting point for the chapter. I discuss the possibility of faith communities understanding a multifaith narrative and then I move toward examining whether those communities will accept the multifaith narrative. This chapter tests the narrative fidelity of a multifaith narrative more so than the previous chapters, and it illuminates an ongoing issue between multifaith families and faith communities.

Chapter 7 – Multifaith Family as Represented in Popular Culture

The penultimate chapter explores popular culture research as it relates to the embodiment of a multifaith narrative. This chapter uses examples from popular culture to denote a multifaith narrative. For example, the television show *Rugrats* might be the most famous iteration of a multifaith family in popular culture. I discuss the reason that it fits

that title and also examine other examples of multifaith narratives. This includes the

O.C.'s invention of a holiday called Chrismukkah and *Saturday Night Live*'s many skits

involving multifaith narratives. The goal of Chapter 6 is to connect this project to some of

the more famous examples of multifaith families, people, or narratives.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

The final chapter is the conclusion to this project. I summarize the previous

chapters, address the implications of this project for the field of communication, and offer

three closing thoughts. The first thought is the further study of multifaith persons and the

similarities in their multifaith narratives. The second thought is to continue the

examination of the interaction of multifaith families and their faith communities. This

proposition can lead to many more interesting outcomes. The final thought is a proposal

for a qualitative study of multifaith families that would involve collecting their stories to

better understand this unique topic.

CHAPTER 2
NARRATIVE COORDINATES

The purpose of this chapter is to demarcate the boundaries for the research on narrative and its relation to this project. With that in mind, I am going to focus on three important scholars in the field of communication and give a brief synopsis of their ideas to better situate multifaith narrative in the later chapters.

The foundation of this project is the work of Walter Fisher. I include Ricoeur's and Carr's work as important offerings for the understanding of narrative; especially significant is their phenomenological grounding of it. However, Fisher is a foundational theorist in the field of communication, while Ricoeur and Carr have a philosophical background. Therefore, the extensive work regarding Fisher and his concept of narrative becomes a central part of my project. Some examples of literature that employ Fisher's narrative paradigm are Baxter, Norwood, Asbury, Jannusch, and Scharp's (2012) article concerning coherence in the adoption process; Iannarino's (2018) discussion of fidelity in relation to health communication and Norm MacDonald; Hobart's (2013) use of urban myths as classroom discussion for narrative fidelity; Roberts's (2004) examination of the complementary nature of narratives in folklore and the narrative paradigm; and Hoppin's (2016) discussion of the rhetoric surrounding vaccines and autism. These examples are but a few among the hundreds of articles in the field of communication.

Walter Fisher's work will help define the process of creating a multifaith narrative in the later chapters. I think his work is beneficial for my outlining of the process that spawns a multifaith narrative for a family. This project attempts to outline this specific construction because doing so will make it easier for people to understand the unique combinations of narratives. Every faith comes with different stories and different cultural

perceptions, which will ultimately change the identity of the multifaith family or individual. However, since it is nearly impossible for anyone to describe in a research project all those distinct combinations, I will focus on the moving parts creating the narrative. Fisher is helpful for that discussion.

First, I will present the work of Paul Ricoeur, followed by the work of David Carr and the work of Walter Fisher. Fisher's ideas will be the main driver for this project. As mentioned before, these coordinates will serve as the main guideposts for this project. There will undoubtedly be other work left out of this project. However, I think this will be a good place to start the conversation about multifaith narrative and the processes that create this growing narrative.

Paul Ricoeur

Paul Ricoeur's elucidation on narrative comes from his work *Time and Narrative: Volumes 1–3*. There are six important parts to Ricoeur's notion of narrative. This section will discuss them to give background to the importance of narrative to identity formation. As previously noted, Ricoeur and Carr focus on the phenomenological aspects of narrative, which contrasts with the work of Fisher and his notion of narrative.

Narrative Identity

Ricoeur's conception of narrative identity does not just reflect the usual idea of narrative for a central cast of characters in a work of fiction. He concludes that the narrative identity can be applied to an actual person in which he or she reveals the story of himself or herself, or of others telling a story of that person (Ricoeur, 1992).

Narrative identity also describes the ability of a person to incorporate narratives from a work of fiction or history into his or her own personal story (Ricoeur, 1992). Therefore, interpretation and emplotment become a mechanism by which a person can tell his or her own narrative and also have narratives inform his or her own story.

Time

A key element of Ricoeur's discussion of narrative is time. He uses three different versions of time in his work. The first is cosmic time. This is the way we usually understand time as chronological (Ricoeur, 1988). For example, today is Christmas, and in a week it will be New Year's Eve. There is a direction to the movement of time.

The other version is phenomenological time. This is meant to embody our experience of time in the past, present, and future (Ricoeur, 1988). Phenomenological time allows for a person to understand all three aspects of time (past, present, and future); more importantly, these aspects do not have to appear in the normal succession or order.

Finally, Ricoeur discusses human time. Human time is the integration of both cosmic time and phenomenological time (Ricoeur, 1988), and it gives the order of the succession of an event, plus the experience of the event. For instance, Christmas is a specific time of the year and also invokes a specific experience of that day. This allows for a structure of events, much like how a narrative structure provides organization for a story.

Emplotment

Emplotment is a critical part of Ricoeur's understanding of narrative. Emplotment is the process of bringing diverse and sometimes disparate events in time to a meaningful

narrative order (Dowling, 2011). Emplotment tends to resemble the plot of a fictional

work of art. The function of emplotment is to bring a sense of order to events in different

situations (Dowling, 2011). The situation can be a specific event with a small time frame

or one with a long time frame. In either example, emplotment is the map created for

understanding events in time. Furthermore, these events can be reconstituted in various

patterns for changeable explanatory narratives.

Mimesis

William Dowling (2011) explains Ricoeur's notion of mimesis as an unshackling

of the original concept because it expands upon the understanding that mimesis is not just

imitation in reference to work and object. Instead, Ricoeur places mimesis within the

context of culture and symbolic orders, and then it, the written story, is frozen in time

before going back into the culture and having an effect on the people of the culture

(Dowling, 2011). Ricoeur's concept of mimesis expands the space and time of mimetic

activity to enrich its effect on narrative construction. Ricoeur breaks this down to include

three variations of mimesis. The next three sections will cover the specifics for Mimesis

1, 2, and 3.

Mimesis 1

Ricoeur's account of narrative is in three stages. All of the stages are represented

by the term mimesis sub 1, 2, or 3. The first stage will be covered in this section.

Mimesis 1 presupposes that human acting is filled with basic proficiencies

(Ricoeur, 1985). This would include semantics, the use of symbols, and the ability to ask

questions of certain things (which includes events or people) (Ricoeur, 1985). Mimesis 1

is the basic understanding of the progression of a plot in a story or in one's life or thought.

Mimesis 2 (Emplotment)

As mentioned previously, emplotment is an important component of Mimesis 2. However, Mimesis 2 explains the concept of time as well. The terms past or present do not always fall in that particular order, according to Ricoeur (1985). Instead, the events that happen in the past or in the present do not have to be before and after in the structure of the narrative. An event can be the beginning of a story, even though it occurs at the end of the narrative. Ricoeur believes there can be different placements of the events within the narrative structure that are out of order in time. There is also the possibility of these narratives being read out of time as well (Ricoeur, 1985). The reasoning is that someone can find these narratives at a future time and not read or hear them at the corresponding time in history.

Another key part of Mimesis 2 and emplotment is the idea of an internal logic, or a narrative unity. Ricoeur is describing the process of the mind to make logical connections between events in a narrative because there is a need for it (Ricoeur, 1985). There is a necessity for oneself to make these connections because people often tend to find the patterns in any form (e.g., the ability for people to recognize animal patterns in the stars [constellations]). These patterns from the narratives imitate the need for continuity in our lives.

Mimesis 3

The final of the three stages, Mimesis 3 is the link from the fictional world to the lived world. Mimesis 3 integrates the hypothetical and the lived by anchoring the fictional work in the timeline of the lived world (Ricoeur, 1984). The interpretative work is cyclical in nature because the places, events, and actors in one time can be reevaluated in another time and/or incorporated with other places, events, and actors. The process continues to churn out new meanings as it adds new elements.

The work of Ricoeur elevates the discussion on narrative with his phenomenological inspection of it. His examination of cosmic time, phenomenological time, and human time help the understanding of narrative fit across spectrums of experience. He also looks at mimesis as a tool for better fitting narratives from a fictional world to a real environment and vice versa. The next section will highlight David Carr's work and his response to the work of Ricoeur.

David Carr

David Carr's *Time, Narrative, and History* is the second coordinate on narrative for this project. His work is, in a way, a response to Ricoeur's work *Time and Narrative*. However, Carr's project takes a slightly different phenomenological approach than Ricouer's. For this project, I am going to focus on the important additions of Carr to the phenomenological understanding of narrative.

Narrative Structure

For Carr, narrative structure is a key starting point. He describes his version of narrative structure as being apart from the literary and historical narrative structures put

forth by other theorists (Carr, 1986b). In these formats, Carr believes that a person or author is retroactively placing a narrative structure on the events in the story or history (Carr, 1986a). Carr does not believe this is the only mode for a narrative structure to exist. Therefore, he wants to move the discussion of a narrative structure to a phenomenological environment.

Carr is taking the notion of narrative and trying to remove it from the qualitative perspective of some theorists. This leads him to combine narrative with Husserl's concept of historicity and Heidegger's concept of Dasien (Carr, 1986a). Carr's phenomenological perspective transitions the idea to the issue of continuity and discontinuity, which becomes the basis of the main differences between previous work on narrative and the intent of Carr's project in *Time, Narrative, and History*.

Continuity Thesis v. Discontinuity Thesis

The major difference between Carr's understanding of narrative versus previous theorists' work is the distinction of the continuity thesis. The continuity thesis puts forth the idea that a narrative structure exists in the lived experience of a person. An event or action will always have a temporal beginning, middle, and end (Carr, 1986a). The narrative structure in the discontinuity thesis holds to the idea that events or actions are not connected in such a manner and can detach from the narrative structure applied to the events or actions of said narrative (Carr, 1986b).

Carr (1986a) is responding to Ricoeur's statements on narrative by stating the following:

If the role of narrative is to introduce something new into the world, and what it introduces is the synthesis of the heterogeneous, then presumably it attaches to the

16

events of the world a form they do not otherwise have. A story redescribes the

world, that is, it describes it *as if* it were what, presumably, in fact it is not. (p. 15)

Carr is trying to delineate the difference between Ricoeur's original attempt at describing

narrative from his overt stating of narrative being a part of the lived world.

Carr is essentially trying to say that the events or actions of our lives will have a

narrative structure (a beginning, a middle, and an end) and that those events or actions

can also call back to a previous event or action connecting the past narrative to the

present or even to a future part of that narrative (Carr, 1986a). In this sense, Carr is

suggesting that there is a lived-through experience of the whole of the narrative, which is

a connection to the pre-thematic phenomenon that occurs before we can make any

conscious reflection. This holistic approach differs from the disconnected events in the

discontinuity thesis. Those events stand alone and are reconstructed to form a whole

narrative at a later time, after the reflection on those past events.

The work of Carr is a response to the work of Paul Ricoeur. Carr offers his

perspective on narrative structure as an author placing a structure on past events. He also

puts forth his concept of a continuity thesis. This is best described as narrative occurring

in the past, present, and future, thus allowing a holistic understanding of narrative

experience. The next section of this chapter will look at the work of Walter Fisher, which

is the backbone of this project.

Walter Fisher

Walter Fisher's work *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action* is the main source of this project. The next few sections

explicate his three major contributions to the field of communication and to the understanding of narratives.

Narrative Paradigm

Fisher's narrative paradigm focuses on the storyteller. This section will cover his narrative paradigm; two subsequent sections will detail the additional pillars for the narrative paradigm of coherence and fidelity.

The narrative paradigm is Fisher's response to the rational world paradigm as the method for human communication (Rowland, 1988). In the rational world paradigm, humans are rational; humans make decisions based on arguments; arguments are based on logic; rationality is based on the evidence; and the world can be understood as a chain of logical relationships paired with reasoning (Fisher, 1987). Fisher believes that the world follows a narrative paradigm where stories become the key to human communication.

The narrative paradigm follows a different pattern than the rational world paradigm. Fisher puts forth five pronouncements that buttress the rational world paradigm. The first is that humans are storytellers (Fisher, 1987). The focus shifts from argumentation to storytelling as the focal point of communication.

The second is that decision making and communication are based upon good reasons (Fisher, 1987). This highlights the story within the narrative as being something that can be gray and not black and white, with logical reasoning. It points toward a narrative in which arguments cannot convince a person to believe this story is untrue.

The third part is that good reasons are the history, culture, and character of the story (Fisher, 1987). This criterion describes the method for people to sometimes forgo a

rational argument and identify with a succession of time and heritage. This allows people to self-identify with those stories and the argumentation trying to refute the narrative.

The fourth part focuses on rationality with the point of entry being the internal consistency of the story and the lived experience (Fisher, 1987). When discussing the idea of rationality, Fisher (1987) is using his concept of narrative rationality, which emphasizes logic as the central theme. Therefore, the issue, in this fourth part, is that a person may have a different lived experience of a certain story, and so the emergence of a logical argument against that occurrence will be easily dismissed because it is not the actual happening of those events. A person's rationality is not only tied to logic but is also closely tied to his or her experience of the world.

The fifth and final part of the narrative paradigm is that we experience a world full of stories, and a person must choose among them (Fisher, 1987). A person will choose the story that best fulfills his or her personal experiences. The ability to identify and communicate these stories becomes the basis for human communication.

The next section of my discussion on Walter Fisher will look at coherence and fidelity. These two concepts are the heart of his narrative paradigm. These two sections will define narrative coherence and fidelity, as well as its role in the narrative paradigm. I will also give a couple of examples of their use in other communication literature.

Coherence

Coherence is the first major part of the narrative paradigm. It is the process of making sense of a given narrative (Fisher, 1987). Any given narrative needs to make sense to the person believing in it or the person hearing it for the first time. The better the

coherence of the narrative, the easier it is for that narrative to be adopted by the person hearing the narrative.

Another part of coherence is the structure of the narrative. The structure must be simple enough for the person who is telling it and also for the person hearing it (Fisher, 1987). The more complicated a structure is, the more difficult it is for a person to understand the narrative. It can create traps and misdirections that, ultimately, make a person not buy in to that particular narrative. This does not mean that a narrative cannot exist with a number of different elements; instead, it points to a simple and more direct connection among the major points of the narrative.

The second important aspect of coherence is the comparison of the narrative in the foreground versus other narratives (Fisher, 1987). A narrative is only as good as its closest counterparts. If a narrative does not compare to other narratives from the past, present, or future, it is dismissed as being subpar. A person will discard the faulty narrative and return to the more sound narrative of before. However, if the narrative is well conceived, it will match up against other narratives or even supersede them moving forward.

The last part of coherence is the credibility of the characters in the narrative (Fisher, 1987). Characters, like structure, need to have a certain amount of reason and logic behind their actions in the narrative. The thoughts of the characters need to follow a pattern that is accessible to the reader or listener. The audience should easily ascertain the motives for the characters in the narrative, and the actions of the characters must also follow the same pattern of thoughts and motivations. A failure for the narrative to achieve any credibility for the characters will ultimately doom the narrative. However, some

stories or movies have a plot twist that creates entertainment for the audience. In these scenarios, the characters' motives are hidden and revealed later in the story. This does not mean the narrative will collapse because the characters' motives or actions were hidden; it just gives the audience a shock because it was unexpected but fits in with the actual narrative. An incoherent narrative, in regard to characters, will find characters making decisions completely out of character. These are the narratives that fail the coherence test because the characters' thoughts, motives, and actions change so drastically that the audience cannot understand their true intentions.

In the years since Fisher first discussed his narrative paradigm, there has been research explaining key components of narrative coherence. Baxter et al. (2012) describe the five parts of Fisher's narrative coherence: sequential organization, orientation, causal explanation, congruence of affect with content, and sense-making (Baxter et al., 2012). The addition of these components adds more to Fisher's original concept of narrative coherence.

Sequential organization is the ability for the narrative to follow a basic logical plot (Baxter et al., 2012). The idea is for the story to follow a sequential order of events to explain the general narrative. Labov (1999) describes sequential organization as temporal events organized within a skeleton-like structure. The events are probably sequential, but as plotting in movies has suggested, there could be a different organization pattern, depending on the reveal at the end of the narrative.

The next component is orientation. Orientation deals with the texturizing of the story (Baxter et al., 2012). The characters in the story and the details of those characters in the events color the audience's understanding of the story. Orientation elements can be

proposed at the beginning of the story so the audience has all the background information

at once, or the details can be revealed as the events of the story take place (Labov, 1999).

The details become a key factor in setting up motives and other key parts of the narrative

throughout the storytelling process.

The motives of the story are known as casual explanations (Baxter et al., 2012).

The "why" aspect of the story comes through during the causal explanation part of the

story (Baxter et al., 2012). For example, if a child in a multifaith family asks his or her

parents why they got married even though they were from different faiths, the parents can

then explain that they fell in love and that the faith of the other parent did become a major

part of their courtship. These reasons become the casual explanations for the key parts of

the narrative.

The fourth component is congruence of affect with content. This is the ability of

the storyteller to match emotion with the intensity of a corresponding event or action

(Baxter et al., 2012). Tone and intensity become a factor in the story, and they do not

necessarily have to match (Fiese & Sameroff, 1999). An example of tone and intensity

not matching is when a parent is angrily punishing a child and saying, "This is hurting me

as much as it is hurting you." Although this statement is true, the tone and intensity are

not corresponding to the statement.

Sense-making is the final component of narrative coherence. A story needs to

have an assessment, reason, or conclusion to the events for it to be coherent (Baxter et al.,

2012). The narrative is supposed to have some sort of meaning-making in it and is not

just a simple recollection of events (Baxter et al., 2012). Sense-making is the lynchpin to

narrative coherence. Without it, the story becomes merely a retelling of events with no

discernable resolution to the actual narrative.

These five parts add more details to Fisher's narrative coherence. They help explain the importance of narrative coherence to a story, and in the case of this project, the concept of sense-making becomes a main issue for the narratives of multifaith families.

Fidelity

The second part of the narrative paradigm is the issue of fidelity. Fidelity is the degree to which the narrative will fit with the purview of the person's prior values and beliefs (Fisher, 1987). There are five parts of standards for fidelity. Each helps to better understand the ability for the narrative to fit the worldview of the person reading or hearing the narrative, or of the person creating the narrative.

The first part focuses on the values embedded in the narrative (Fisher, 1987). The narrative will espouse a certain set of values, and the reader or listener should be able to easily find these values in the narrative.

The second part is the association between the plot of the narrative and the embedded values in it (Fisher, 1987). It describes the need for the values to have a pattern or flow with the narrative structure. The correlation between plot and values highlights a logical pattern of thought. Anything that appears to make the values hypocritical would negate the fidelity of the narrative.

The third part of fidelity is the benefits to the person listening to the narrative in question (Fisher, 1987). The purpose is to ask why a person would believe in such a narrative: Is the narrative giving him or her hope, or is the narrative giving the person an answer or maybe even an excuse for a problem that affects him or her?

The fourth part of fidelity is the consistency of the narrative with the values of the person reading or listening to it (Fisher, 1987). The viewer of the narrative will usually have a complex system of values already in place, as narrative comes between the foreground and the background. However, for any new narrative to become a part of a person's value classification, it needs to fit in the system. A narrative that does fit becomes part of his or her values. It would take a total change to a person's values for him or her to accept a narrative contradictory to his or her current value organization.

The last part of fidelity deals with the idealized values of the narrative (Fisher, 1987). The idea is for a narrative to connect the values in its story to those of a perfect version of values for which most humans strive to achieve. A narrative that can connect the values embedded in its story to the higher concept of values tends to keep the fidelity of the story intact.

There are two applications that highlight the significance of narrative fidelity. The first examines the role of narrative fidelity for cancer patients in regard to a warrior's mentality, and the second focuses on communication activity for a classroom of students and uses the idea of narrative fidelity to better understand what sounds true to the listener.

Iannarino (2018) takes a look at narrative fidelity by examining Norm Macdonald's stand-up routine about his Uncle Burt's fight with cancer. The comedic bit underscores the fallacy in the warrior narrative when a patient is battling cancer. The premise is that a patient will either win or lose the battle with cancer (Iannarino, 2018). Iannarino (2018) explains the public's ongoing warrior narrative for battling cancer or other diseases, and discusses the afflicted people as warriors. However, narrative fidelity becomes a problem for patients because there are clear winning and losing endings for

them. The public looks at battling cancer as heroic, but the patient might not feel the same way because his or her understanding of the disease is more nuanced than simplistic (Iannarino, 2018). Finally, the concept of losing the battle might make some patients feel weak in comparison to a person who beat the disease (Iannarino, 2018). These discrepancies in narrative fidelity make the concept of the warrior in regard to health as something to be reevaluated because it may cause undue pressure or harm on those facing these illnesses (Iannarino, 2018).

The other example comes from a classroom assignment designed to teach students about narrative coherence and narrative fidelity (Hobart, 2013). The assignment is to take a short reading that contains a claim that is false but could also sound true. Hobart (2013) explains that she uses urban legends because they will challenge the background of the student. She describes using a story in which small star-shaped tattoos laced with LSD are being given to schoolchildren. Students often believe the fidelity of the story because it clearly has narrative coherence because of the anecdotal evidence (Hobart, 2013). Furthermore, she explains that most students have heard stories about children being harmed by adults, yet lack a clear understanding of what LSD is (Hobart, 2013). Therefore, these issues tend to have the students agreeing with the fidelity of the narrative. The classroom activity allows students to understand the concepts of narrative coherence and narrative fidelity because it offers them firsthand experience with trying to deduce the meaning and truth of a narrative.

For this project, the idea of narrative fidelity becomes a barometer for the family, the extended family, and the religious community because the concept of multifaith families challenges the backgrounds of these groups. This is why it is important to

include it in the later chapters because it will highlight the places where a multifaith

narrative is encountering any kind of resistance.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss a few narrative coordinates to help

better understand the concept of narrative. I chose the work of Walter Fisher because he

is an integral scholar in our field of communication. Fisher's narrative paradigm, which

features coherence and fidelity, is a major part of this project on multifaith families. I also

included a few examples to help convey the use of coherence and fidelity in the field of

communication. Starting in Chapter 4, I will be using Fisher's narrative paradigm,

specifically coherence and fidelity, to texturize the conversation on multifaith families.

My hope is to conduct an in-depth exploration of a multifaith narrative because multifaith

unions are a growing segment of all marriages.

CHAPTER 3
FAMILY AND INTERFAITH FAMILY LITERATURE

In this chapter, I will be selecting key family and interfaith communication literature to further the purpose of this project. As stated before, there is a bevy of different articles and books written on family communication and interfaith communication. With this in mind, I am focusing on five specific areas. I am going to use the topics included in Lynn Turner and Richard West's (2015) *Sage Handbook of Family Communication*: theoretical approaches to family communication, narrative research in family communication, intergenerational relationship communication, communication in interfaith families, and family communication in television.

The five sections within this chapter will try to give an impression of the work being done within these areas in the family communication and interfaith literature. I am going to use different parts of this literature review in the subsequent chapters of my project. The research on dialectical theory, the intergenerational literature, and the interfaith communication literature are going to be relied on heavily in the following chapters. I will also be using some of the other literature presented in this chapter later in this project.

It is also important to note that narrative remains a key component of this project and, as it will be seen in the following research, a significant part of family communication. I will still be using Fisher's work as my narrative foundation for this project because his work is a bedrock of communication.

Theoretical Approaches to Family Communication

This section will discuss the different theoretical approaches to family communication. I am going to use Sandra Metts and Bryan Asbury's (2015) "Theoretical Approaches to Family Communication" as the scaffolding for the discussion in this section. There are three categories of theories that help shape the focus of family communication literature; these are broken down to the system level, the dyadic level, and the individual level (Metts & Asbury, 2015). As previously mentioned, this section is an overview of each segment of the overarching sections. Therefore, it will not be a full summary of the three categories of theories.

System Level

The first category of theoretical approaches to family communication examines different theories focusing on the family as a system of interactions and, more importantly, on families being a subset of a larger system, like a society or a culture, in a manner representing an ecosystem. System level includes systems theory, family communication patterns, and critical theory; these three categories are an important part of the family communication literature, but I will not be using them in the later sections of this project. However, I did want to include them as part of this literature review.

Systems Theory

In family communication, systems theory assumes that a family is like other types of systems where there are interactive and interdependent parts that operate and function as part of a whole (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967; White & Klein, 2002). Systems theory plays an important role in describing the interworking of family dynamics

and is also employed within other communication disciplines (e.g., organizational communication).

The most prevalent systems theory work is found in the circumplex model of family systems (Olson, 2000; Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1983). The work done within this framework describes the family in a series of modes that includes cohesion, flexibility, and communication. The circumplex model is a circular representation (like a graph or chart illustrated in the shape of a target) of these interactions. The different interactions lead to distinct differences between open and closed systems. An open system allows for the family members to interact with their environment and bring knowledge back to the family, whereas a closed system posits that the family will mainly interact with the family members (Kuhn, 1974). As mentioned previously, these frameworks are located in a circumplex visual chart.

Systems theory has changed within family communication as some newer approaches have emerged in the past couple of decades. One example is the description of parents and children having a bidirectional communication pattern; this differs from previous research that situated the parents at the top of the family and the children below as a type of hierarchy (O'Conner, Hetherington, & Clingempeel, 1997).

Family Communication Patterns

The next part of system level theory is family communication patterns. Developed by McLeod and Chaffe (1972), family communication patterns describe the predictable and stable nature of family communication. Ritchie (1991) built upon this idea by revising the underpinning typology to four distinct low to high communication orientations: pluralistic, consensual, laissez-faire, and protective. Each category describes

a distinct communication style that can be found in family communication. Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1994) further revised this idea by creating a Couple Types scale describing traditional, independent, and separate couples, and the Family Communication Patterns index. This index breaks family communication into three environments: expressiveness, structural traditionalism, and avoidance (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie, 1994). The scale and index work to recognize and describe family communication patterns to help better understand the complexity of family communication.

These are some of the highlights in this particular theory area. The next section will discuss the last part of system level theory: critical theory.

Critical Theory

The last theory in the system level section is critical theory. Critical theory examines the relationship of the family as part of a system of social and institutional structures. The main relationship describes how social systems influence the family and the family influences social structures (Deetz, 2001). Critical theory examines the role of power and the influence it has on the family and vice versa. Chris Pine (1993) takes a Marxist, modernist approach to describing the impact of social structures on family practices. Michel Foucault (1980), in *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1*, takes the opposite approach and describes the movement of power from family practices to social structures. Another example of critical theory is research on relationships among class, race, and family communication (Lareau, 2003). Lareau's (2003) work juxtaposes middle-class families and the engaging communication of their children with working-class families in which their children speak only when spoken to. Critical theory research also describes the process of social institutional disruption. A good example is of a same-

sex commitment ceremony as challenging the social norm of exchanging vows (Goltz &

Zingsheim, 2010).

The goal of critical theory is to describe the embedded family communication

within larger society as a whole. Compared to the previous two theory types, it takes a

different approach at looking at systems.

Dyadic Level

The second category of theoretical approaches to family communication is the

dyadic level, which shifts the focus from systems and the family interacting with those

systems to the dyadic interactions between family members. Examples of dyadic

interactions are those between parents and children, spouses, or siblings. For this project,

I will look at some theories on the dyadic level. More specifically, I will focus on the

dialectical part of this section because it will be a component of the multifaith portion of

this project. Leslie Baxter's work will aid the discussion of multifaith families, especially

in the next chapter. The rest of the theories act as a roadmap to better understand the

theories that work on a dyadic level. The next few theories are prominent in the area of

family communication.

Social Exchange Theory

The central premise of social exchange theory is that humans are rational

creatures that cooperate with one another. It is further contextualized by the

understanding that humans think each person should contribute fairly, or, roughly

translated, the same amount to the relationship or activity. Therefore, if a member of the

group tries to take more than his or her fair share or focus solely on his or her needs, the

group will suffer (Homans, 1958). However, if everyone in the group benefits the same amount, the group tends to thrive (Homans, 1958). Social exchange theory is a good starting point for understanding the next few theories.

Interdependence Theory

The interdependence model builds from social exchange theory. However, the principal driving force for this model is the breakdown of social exchanges into rewards and costs (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). The rewards and costs are divided into tangible and intangible events (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). An example of a tangible event is a husband fixing his wife's necklace with a broken clasp; an intangible event is a wife expressing gratitude for her husband going to her family's Christmas party. These different little day-to-day actions create a balance sheet of profits and deductions (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). If the couple is on the positive side of this list, that means they are doing well. The other issue is that most couples bring the baggage of previous relationships to a current relationship, so they will often compare their current relationship to those past relationships (Kelley & Thibaut, 1978). Therefore, all of these tangible and intangible experiences have an effect on the relationship.

Equity Theory

Another theory emerging from the social exchange archetype is equity theory. The central focus of equity theory is on the consequences in unbalanced relationships (Hatfield, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). The major premise of equity theory revolves around a person getting treated equally as a person and within the group. This echoes the core meaning of a social exchange theory. However, equity theory identifies the distress

that a person feels when he or she is being treated inequitably, as well as the attempt of that person to reduce that feeling of stress by convincing himself or herself that an unbalanced relationship is fair or by abandoning the relationship altogether (Hatfield, 2009). Distress also occurs when a person is being treated better than others, because this creates a feeling of shame or guilt (Hatfield, 2009). Therefore, both positive and negative treatment will create feelings of distress. Equity theory helps to explain the treatment of individuals and their perceived level of equality.

Investment Model

The investment model takes all three previous theories (social exchange, interdependence, and equity) and synthesizes them to produce a theory that looks at the stability of close relationships (Rusbult, 1983; Rusbult & Buunk, 1993). This model tries to predict the commitment levels of relationships based upon the same profit and cost association in interdependence theory (Rusbult, 1983). Investment theory also includes two new functions: benign attributions and accommodating behaviors (Yovetich & Rusbult, 1994). These functions explain the reasons that partners in committed relationships overlook stressful events or minor aggressions. This falls in line with the idea that forgiveness is better than retaliation (Yovetich & Rusbult, 1994).

Relational Communication

A major difference between relational communication and the previous theories is that relational communication focuses on messages having content and relationship components, which change the focus from profit and costs to a dyad that dictate control in the partnership or relationship (Parks, 1977). An important aspect of relational

communication is that the messages are communicating control or allowing control to occur in the relationship (Rogers, 2001). The goal of getting or giving control is for it to achieve a leveling, which allows a relationship to be equal (Rogers, 2001). Relational communication focuses on the nonverbal communication patterns in relationships and accounts for behaviors like a smile or a nod of the head (Siegel, Friedlander, & Heatherington, 1992). The movement from a pure system of plus and minus, depending on the action, starts to begin in this theory, as well as in the next two theories.

Dialectical Theory

        Dialectical theory is rooted in the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, but was developed by Leslie Baxter. This theory differs from the traditional view of family communication because it posits that relationships are constitutive practices where relationships are created (Baxter, 2004). There are four driving forces for this theory: contradictions, totality, change, and praxis (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Furthermore, there are three primary pairings located within dialectical theory: integration/separation, certainty/uncertainty, and expression/nonexpression (Baxter, 2004). There are also internal and external environments, which also shape the dialectics (Baxter, 2007); this means that each dialectic will have a different corresponding internal and external contradiction, depending on if it is the internal or external environment. I will revisit relational dialects in Chapter 4 and, more specifically, focus on the four parts of relational dialects because it will help in better understanding multifaith families.

Communication Privacy Management Theory

   The last theory in the dyadic section is communication privacy management theory. The theory looks at one of Baxter's primary dialectics of expression/nonexpression as a function of revealing private information (Petronio, 1991). It examines the two different types of private information, which are categorized as personal and collaborative (Petronio, 1991). The space created by disclosing private information is considered to open a private space within the relationship (Petronio, 1991). The theory has evolved to include five new assumptions: Individuals own their private information; people have the right to control their private information; people use privacy roles for disclosure; people revealing their private information to others makes those people co-owners of that information; and if someone violates these rules, then mistrust is created in the relationship (Petronio, 2007).

Individual Level

   The third category of theoretical approaches to family communication is the individual level. It focuses on the manner in which family members give meaning to their own behaviors and to those of their family members. As with the dyadic level, the individual level will aid in the description of the inner workings of a multifaith family. The theories that are incorporated into this part will be included later in the discussion of multifaith families. The section will end with a brief overview of narrative, which, combined with the previous research on the narrative paradigm, becomes key to the later parts of this project. There are four theories in this section that describe this process of attribution. Therefore, this section begins with attribution theory.

Attribution Theory

A distinction of attribution theory is that it focuses on the psychological aspects of relationships (Manusov, 2001). The theory is based on the idea that people are motivated to make sense of their surroundings and the attributions attached to the people in this environment (Heider, 1958). For example, a child's early years create attributions he or she will likely make as he or she ages (Bugental, Shennum, Frank, & Ekman, 2001). This can explain why children who suffer trauma at such an early age have a high level of attribution error (Wilson & Whipple, 2001). Attribution theory is easily tied to family communication because the family is an environment where a child learns and grows. Like attribution theory, the next few theories focus on the psychological and identity formation of members in the family.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory reflects the position that a child's caregivers offer a secure environment during child development (Bowlby, 1988). A child who receives this care will have less anxiety and fears as he or she continues to age (Feeny, 1999). The opposite of this scenario is also true. Children with parents who do not offer their children a secure environment tend to be avoidant and have detachment issues (Main & Solomon, 1990). There is a four-category model that helps explain attachment theory, with categories consisting of secure, preoccupied, dismissive, and fearful/avoidant; these demonstrate the different areas of positive or negative environments (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). Attachment theory provides an individuated account of development depending on the conditions of a child at a very early age. This research is ongoing as people continue to discuss the impact of this developmental issue.

Narrative Theory

Narrative theory describes the construction of stories, family myths, and legacies of a family, as well as a family's storytelling. An important feature of narrative theory is that it describes story creation as a joint effort of the family members (Thompson et al., 2009). This could make narrative theory a good selection for the dyadic section. However, stories are created both individually and as a collaboration within a family (Koenig Kellas, Trees, A. R., Schrodt, P., LeClair,-Underberg, C., & Willer, E. K., 2010). Thompson et al. (2009) and Koening Kellas et al. (2010) argue that narrative can be placed at the dyadic or individual level. Another theorist like Fisher (1987) may argue that narrative is developed in a system of people, and, therefore, it should be placed within the system. So where should it go? I look toward Metts and Asbury (2015) when they argue the following:

> We include narratives within the individual level section because the ultimate outcome of the sense-making process is the story that is retained as a memory, metal schema, or personal myth by an individual – that is, characters, storylines, plots, and scenes within which one's identity as spouse, mother, father, child, stepchild, adopted child, brother, sister, hero villain, loved, rejected, and so on is embedded. (p. 53)

I believe that narrative's situation here is acceptable for the purpose of this literature review, but I am also recognizing that it belongs to every level.

Narrative Performance Theory

The major difference between narrative theory and narrative performance theory is that narrative theory reflects the narrative of the individual, whereas narrative performance theory deals with the construction of an individual's narrative reality (Langellier & Peterson, 2004). Narrative performance theory relies on speech act theory, which describes the potential power of words to create reality (Searle, 1969). Furthermore, it makes the distinction that family narratives are not just storytelling by a family, but are also involve every member of the family telling his or her individual story, thus creating the family (Langellier & Peterson, 2004). This implies that a person contributes to the meaning of a family and also to his or her understanding of a place within that family.

Narrative Research in Family Communication

The purpose of this section is to echo thoughts from a handbook chapter written by Jody Koenig Kellas and Haley Kranstuber Horstman (2015) on a postpositivist approach to identity and narrative in the family. The goal is to look at the different lenses that go into making up a term named communicated narrative sense-making (CNSM) (Koenig Kellas & Kranstuber Horstman, 2015). According to Koenig Kellas and Kranstuber Horstman (2015), "CNSM, in our conceptual model, refers to an empirical approach to understanding the ways in which narratives and storytelling affect and reflect individual and relational well-being in the family" (p. 82). This section will follow the overview that Koenig Kellas and Kranstuber Horstman (2015) use in their discussion of CNSM. This information is important to include because it tries to account for a newer study of narrative in family communication.

Koenig Kellas and Kranstuber Horstman (2015) start by describing the origins of narrative study in the field of family communication, then transition to discussions of sociohistorical framework, theory and method, functions of narrative in family communication, and CNSM.

Most of the narrative literature is grounded in the works of Fisher (1987) and Brunner (1990). Fisher (1987) describes narrative, mentioned earlier, as human communication, and Brunner (1990) explains that human cognition is narrative. The next parts will examine narrative in four categories: sociohistorical framework, theory and method, functions of narrative in family, and CNSM.

Sociohistorical Framework

Sociohistorical framework examines the importance of culture and time and their impact on family stories. The elements of culture, ethnicity, and religion influence and form family narratives (Stone, 1988). This includes the change in relationship for family stories as immigration or other events change the fortunes of a family (Stone, 2004).

Another example comes from Langellier and Peterson (2004). They discuss Franco-American families and their methods for interpreting, creating, and sharing family stories (Langellier & Peterson, 2004), which illustrates the impact of culture on the creation of familial narratives. Furthermore, it includes the historical element of culture, which helps to shape a narrative by bringing the richness of years of experience to the cultural narrative.

Sociohistorical framework describes the connection of families to their cultural histories. This concept is becoming more popular to trace, and it can offer a good ethnographic account of narrative in families.

Theory and Method

There are a couple of lenses that may be used to describe the theories and methods related to narratives, including mediums, analytics, processes, life courses, and paradigms (Koenig Kellas & Kranstuber Horstman, 2015). These lenses offer different perspectives on narratives and their relation to family communication.

Medium is a lens that studies the use of phone, text, social media applications, and so forth in the transfer of stories. For example, written breakup accounts of people in relationships can be used to examine the medium and its relation to coherence in the breakup narrative (Koenig Kellas & Manusov, 2003).

The next lens takes an analytical approach to narrative by studying the content or outcomes of family narratives. An example of this analytical approach looks at family identity through stories related to that family (Koenig Kellas, 2005). Another example is the creation of spousal relationships in the early years of a marriage (Holmberg, Orbuch, & Veroff, 2004). The analytical approach has mainly focused on the content of a narrative related to family communication. The next lens looks more at the processes of narrative related to family communication.

Storytelling processes tend to examine the actual storytelling process, as the name suggests. Examples of the storytelling process include the process of mothers telling their adoptive children the story of their adoption (Harrigan, 2010) and the conversations between a members of a couple that use narratives as a method of shared storytelling (Mandelbaum, 1987). The process not only describes the content of narratives but also the manner of their transference between family members.

The next lens is described as life course storytelling, which involves the stories and storytelling developed over the course of relationships, from beginning to dissolving (Koenig Kellas et al., 2010). It also focuses on the changes in family stories and storytelling processes over time (Jorgenson & Bochner, 2004). Life course storytelling looks at a much longer span of time than storytelling processes or the analytical approach.

Paradigm is the last lens pertaining to narrative. It looks at storytelling through interpretive, rhetorical, critical, and postpositivist approaches (Koenig Kellas & Kranstuber Horstman, 2015). These different approaches lead to research such as rhetorical meaning created and shared through cultural narratives (Japp & Japp, 2005) or investigation of family narratives through autoethnography (Goodall, 2005). The insights given to these narratives texture a different type of analysis than the previous four lenses.

Functions of Narrative in Family

Narratives are the building blocks creating and making sense of life experiences in family communication. According to Koenig Kellas and Trees (2013), there are three different functions for narratives, which are creating, socializing, and coping.

Narratives are a process of creating and recreating family identities (Jorgenson & Bochner, 2004). Furthermore, the creation of stories allows family members and families to construct and reconstruct family myths, family stories, and identity (Linde, 1993; McAdams, 1993). Narratives are created to share the histories of the family and the bonds connecting family. They give the members of the family a shared purpose as the family continually evolves into the future.

Narratives in family serve as the socializing mechanism for family members to understand values and behaviors associated with that particular family (Pratt, Norris, Hebblethwaite, & Arnold, 2008). Beyond just values, socialization can also teach children about gender roles (Reese, 1996). Furthermore, it can even convey the family's expectations for dating or for relationships outside of the family (Kranstuber Horstman, 2013).

The last part of this section focuses on the ability of narratives and storytelling to be a mechanism for coping with difficult life experiences (Koenig Kellas, 2008). Coping is a key family dynamic, and narratives are the vehicle for this process to occur. A good example is breakups in the family (Koenig Kellas & Manusov, 2003). The splitting up of parents can take a substantial toll on family members, and the ability to cope with that experience is in large part due to the use of narratives as a coping mechanism.

Whether it is for the purpose of creating, coping, or socializing, narrative plays a significant role in making sense of family communication, which directly leads to the last part on communicated narrative sense-making.

Communicated Narrative Sense-Making

The last part of narrative research in family communication focuses on CNSM, which combines the different functions of narrative in family literature to create a postpositivist approach to understanding narrative (Koenig Kellas & Kranstuber Horstman, 2015). Communicated sense-making (CSM) is the overall term used for defining how people communicate (Koenig Kellas & Kranstuber Horstman, 2015). The incorporation of memorable messages, accounts, CNSM, attributes, and communicated perspective talking construct CSM. CNSM is one of the key elements in CSM, but there

are three parts that define CNSM: retrospective storytelling, interactional/joint storytelling, and translational storytelling (Koenig Kellas & Kranstuber Horstman, 2015). This section will look at those three parts in more detail.

Retrospective storytelling deals with the notion that people process their lives by looking back on the stories told in the family or as an individual (Brunner, 1990). Furthermore, people construct personal myths by retrospectively retelling those stories in a series of life stories (McAdams, 1993). Retrospective storytelling is a process fundamental to narratives because narrative inherently involves putting a story around a series of events.

Interactional/joint storytelling is the keystone of CSNM because it focuses on the actual process of telling the story in the family. A good example of interactional/joint storytelling is of a family trying to make sense of their world and the relationships of the family by the interactions (Fiese & Sameroff, 1999). The joint interaction in storytelling is the foundation of CNSM.

The last aspect of CNSM is translational storytelling. Translational storytelling inspects the manner in which storytelling can aid in coping with challenging events in the life of a family (Koenig Kellas & Kranstuber Horstman, 2015). An example is the expressive writing paradigm that is the basis for scholars when they are designing interventions for families and their afflicted loved one (Frattaroli, 2006). Translational storytelling does not get as much attention as retrospective or interactional/joint storytelling, but it assists in CNSM.

Intergenerational Family Relationship Communication

Intergenerational family relationship literature examines the different communication issues stemming from grandparent, parent, child, aunt, uncle, and in-law interaction. According to Fowler and Fisher (2015), "while parent-child bonds have been the primary focus of IGFR [intergenerational family relationships] studies, important work is also being carried out that examines grandparent-grandchild relationships, aunt/uncle-niece/nephew bonds, and connections between parents and children in law" (p. 208). This section will cover a few intergenerational articles, which explain some of the situations discussed in the later chapters of this project. I would like to highlight that the majority of the intergenerational literature focuses primarily on grandparents, aunts, and uncles. There is little to no literature on cousins or second cousins. Therefore, the main focus of intergenerational literature for this project comes from the research revolving around parent-child relationships to grandparents, aunts, uncles, and in-laws.

The starting point of intergenerational family relationship communication is the lifespan developmental perspective and its five tenets (Baltes, 1987; Williams & Nussbaum, 2001). Important to this project, tenet five describes people within a family being organized by a social, cultural, and historical environment where age plays an important factor (Williams & Nussbaum, 2001). The idea is that the older generation of a family plays a role in the socialization of children into the background of the family. Socialization is not just limited to the parents and children.

Another central point in intergenerational family relationship communication is the fact that most families have at least three generations able to interact (Uhlenberg, 1980). Fowler and Fisher (2015) explain that "as lifespans increase, family members are

able to develop IGFRs over extended periods of time that would have been unusual even a hundred years ago" (p. 207). Therefore, intergenerational family relationships are more prevalent than ever before. This allows grandparents to have more time to interact with their children and grandchildren.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, this project involves selecting literature pertinent to describing multifaith families. Much of the family communication research covers parent and child interactions, and this is why this section will focus briefly on the parent-child relationship and expand upon the familial relationships for grandparents, aunts, uncles, and in-laws.

The parent-child relationship has a wide range of experiences and events that affect the bond between the parent and child. Fowler and Fisher (2015) describe two different transitions in the relationship: the normative transitions of adolescence, dating, going to college, and perceiving the parents as people independent of their family roles, and the non-normative transitions of divorce and family crises (Fowler & Fisher, 2015). These examples give a brief idea of the different interactions that the parent-child relationship has over the years. There is more to these relationships, but, as mentioned before, the focus of this section should also highlight the importance of the extended family.

The grandparent and grandchild bond is a special bond that usually brings happiness to both parties (Harwood & Lin, 2000). There is a connection between grandparents and grandchildren that brings out the best of both parties. A fundamental aspect of this relationship is the grandparents acting as keepers of family history and the storytellers of those tales (Brussoni & Boon, 1998). The grandparents can pass along

those histories and make it more likely that the children and grandchildren will remember those stories.

In addition to being the keepers of family histories, grandparents' support of their grandchildren can create a shared sense of family identification (Soliz, 2007). The ability of grandparents to act as the wise patriarch or matriarch of a family makes it much easier for them to pass along key family traits. This helps to connect a family to their ancestors. A good example of this comes from the play *The Piano Lesson* by August Wilson (1990). The play revolves around a piano that holds the stories and the likenesses of some of the family ancestors within it. The connection of the ancestors to the present figures arguing about the piano links the generations. This play illustrates the bonds between older family members and the generations before. Grandparents act as a bridge to pass the stories of a family's ancestors to the youngest generation of that family.

The grandparents can also be the models of relationship traits for grandchildren (O'Neil, 2007). The manner in which grandparents and grandchildren interact can dictate the stories, narratives, and feelings that grandchildren have when looking for a relationship in their adult life (O'Neil, 2007). Therefore, grandparents do model a sense of care and affection, similar to what their grandchild may want from their eventual partner. In other cases, they may illustrate the kind of communication in a relationship that does not work or can be seen as controlling or domineering (O'Neil, 2007).

Intergenerational family relationship communication research does not only focus on grandparents. It also looks at the interactions of aunts and uncles with the family. Sometimes aunts and uncles can seem like peripheral family members, but they do have a role in the family. The more that aunts and uncles are involved in small communication

acts with their nieces or nephews, the greater the likelihood that they will develop a closer relationship (Ellingson & Sotirin, 2010).

Aunts and uncles also contribute to the family by "kin-keeping," which is the ability for aunts and uncles to build the family by acting as a third party to express needs of the family (Ellingson & Sotirin, 2006). In essence, aunts and uncles become arbiters in sometimes difficult situations. In addition, aunts and uncles can become teachers about topics that parents cannot easily discuss with their children (Milardo, 2010). Furthermore, they can act as confidants for their nieces and nephews (Ellingson & Sotirin, 2006; Milardo, 2005).

Aunts and uncles may also act as family historians and guides for their nieces and nephews, which echoes the function of the grandparents (Milardo, 2005). Like grandparents, aunts and uncles provide a bridge for the family to connect to earlier times or even previous generations. This helps the family link back to their social and cultural heritages.

The last part of intergenerational family relationships is interactions with in-laws. The in-laws play a significant role in the positive satisfaction of newlyweds (Timmer & Veroff, 2000). This can also be extended to positive or negative support in long-term marriages (Bryant & Conger, 1999; Bryant, Conger, & Meehan, 2001). In-laws, like grandparents from the other side of the family, play a key role in the keeping of family histories. In-laws' acceptance of their son-in-law or daughter in-law often was correlated with a more positive relationship (Morr Serewicz & Canary, 2008). All of these aspects of in-law communication have an impact on the parents of a family and their interactions as a couple and with their children.

Communication in Interfaith Families

Communication in interfaith families and narrative research are the two pillars of literature for this project. In this section, I will discuss the impact of the religious community on family communication and then examine the literature on interfaith families. Both of these parts will provide the basis for the different aspects of narrative formation in a multifaith family. They will also help contextualize the research in communication for religious communities and interfaith families as it pertains to family communication. As mentioned, I will be selecting certain articles from these two parts for the later chapters.

Religious Community

Religious communities have existed for thousands of years. This project is not trying to extensively summarize those histories. Instead, it will attempt to get an idea of how religious communities play a supportive role or an oppressive role in relation to family communication (Sterk & Sisler, 2015). Therefore, this part of the work related to communication in the interfaith family will address the religious community according to those perspectives.

It is important to note that there is not much literature in regard to family communication and religion (Diggs & Socha, 2004). However, there are some ideas that can texturize the understanding of the relationship between the family and religious communities.

Supportive religious communities can come in different styles, but they all provide support in times of need for a family from the religious community. An example

is of a religious community coming to the aid of a congregant family during the death of a family member (Gillespie, 2007). A reason for this is because religious communities can come together in a way that they consider to be transcendent, whether it is for the good of the community or God (Sterk & Sisler, 2015). It can also be because religious institutions can be a physical space or a common area for prayer and community (Kleman, Everett, & Egbert, 2009). The supportiveness of these communities creates a feeling of belonging, and for many families, that is a vital part of their daily lives.

Supportive practices also extend to the area of marriage. Marriage is a major event in the lives of most people and a key part of religious communities because it is seen as the beginning of a new religious family unit. Many religions have classes or tenets for newlyweds to follow. The idea is to extend the religious community to the family and also to bring the family back to the religious community (Sterk & Sisler, 2015). However, even with those supportive practices, newlyweds rank "same religion" as 12th most important out of 23 factors that influence picking a mate (Mahoney, 2010). Even more salient is the idea of couples having a common religion rather than having an actual connection to a religious community (Sherkat, 2004). Therefore, religious communities are finding it difficult to keep congregants in the community fold.

Religious communities may also be of an oppressive nature. An issue that arises in religious communities is the focus on just one particular type of family: one with parents (usually heterosexual) and children (Wilcox, Chaves, & Franz, 2004). Since many families fit outside of that religious norm, these families are starting to leave those religious communities for other religious communities, or leave overall. Another issue is that when people begin a relationship, it might not fit the sacred structure of the ideal

49

family by the standards of the religious community (Mahoney, Paragament, Murray-Swank, & Murray-Swank, 2003). A partnership retrospectively putting a religious structure on the relationship at a later date could doom the relationship. These types of issues, which invoke a different path than the one set out by the religious community, tend to alienate new families from their religious communities.

This leads to the next part of this section on interfaith families and the nature of their relationships, as well as the obvious issue of fitting into their religious communities.

Interfaith Families

The research on interfaith families is sparse, but there has been research into this family group. This part of communication in interfaith families is the central focus of this project combined with the research on narratives.

Interfaith families are becoming a more prevalent family type (Kalmijn, 1998). So how is an interfaith family defined? Most people imagine an interfaith family as being between two distinct religions, like Christianity and Judaism, but it also includes denominations of the same faith, such as Catholic and Protestant (Chinitz & Brown, 2001; Curtis & Ellison, 2002; Hughes & Dickson, 2006). These classifications actually broaden the idea of interfaith family and affect more people than generally thought on the topic. Therefore, what creates an interfaith family?

There are a few reasons explaining the increase in interfaith marriage. One is that the size of a religious group and the size of the general population can cause more interfaith marriages, depending on corresponding factors like race or socioeconomic status (Blau, 1977; Davidson & Widman, 2002). Another factor is that some people are looking for adventure or love, or they have other individual motivations (Racin & Dein,

2010). These two factors are the leading reasons for the emergence of interfaith families. The next portion of this work provides examples of the research put forward to describe the inner workings of an interfaith family.

A good place to start the conversation on communication in an interfaith family is religiosity. Religiosity is the description of socialization of values, beliefs, rearing of children, traditions, and ceremonial rituals that create religious identity (Curtis & Ellison, 2002; Edgell, 2005; Leonard, 2009). Keeping this in mind, most of the research on the interfaith family describes the hardships of the relationship. Communication between the parents in the family can create a host of problems. For example, the lack of faith similarity can create distress in the family because of arguments (Chinitz & Brown, 2001; Eaton, 1994; McAloney, 2012). In addition, the lack of spiritual cohesion can have an impact on the theology or scripture or even religious activities (Chinitz & Brown, 2001; Curtis & Ellison, 2002, Hughes & Dickson, 2006). There is also the chance that a couple will assign blame to the cultural differences between the faiths (Eaton, 1994; McGoldrick, 1982). This can lead to gender roles becoming an issue because of religious culture (Colaner, 2009). All of these issues can lead to higher divorce rates in interfaith marriages (Chinitz & Brown, 2001). They can also lead to counseling for the couples in an attempt to try to work out these differences (Beckerman & Shepard, 2002).

The extended family also can cause problems for the interfaith couple. If the family supports the interfaith union, it usually leads to a decrease in conflict in the couple; however, if the extended family disapproves of the relationship, it will increase the level of conflict in the couple (Chinitz & Brown, 2001). Other issues are the historical nature of religions rejecting interfaith marriages, parents feeling as though an interfaith

51

marriage is a rejection of their faith, and the idea that children are less likely to be a part of the same religious community as the extended family (Walsh, 2010). Another issue is family solidarity during religious practices or activities (Eaton, 1994). This can include the family celebrating a first communion and the extended family being concerned that the interfaith family does not know how to participate in the life event. These issues, plus the issues from interfaith marriage conflict, make the creation of an interfaith family sound like a hard proposition, but there is some positive research in this area.

Successful interfaith marriages often rely on open communication about religious differences and also an active interest in the other partner's religious identity (Reiter & Gee, 2008). In addition, navigating holidays and traditions can be easier in interfaith marriages because the couple rarely has to compete with other holidays (Horowitz, 1999. However, if the interfaith couple are members of two different Christian denominations, it could cause more of a problem because they would have to split time with family.

The next part of interfaith research focuses on the children in these families. Historically, most families experienced the same coming-of-age process where the children entered adulthood in the same religion (Wilson & Sandomirsky, 1991). However, in recent years, more families have become more individualist with respect to their faiths (Arnett & Jensen, 2002). This means that more people are connecting different religious tenets with their own to create a more specific connection to religion. This could be like connecting Christian values to those of Buddhism (Arnett & Jensen, 2002). The evolution of these religious and family practices coincides with the interfaith family.

The children in interfaith families are predisposed to different religions from an early age. Many of them may choose the religion of the mother because, in traditional cases, the mother is more involved with the child (Nelsen, 1990). This does not mean that a child cannot choose the other religion, because that also occurs. A significant feature of interfaith families is that the religious socialization occurring in the family creates an environment where the child can incorporate the practices and ideologies of both faiths into his or her identity (Peterson, 1986). This also holds for religious communication. The parents in an interfaith family have an easier time navigating the religious changes in their children as the children age (Colaner, Soliz, & Nelson, 2014). The reason for this is that the family is practices a version of religious plurality, which accommodates different views on faith, even if those views change.

The last part of interfaith families and communication is their connection to religious pluralism. In many cases, interfaith families can help bridge the attitudes of different religions because of their navigation of such issues in the family (Soliz & Rittenour, 2012). Interfaith families can also traverse the varying religious traditions during the holidays in a way that respects the diversity of those many traditions (Brown & Brown, 2011). This seems to go against the idea of a "war on Christmas." Interfaith families have the tendency not to diminish religious practices, instead elevating them and incorporating them into the family culture (Eaton, 1994). All of these examples can help people navigate religious pluralism.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, there is only a little bit of research on interfaith family communication. There are two existing interfaith family areas with little research. One area is trying to understand the nature of interfaith families (Marks,

2006). The other is focusing on the family and relational communication processes that manage the differences in interfaith families (Hughes & Dickson, 2005). Other areas not associated with negative differences or other problems arising in interfaith marriages are not mentioned.

Family Communication in Television

The last section of Chapter 3 looks at the impact television has on our understanding of family communication. The following research and literature reflect some of the work in family communication that pushes toward a better understanding of the impact of television on the family. This entire section focuses specifically on the medium of television. I am including this research here in Chapter 3 because it belongs with the other material on family communication. However, I will be addressing multifaith narratives as represented by popular culture in Chapter 7. At that time, I will also introduce some other literature on popular culture, as well as discuss the emergence of a multifaith narrative through a brief discussion of the history of Hollywood.

I will be looking at family communication in television, but I would first like to explore some examples of media effects on the family. Media have many different effects on the family, including everything from repairing a romantic relationship to affecting relationships among siblings to influencing how children and parents use media together (Coyne, Bushman, & Nathanson, 2012). Media effects on family can extend to the cable news reporting on missing people. Sarah Stillman (2007), in her essay "'The Missing White Girl Syndrome': Disappeared Women and Media Activism," describes the news portrayals of white girls gone missing. She explains the "missing white girl syndrome" as follows:

Round-the-clock coverage of disappeared young females who qualify as 'damsels

in distress' by race, class, and other relevant social variables. Cable news serves

up images and anecdotes of the victims; media-aware lawyers and pop

psychologists debate possible suspects on radio talk shows; and the national

public participates in the trauma of 'every parent's worst nightmare' - building

memorial websites, for example, or erecting shrines of flowers and stuffed

animals to the young women and girls at the centre of the media flurry. (p. 492)

Her description serves as a warning concerning the amount of saturation a television

news story can have on the family. Such media effects on the family can cause stress and

even paranoia for some parents.

Another example of media effects comes from an article written by Majorie Heins

(2007), who discusses research that critiques the influence of media on families, but then

examines research that negates these original critiques. She states the following:

The inability of social science to quantify the impact of art or entertainment

obviously does not preclude the existence of a wide range of psychological and

behavioral effects, or obviate the need, in a democratic society, for interpretation

and critique of media messages. (p. 253)

Her article helps to articulate the position that media can have an effect on the family, but

that this effect might not always be measurable and may take the shape of more of a

critique than a quantifiable study.

The last example of media effects on the family focuses on voyeurism. Mark

Andrejevic (2009) examines the role of voyeurism in reality television. His main

audience is the viewer, which can be anyone in the family or the whole family.

Andrejevic (2009) explains reality television with a quote from media historian Neal Gabler. Gabler states "Reality television is "above all . . . about old-fashioned voyeurism—providing us the entertainment of seeing something and imagining something that television had never allowed us to see or imagine" (Andrejevic, 2009, p. 321). However, Andrejevic (2009) considers this to be a superficial definition of voyeurism in television. Therefore, he offers his own description:

> …as the invocation of voyeurism suggests, there is pleasure to be taken in the act of seeing behind the scenes, there is also a certain pleasure to be derived from the performance of the savvy subject—the one who isn't taken in by the performance of others, who insists for all to see that he or she "gets it." (Andrejevic, 2009, p. 322)

The voyeuristic act takes a turn because it not only allows the viewer a glimpse behind the curtain but also allows him or her to be in on the actions of the television show participants.

Popular culture, especially when viewed through the lens of television, can have a major influence on the audience's learning of sociocultural information (Dates & Stroman, 2001; Glenn, 2013; Signorielli, 2009). The next few paragraphs will look at the power of television (as a medium for popular culture) to influence society's understanding of itself.

As mentioned previously, with Andrejevic (2009), one aspect of television is the voyeuristic nature of the medium. Television gives the audience an opportunity to glimpse the life of another family (Brooks, 2005). This is true of situational comedies and dramas, which are usually fictitious, or the newer reality television programs. Another

part of voyeurism is the power of the images on television to bring together different people in the audience, while also creating the possibility of social division (Matabane & Merritt, 1996). A good example is the television show *Modern Family*. The show follows three distinct families. One is multigenerational (Jay and Gloria), the second is a regular nuclear family (Phil and Claire), and the last one is a family with same-sex parents (Mitch and Cam) and an adopted Vietnamese baby. The families are related through the Pritchett side of the family, so they are always interacting. The show was considered groundbreaking, but it did cause controversy because it showcased a same-sex couple. This created some social division amongst the audience. However, it also brought together a larger segment of the viewership. The reason this example connects to voyeurism is because it describes the emergence of the newer version of family. This for many people is a reflection of their own family; for others, it is a glimpse at a different kind of family. This particular example of a family resonated with different people because it included a same-sex couple and family. The ability to show these three families communicating and getting along illustrated an experience for many families in the early 21st century.

The other feature of television is that it can sometimes have a realistic portrayal of lived experiences (Bryant & Bryant, 2006; Robinson & Skill, 2001; Signorelli & Morgan, 2001). During much of the history of television, families followed a traditional pattern (father, mother, children). However, in the 1990s, television started to add other elements to the family; eventually, by the 2000s, shows started to deviate from the traditional family. This is why television becomes a powerful learning tool and viewers make sure to tune in to watch their favorite programs (Branch, Wilson, & Agnew, 2013).

This research is an important part of understanding family communication. It is also significant to this project because one of the later chapters will examine the role of popular culture, especially the medium of television, in exhibiting multifaith families to audiences across the United States and world.

Conclusion

The purpose of Chapter 3 was to describe various theories and research used in the field of family communication. I focused on the five following topics: theoretical approaches to family communication, narrative research in family communication, intergenerational relationship communication, communication in interfaith families, and family communication in television. This represents just a snapshot of the literature in family communication. However, these topics will assist in situating this project within the family communication literature and, as mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, to apply certain aspects of it in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 4
MULTIFAITH FAMILY

This chapter explores the dynamics of a multifaith family through Fisher's narrative paradigm. I look specifically at coherence and fidelity, and this becomes a structure I carry through the next two chapters. This chapter also discusses the family in two sections: parents and children. Furthermore, the chapter includes three different categories of participation in the narrative for the parents. These categories will become the typology for the rest of this project as well. Finally, I offer four different methods for family narrative and identity formation. The four theories are dialectical theory (located in Chapter 2), cognitive dissonance, double consciousness, and bi/multiracial theory. However, the first place to start is with the definition of family.

The definition of family is fluid, and there are many interpretations of family. Turner and West (2013) describe family as a set of relationships that are voluntary or involuntary. This a good place to start because it includes different interpretations of family and is general enough to be all-encompassing. Another view from Turner and West (2015) breaks down family in two different ways: One way uses different scholarly approaches that include conceptual, lens, social construction or discourse-dependent, laypeople definitions, and culture and social class (Turner & West, 2015), whereas another way to view family comes from typologies, which incorporate Kantor and Lehr's (1975) family types, Fitzpatrick's (1977) couple types, and demographic types (Turner & West, 2015). For this project, I am going to focus on the demographic types to explain the types of family, because these demographic types are the most familiar types of families that are being discussed in our field and society.

The demographic types of families are many: nuclear/biological, single parent, extended family households (this type includes family members beyond the nuclear family), stepfamilies/blended families, gay- and lesbian-headed families (same-sex families), and cohabitating couples (Turner & West, 2015). This is only a snapshot of the possible variations of families, but for the benefit of this project, it gives some parameters for the different interactions of a multifaith family in these various forms. This does not account for the subdivisions in each of these categories, like adoptive parents or bi/multiracial families, which will add another dimension to the concept of multifaith family for the project.

Family Narrative and Identity Formation

This section is going to explore four concepts related to the formation of a multifaith narrative: relational dialectics, cognitive dissonance, double consciousness, and bi/multiracial identity research. These concepts are important to the creation of a multifaith family and narrative. I am including them in this chapter because it examines the multifaith family.

Relational Dialectics

In Chapter 3, I mentioned dialectical theory as a part of family communication. I am going to explore this a little more in this section by looking at relational dialectics as put forth in Baxter and Montgomery's (1996) book *Relating: Dialogues & Dialectics*.

There are four main components of relational dialectics: contradiction, change, praxis, and totality (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Contradiction, the first component, is explained as "inherent in social life and not evidence of failure or inadequacy in a person or in a social system. In fact, contradictions are the basic 'drivers' of change, according to

a dialectical perspective" (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 7). The notion that a contradiction is a negative personal trait is not the meaning of a relational dialectic. Instead, contradictions account for the change in interpersonal relations. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) go on to say that contradictions "refer to the 'dynamic interplay between unified oppositions'" (p. 8). This brings about the question of what oppositions are. According to Baxter and Montgomery (1996), "two tendencies or features of a phenomenon are 'oppositions' if they are actively incompatible and mutually negate one another" (p. 8). Oppositions are important to contradiction because they are the contradictions. This then leads into the concepts of unified oppositions and dynamic interplay of oppositions (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). Unified oppositions are considered as both/and and, therefore, placed in dynamic interrelational situations, which creates a tension that brings about change.

The second component of relational dialectics is change. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) are straightforward when describing change as "the interplay of stability and flux" (p. 10). Change is seen in two different aspects of relational dialectics. The first part follows Aristotle's efficient cause and formal cause, and the second part is a debate between teleological or indeterminate change.

Aristotle's efficient cause refers to "[a] linear antecedent-consequent relation" (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 11). This basically means that A caused B. The formal cause is described as "the patterned relation among phenomena" (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 11). Formal cause explains how patterns and events flow together over time and are not always linear.

The other part of change is the teleological or indeterminate understanding of it. The teleological model of change follows the basic "thesis-antithesis-synthesis" pattern (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 12). The basic premise is that an idea has a contradictory idea, and to make a new idea, there needs to be a combination of both the idea and contradictory idea. Indeterminate change is "characterized by a repeating pattern [cyclical change] and/or a series of changes representing movement from one quantitative or qualitative state to another [linear]" (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 13). Baxter and Montgomery (1996) also state that this pattern is more of a "spiral" because it does not repeat and can include both highly abstracted and linear versions of change (p. 13).

The third component of relational dialectics is praxis. Baxter and Montgomery (1996) state "that people are at once actors and objects of their own actions, a quality that dialectical theorists have termed 'praxis'" (p. 13). They continue:

> People function as proactive actors who make communicative choices in how to function in their social world. Simultaneously, however, they become reactive objects, because their actions become reified in a variety of normative and institutionalized practices that establish the boundaries of subsequent communicative moves. (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 13)

Basically, praxis is the action of individuals to make decisions based on interactions from previous experiences or present experiences that will have an effect on future experiences.

The final component of relational dialectics is totality. Totality is "a way to think about the world as a process of relations or interdependencies" (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 15). It is important to note that totality in dialectics specifically looks at the

relations of contradictions (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996, p. 15). Contradictions are the focus of totality, and the goal is to study the numerous relationships and interactions between contradictions. This is what separates dialectic totality from other holistic versions of other concepts.

I am using relational dialectics to illustrate the creation of a multifaith family and narrative. This will help to explain the dyadic relationship of parents in a multifaith family and their ability to form a new narrative from two contradictory faiths. Relational dialectics and the following three concepts are going to help explain the complicated interactions of a multifaith family.

Cognitive Dissonance

Cognitive dissonance can play a role in family identity and personal identity in relation to a multifaith family. Leon Festinger (1957) first proposed the theory of cognitive dissonance. He describes cognitive dissonance as the attempt of the internal psychology of a person to stay in balance; therefore, this involves sometimes making adjustments in situations where the internal cognition is not met (Festinger, 1957). For a person to stay in balance, the person's psyche may have to create or downplay certain events, thus creating cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). There are three cognitions: consonant (equal), irrelevant (unrelated), and dissonant (inconsistent). These affect a person's psychology (Festinger, 1957). The dissonant aspect becomes the focus because it can influence a person's relation to the world around him or her. In this case, the magnitude of dissonance becomes a factor. If a person highly values the two different elements in the dissonant relationship, then there is a higher degree of dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

Another view on cognitive dissonance comes from Tavris and Aronson (2007).

Their work combines cognitive dissonance with self-justification and confirmation bias to

give a bird's-eye perspective on the ability of people to believe in unrealistic perceptions

of the their world. It is not only cognitive dissonance that traps people in a never-ending

loop. Also required is the ability of people to keep confirming these ideas and justifying

them to harden their belief in a falsity. For this project, the role of cognitive dissonance

will help to explain one method of creating family identity or personal identity in

multifaith families.

Double Consciousness

The term double consciousness comes from W.E.B. Du Bois's (1903) *The Soul of*

Black Folks. He describes the black experience in America as having two souls: one of a

black man (or woman) and the other of being an American (Du Bois, 1903). Both of

these souls are in conflict with the other because one is viewed through the prism of the

white majority, whereas the black individual is at the same time trying to find a pathway

to incorporate the two souls (Du Bois, 1903). Therefore, this double consciousness is the

existence of living in two worlds simultaneously. Du Bois (1903) describes this struggle,

and he emphasizes the internal conflict between the white side and the black side. He

goes as far as explaining that the white side will flat out dismiss the black side because it

sees it as inferior (Du Bois, 1903).

For this project, I am including double consciousness because it explains the

feeling of belonging to two distinct and separate cultures. This idea applies to the identity

of multifaith families and individuals. I am thinking of an example where a child with

parents who are Christian and Hindu spends time with his or her Christian grandparents,

and the grandparents are dismissive of the Hindu side of the family because they are not part of the Abrahamic tradition. The term double consciousness is closely associated with the black experience in the United States, and it is vital to acknowledge this fact as not to appropriate the original intent of the term.

Bi/Multiracial Children

This next section will explore the family communication literature pertaining to bi/multiracial children. The reason for including this information in this project is because it parallels the parent–child relationship in multifaith families. Since faith is closely tied to both ethnicity and culture, it helps to discuss the identity of bi/multiracial children; some of these children may self-identity as multifaith. The parents may not only share a different racial identification but also have dissimilar faiths. I would also like to include a historical perspective, which examines racial overtones applied to faith communities. A good example is from Michael Monahan's (2011) work *The Creolizing Subject: Race, Reason, and the Politics of Purity*. One of Monahan's chapters addresses the Irish as indentured servants in Barbados. In this chapter, he describes that the Irish were treated so poorly to the point that they were held in similar standing as the African slaves. Monahan (2011) continues:

> In addition to the perceived racial difference between the Irish and the English, there were religious differences. The English generally did not view Catholics as proper or true Christians by a distinction that further fueled their contempt for Ireland and the Irish. (pp. 58-59)

This passage highlights the emphasis not only on the ethnic division but also on the religious difference between the English and the Irish. Monahan (2011) goes on to quote

Hilary Beckles, a Barbadian historian, who says that "John Scott, a seventeenth-century English adventurer, wrote of the Irish in Barbados that they were 'derided by the negroes, and branded with the epithet of 'white slaves''" (p. 60). Monahan is emphasizing the movement of the English to describe the Irish as a racial group. This historical perspective can assist in understanding that racial qualities were historically applied to certain religious groups. The next section will look at the research pertaining to bi/multiracial families.

Two places to examine the relationship between parent and child in bi/multiracial families in the bi/multiracial literature are the works of Brooks (2007) and Bratter and Heard (2009). These two projects highlight the inner workings of a bi/multiracial family and provide a context for the literature that focuses on this subject.

Brooks (2007) looks at the parent–child relationship in a bi/multiracial family through four parenting styles: protector, supporter, aggressor, and dismissive. These variations offer a different glimpse into the family interactions. Brooks (2007) explains that a child in a bi/multiracial family who receives positive messages about his or her bi/multiracial identity will have a positive self-perception. Furthermore, the inverse is true. A child receiving negative messages will have a negative perception of his or her identity in society (Brooks, 2007). The distinction is important because it connects to the four distinct styles of parenting. The protector parent has a positive view of the child's bi/multiracial identity while also recognizing the hurdles of discrimination the child will face in society (Brooks, 2007). The supporter parent takes a positive view of the child's bi/multiracial identity, but in this case, the parent lets the child explore this identity on his or her own (Brooks, 2007). This can lead to the child having conflicting ideas about his

or her identity because society may try to label the child. Furthermore, this can create negative feelings about the child's identity and could fracture the parent–child bond (Brooks, 2007). The aggressor parent expects the child to encounter different forms of discrimination and will try to prepare the child for these conflicts. In doing so, the child will expect the worst of society and will always encounter these issues in a defensive manner. This can lead to negative feelings of identity for bi/multiracial children. The dismissive parent dismisses the idea that there are significant issues with race in society that the child will face. Ultimately, this makes the child take on a parental role of developing his or her identity, and it leaves the child underprepared for the interactions that he or she will face in society about his or her bi/multiracial identity (Brooks, 2007).

Bratter and Heard (2009) also found four categories of parental involvement in their study on socialization of bi/multiracial children; these are quantity of involvement, quality of parental involvement, educational involvement, and social control. Quantity of involvement deals with the amount of time that the parent spends with the child, and quality of involvement relates to the degree of interaction on an emotional level. Educational involvement looks at the expectations for academic success for the child. This, coupled with parental engagement with the child, leads to challenging the racial stereotypes associated with education and academic achievement. Social control relates to the parents' oversight of the child's behavior (Bratter & Heard, 2009).

There are two more projects I would like to highlight in this section. The first is from Miller and Miller (1990). Their work focuses on ethnic socialization, or the idea of a communication of an ethnic identity, which is critical to a minority agenda. A minority agenda makes the child aware of the discrimination that occurs in society. This

socialization by the parents helps the child become aware of lived experiences and the ability to survive them (Miller & Miller, 1990).

The other work is from Radina and Cooney (2000). It stresses the importance of communication as a vital factor in identity formation for bi/multiracial children (Radina & Cooney, 2000). They go on to explain the need for parents in a bi/multiracial family to adopt multiple strategies for dealing with societal discrimination, and they emphasize contact and emotional support/closeness as a method of navigating prejudice. The reasoning is that bi/multiracial adolescents will face challenges different than those of other adolescents; supportive relationships with their parents will help them address these challenges.

As I stated at the beginning of this section, bi/multiracial family communication literature helps to contextualize multifaith identity because it explores parent–child challenges facing a family that incorporates different identities that are sometimes deemed incompatible by society. This literature can point to methods of managing the differences that are both positive and negative. Therefore, it should be included in this project.

I included these four theories (dialectics, cognitive dissonance, double consciousness, and bi/multiracial research) because I will be using them in the sections on parents and children in a multifaith family. These theories play a role in describing the formation of the multifaith narrative and convey some understanding of a multifaith identity. This research, plus the literature from my previous two chapters, is going to underpin my discussion of multifaith families and multifaith narrative.

Multifaith Family Typology

In this section, I am putting forth a typology for multifaith families where the foundation is based on the faith relationship of the parental dyad. Communication about their faith and how they want to express their faith in a family environment is the defining characteristic of this typology. For the well-being of this project, I am trying to explain the expression side of this communication because it moves the conversation from interfaith dialogue to a multifaith narrative. Therefore, this typology is the scaffolding for better understanding the coherence and fidelity of multifaith families. I will be using this structure throughout the remaining chapters of this project because it highlights not just the parental side of communication but will also involve the children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and godparents. For example, later in this chapter, the typology addresses the child's perspective in the parent–child dyad, and in the next chapter, it examines the communication between the grandparent and parent (parent–child) and the grandparent and grandchild.

The first type of multifaith family is constructed with a Passive/Passive parental dyad. This formation contains parents who do not actively engage their faith narrative. There is a scale of engagement ranging from low to high in all of these types, because the dyads all contain some nuance related to the communication of the parents. For example, a Passive parent could not talk about his or her faith or not have a faith, which would fall on the low end of the scale; the higher end of the spectrum would involve a parent telling stories about his or her family or faith upbringing. However, there is a dividing line between Passive and Active. This is the actual engagement of faith narrative by participating in the rituals, traditions, or holidays of the parent's respective faith.

Therefore, a Passive parent can still talk about his or her faith, race, ethnicity, family history, ancestors, or other aspects connecting back to faith without still meeting the designation of Active. This denotation becomes a bigger factor in the next two typologies of Passive/Active and Active/Active.

Passive/Active multifaith families have one Passive parent and one Active parent. The difference between the two parents is the active engagement of a faith narrative by one of the parents. The Active parent is going to actively express his or her faith in the family, and this leads to different outcomes for a multifaith family. I will try to address these throughout the rest of this project. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, there is a scale for Active parents. The low end would have a parent celebrating only the holidays of his or her faith, while on the higher end would be a parent going to services, being an active member of his or her faith community, and taking part in traditions and holidays. Yet, as I mentioned, these different levels add numerous dimensions to all of these typologies. This project cannot take into account every variation, but it will attempt to cover the dyads in regard to the simple designations.

The final type is the Active/Active parental dyad. This dyad offers the highest number of variations because it contains two parents actively engaging in their faith narrative. The communication between these two parents about their faith can at worst cause negative issues for the family and even divorce and can at best create a very positive environment for a multifaith narrative to occur.

One last note for this section is that all of these typologies can lead to numerous variations of the multifaith family. These typologies do not dismiss a multifaith family, narrative, or identity but rather try to provide some structure to a complicated issue in

70

order to better understand all of the variables creating a multifaith family, narrative, or identity.

Coherence

In Chapter 2 of this project, Fisher (1987) was noted as describing narrative coherence as the structure of the narrative and the ability for it to make sense within the structures of society. I am using coherence as an ongoing part of this project because the narrative probability (coherence) is continually being tested by the factors outside of the family. Therefore, the frequent sense-making of the multifaith narrative needs some sort of explication. This is the reason that I describe communication and identity formation in this section.

The coherence of the narrative from the vantage point of the parents and the children will be explored. The purpose is to understand the dynamics of the narrative within the family and the manner in which the narrative is presented and understood by the family members. Coherence will also help describe the convergence of these narratives and the distinctness of the new multifaith narrative for the family.

Parents

According to Curtis and Ellison (2002), parents are the drivers of the different faith narratives within the family. In time, children may find their own narratives and bring them into the family in a reversal of this top-down effect. However, it is important to start with the usual method of parents including their faith narratives during the formation and lifespan of the family.

The assumption of this project is that the parents in a multifaith family bring their own faith narratives to the family. Most of the project is from the perspective of two

singular faith persons. However, the same concept would apply to a multifaith person who partners with another multifaith person or a person of singular faith.

The starting point of coherence for a multifaith family is described in two ways. The first way is the coherence of the original faith narrative, and the second is the new multifaith narrative. It is essential to first examine the original faith narrative. For example, the faiths of Christianity and Islam are accepted by a large amount of people within the world. There are many subsets of these larger faiths, and this needs to be taken into account when examining family and community. It is also important to note that ethnicity and culture play a role in faith. For example, Irish Catholics and Italian Catholics understand and express their faith in different ways. There is a general connection because they are both Roman Catholic, but I would be remiss if I described them as being exactly the same faith.

The second part of coherence deals with the more complicated multifaith narrative. The reason it is complex is because the narrative takes two distinct narratives and creates a multifaith narrative. This can result in some questions and even friction with the greater society. The combination of the two narratives can make sense to the family (the parents and children). Yet, as Mahoney et al. (2003) explains, new definitions of family may not fit with the religious community's ideal standard of family. Therefore, the multifaith narrative, or the essence of belonging to two different faiths, can make other people question the validity of the narrative. The best way to explain this is to describe the manner in which the different narratives come together, as well as the children's interaction with this multifaith narrative.

At this time, I am going to apply the three typologies to coherence. These typologies are fluid, depending on the action or inaction of the parent, but they describe the three main states of the parent's communication of his or her faith narratives to the family. The first is Passive/Passive, the second is Passive/Active, and the third is Active/Active. These typologies describe the interaction of each parent with his or her faith narrative, so Passive/Passive is a family where the two parents have a passive role with their engagement of their faith narratives.

Passive - Passive

The Passive/Passive category of a multifaith parent model puts forth the design that both parents in this family will passively engage their own faith narratives. The parents in a Passive/Passive family will both dismiss their faith narratives by not actively participating in the narrative. There are different ways in which this can occur. For example, the parents will not participate in the traditions of their faith. Referring back to the literature review in Chapter 3 of this project, Eaton (1994) explains that traditions are the active engagement of a faith narrative. These are the performative acts that allow for people to make a connection and play out the important aspects of the faith (Eaton, 1994). A person who is passive will not take part in these different actions. For example, if a person who identifies as part of the Christian narrative does not take part in Easter traditions or Christmas traditions, this would be considered passive. He or she is not participating in different traditions of the faith. This can range from not putting up Christmas decorations to not attending church on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. I explained in the typology section that there is a scale that designates if a person strongly

or weakly fits in the category of passive or active. For someone to be considered passive, he or she must not participate in any faith-based traditions or rituals.

As mentioned in Chapter 3 of this project, Curtis and Ellison (2002), Edgell (2005), and Leonard (2009) agree that religiosity (religious orientation and involvement) explains the socialization of religious values for the family and children. The traditions and rituals are all part of a narrative. However, the smaller stories located within the narrative also play a central role in explaining the faith narrative. For example, Biblical stories, like those of David and Goliath or Jesus healing the lepers, can reinforce a Christian narrative. It can also be the stories that are culturally attached to particular faiths. These stories can be linked to distinct geographical differences, different languages, or any other cultural component. A good example of this may be observed in the differences between Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews. The differences between these two groups are portrayed in the stories they will pass on to their children and children's children.

A parent who does not actively participate in storytelling would be passive. However, in these cases, it is much different because most people will tell stories of their family histories. As such, it is very difficult for a person to never tell a story about his or her faith through some kind of tale. It can happen but is not likely because storytelling is the most prominent method for telling about our own life and family sagas. Therefore, this is usually an ongoing activity for most people.

So how can something like storytelling mean that a parent is still being passive? A person is still being passive because he or she is not actively participating in both storytelling and the traditions of the faith. A person/parent who is doing both will be

considered an active participant in his or her faith. This also has varying degrees of engagement, but those will be covered in the following sections. For this project, a passive person must not participate in either storytelling or in the active participation of traditions.

What does this mean, and how does it work? The first question is simple. A Passive/Passive parent structure does not actively promote a faith narrative. The parents are not performing traditions and are not actively telling stories about their faith to their family.

The other answer to the first question is that a Passive/Passive situation is not one of the prominent forms of a multifaith parental structure. It is actually the least probable of all three modalities. However, it needs to be discussed because this pairing can still occur. Furthermore, this mode does not mean that a family cannot be a multifaith family. The difference is that the stories of the family and the narratives of their ancestors tend to drive the multifaith narrative, and this will create a different multifaith narrative for that particular family. As stated earlier, every multifaith family has a different narrative. Nevertheless, all of these families will share some common aspects, which are being unpacked in this project.

The multifaith narrative in a Passive/Passive setting is created with the stories from the parents. There are no active traditions being observed, and the only way that a faith-based narrative is engaged is through storytelling. As mentioned previously, the stories about family members and those parents' ancestors will play a role in developing some version of a multifaith narrative. However, in these cases, it becomes an environment of stories passed to the children. These stories permeate the family

environment, but the active engagement of these stories does not come to exist. Instead, these stories swirl around and give some meaning to the existence of different faiths, but not the active engagement of the parents.

There is a caveat to the formulation of a multifaith narrative in a Passive/Passive situation. Going back to Arnett and Jensen (2002), as mentioned in Chapter 3 of this project, as children age into adults, they can pick up other religious beliefs that differ from those of their childhood. However, the opposite can exist. If children know about certain faith narratives but do not participate in them, they can expand their own faith narratives by exploring these stories as they get older. They can then bring these different narratives into the family. The extended family, like grandparents, aunts, and uncles, can also play a role in expanding upon the stories if they are present in the child's life. This phenomenon will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter. Parents can at any time become active participants in their faith narratives. There is no limitation to a parent becoming more involved with his or her faith and thus changing his or her categorization from passive to active.

Passive - Active

The second category is Passive/Active. In this typology, there is one parent who is passive and the other parent is active. There are a couple of ways in which this typology can operate, and these will be discussed in this section. Furthermore, this is a more prevalent variation of a multifaith partnership and formation of a multifaith narrative within the family. Unlike Passive/Passive and Active/Active, this variation will make the most sense to people in the community outside of the family because it seems to create a single faith narrative. However, this is not always the case. Rather, there is still a creation

76

of a multifaith narrative that will be tested against the community. This project will discuss this more in Chapter 5.

There are a couple distinctions to be made in describing Passive/Active parents. The first is the original idea of the dichotomy of the relationship with their faith narratives. Another is a newer idea that opens up the creation of a multifaith narrative based upon some of the ideas originally stated in the Passive/Passive section of this chapter.

Classic Version of Passive - Active

The classic model of the Passive/Active narrative formation involves one parent who is active in raising the child (or children) in his or her faith. This would explain the category Passive/Active since one parent is actively engaging in the faith narrative and the other parent is being passive toward it. The faith narrative of one parent becomes the focus of the communication between the parent and child in respect to faith formation. For example, a Christian mother will pass down the stories of the faith, plus any cultural components tied to it, to the children. This mother will also take part in the traditions of the faith, like celebrating holidays, going to church, and participating in baptism, confirmation, or any other traditions associated with the faith. The other parent does not actively engage his or her faith, so the passive parent's faith becomes a background part of the family narrative.

The active participation of one parent makes total sense from an outside perspective because the children are only knowing and participating in one faith narrative like most individuals in society. It almost replicates a situation where there are two parents who are Roman Catholic and they are passing their faith narrative to their

children, actively engaging in storytelling and the traditions associated with the faith. However, this does not take into account the other parent's faith (especially if it is different from the other parent's). This is why the next perspective of a Passive/Active mode should be considered with respect to creating a multifaith narrative.

Reimagining of Passive - Active

The other version of a Passive/Active multifaith narrative goes against the idea that it is just one parent offering a faith narrative to the family. Rather, the passiveness of the second parent does not mean that there is no storytelling or retelling of any part of a faith narrative. This was mentioned in a previous section on Passive/Passive parent structures. The second parent usually brings some mention of his or her faith or lack of faith to the family. It is extremely rare for a parent not to discuss any part of his or her faith narrative, because it is tied to many different parts of culture for many different groups. This even applies to someone who converts to the faith of his or her partner or is non-religious. The act of relinquishing faith does not totally erase the faith background of a person. Therefore, there is always going to be an additional faith narrative that must coexist along with the one actively being enacted in the family.

The reimagined version dispenses with the idea of a singular faith narrative being formulated in the family. This allows for both faith narratives to exist within the family and to influence the children and both parents. The structure in this version of a Passive/Active family has one parent actively engaging the narrative and sharing the stories and culture, while the other parent does not participate in the traditions of his or her own faith but can tell stories that propagate an aspect of his or her own faith narrative to the rest of the family.

The family becomes more aware of the faith narratives in this parental situation. The reason for this is because the one parent who is actively taking part in his or her traditions gets the children to also take part in those traditions. These rituals can be juxtaposed against the stories from the other parent about his or her own faith, and there is a new awareness of two different faiths because this differentiation is something that is a part of the family. It is not a singular faith contrasted with an outside faith. In this situation, the other faith feels alien. However, the new family environment of a Passive/Active family does not make two separate faiths feel unfamiliar. These faiths are becoming an aspect of the family narrative and the family members.

Active - Active

The last category of parent structure is Active/Active. This situation is similar to Passive/Active in that it is a more prevalent version. The distinction in this case is that both parents are taking an active role in their faith narratives. The parents are engaging these narratives with their family. The first part of this section will discuss the communicative identify formation that is required for an Active/Active family to exist. The second part will explore examples of a working Active/Active parent structure.

Formation of a Multifaith Narrative

The formation of a multifaith narrative sets the Active/Active parents apart from the previous two typologies. In this case, the parents are forging an identity and narrative set in the two faiths. Within the first two typologies, there are some characteristics of a multifaith narrative, but with this particular typology, there must be some method for combining the two faiths in a workable family relationship and narrative. I am going back

to the beginning of this chapter, where I discussed family narrative and identity to help

explain the possible methods for a multifaith narrative to form in a family.

The first approach can be the dialectical, as noted by Baxter (2004) and as

discussed in Chapter 3. Her understanding of dialectics hinges on the contradictions and

the totality of dialectical interactions. All relationships will have a contradiction like

openness and privacy, and these contradictions will affect the totality of the relationship,

meaning that they cannot exist on their own terms. Therefore, in the understanding of a

multifaith family and narrative, the two contradicting faiths exist in an interdependent

relationship because of the parents. The two faiths are connected because of the relational

dynamic of the parents. There is not a negation of one of the faiths because of the other,

thus allowing a space for the two faiths to exist in relation to the other.

The next method is of cognitive dissonance. Referring back to the beginning of

this chapter and Festinger (1957), cognitive dissonance focuses on the ability of a

person's psyche to dismiss the contradictions in two different ideas because of the high

emotional attachment to the two subjects. In this case, parents in a multifaith family use

cognitive dissonance to dismiss the incompatibilities of the two faiths, thus making the

relationship and multifaith narrative work for the family. The dismissal of the contrary

beliefs means that the parents usually focus on the similarities of the faith, making it

much easier for the family to adopt both as part of the family narrative.

The final approach comes from research on bi/multiracial families. At the

beginning of this chapter, I reviewed literature from Brooks (2007), Bratter and Heard

(2009), Miller and Miller (1990), and Radina and Cooney (2000). A common thread in

this literature is the active communication of the racial or ethnic identities of the parents

to the children. The communication better prepares the children for discrimination or the challenges of fitting into society. In this case, parents recognize that there is a difference between race and ethnicity, and instead of promoting one over the other, the parents explain the narratives affecting both cultures. This project recognizes the distinctions of this literature because it is dealing with the significant impact of race and racism in the world. Yet, there are some similarities, and the study of multifaith families should use this literature because there are some parallels, especially with anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and other religious discrimination. The narratives surrounding both faiths are told to the children, and the idea is for the child and family to understand the unique challenges they might face in society.

The next part of the Active/Active parent section focuses on the examples and situations facing the family. These are used to help explain the key themes that an Active/Active family will face.

Explication of Active - Active

What separates Active/Active from the other two typologies is the active participation in traditions by both parents. The parents will share and take part in the traditions, thus modeling them for the children. An example is a Christian parent celebrating Christmas by putting up a Christmas tree and going to church, while his or her Jewish partner celebrates Chanukah by lighting the menorah and going to synagogue. This usually occurs during the same time of year, and it can be quite the hectic schedule. A Christmas-oriented example is a Methodist parent taking part in his or her specific traditions, while the Catholic partner adds his or her own traditions to the Christmas celebration. Both of these examples have both parents actively partaking in their faith

81

narratives. These actions help reinforce the narratives and will ultimately create a multifaith environment for the family.

There are also the storytelling aspects of an Active/Active partnership. Both parents will include stories about their faiths and the culture attached to them. These stories can range from the differences between a Hindu story and a Muslim story to the differences between northern and southern Italians and the interactions of their faith stories. Having more stories will create a little bit of chaos, but at the same time will create a much richer multifaith narrative. This is kind of like making a perfect beef bourguignon with layers of flavor in the dish.

Both parents are also participants in the other's faith. A unique quality of an Active/Active parental structure is the chance of the other partner to actually actively participate in the other faith narrative. This may be because he or she would like to be supportive of the person and celebrate traditions with his or her partner. This does not necessarily make the partner forgo his or her original faith narrative. However, it does give him or her the opportunity to experience and take part in faith narrative other than his or her own. A good example is of someone celebrating the Passover Seder with his or her partner despite not being Jewish. This person can still participate in the meal and be a part of this narrative (it is important to note that there are varying degrees of participation, depending on the family, which will be discussed in the next chapter). There can also be reciprocity, and the Jewish partner can help with an Easter egg hunt if he or she has a Christian partner and that is among one of the partner's traditions.

In some situations, the Active/Active parents can start to believe in a multifaith narrative because of their scenario. This is still a bit different from the children in these

families, but there can be a mutual affection for this new multifaith narrative because of the stories being told and the taking part in the traditions of the respective faiths. Now, why is either version possible? It can be because of inclusionary practices of the faith narratives.

Inclusion is a big part of a multifaith family, and this does occur in both versions of Passive/Active and Active/Active parents. It does not happen consistently with every multifaith family, but for many of these families, this is a common occurrence. All faith narratives have stories of inclusion (and exclusion). One of the key messages of Christianity is the inclusion of all people who will accept Jesus Christ as their messiah. That tenet produces many different strings of inclusion within the narrative. However, it can also be exclusive, depending on the people interpreting the message. A multifaith narrative is built on inclusion. Therefore, it is noticeable to see those families taking a more inclusionary approach to faith. The parents want the children to feel that they are a part of their faith, and inclusion is the best vehicle for it. It also works with extended family because grandparent, aunts, and uncles would like for their grandchildren, nieces, and nephews to be a part of their traditions and stories of faith.

The final part of the Active/Active section deals with the level of the involvement of the parents. The Active/Active parents sound like both parents are some of the most religious people in existence. That would be a false statement. Most of the time, parents are participating to varying degrees, from high to low. The key difference between Passive/Active and Active/Active is that parents in an Active/Active scenario are actively participating in the traditions of their faiths. Celebrating a holiday or taking part in another tradition reinforces the faith narrative by action. The faith narrative is not solely

based on the stories of the culture or the faith associated with it. A good description is a Christian who celebrates Christmas and Easter, but never goes to church. A person can simply participate in the traditions of their faith and still be an Active/Active parent.

Children

The children in a multifaith family will face certain challenges from the outside environment. These challenges mainly focus on the outsider questioning the coherence or fidelity of the multifaith narrative. The fidelity part of this will be discussed in the next couple of sections. Coherence becomes a major issue for many children with the formulation of a multifaith narrative.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the cognitive formation of the narrative derives from a dialectic (Baxter, 2004) or the imparting of a narrative, like in a bi/multiracial family (Bratter & Heard, 2009; Brooks, 2007). With this in mind, the first part of coherence for a multifaith narrative from a child's perspective is the narrative presented by the parents and learned in the day-to-day interactions of the family over an extended period of time. A multifaith faith narrative makes sense to a child because he or she grew up in this environment. The different typologies (Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active) all fit within the worldview and the faith narrative of children. The parents, sometimes actively or passively, passed their faith narratives to the children by creating an ecosystem where these different faith narratives could exist and be a part of the children's lives; this could also influence the other parent as well. The reason that a child does not find this problematic comes from him or her celebrating or hearing these stories and traditions. This tends to not make the child feel odd about these

separate faiths. Thus, it becomes a part of the child's own understanding of his or her multifaith narrative and also just faith in general.

Another part of the child's multifaith narrative involves holding two faith narratives together with cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Cognitive dissonance allows the child not to have to reconcile the differences between faiths. This becomes vital in instances where one faith narrative is completely different than its counterpart (e.g., if a child has a Muslim parent and a Christian parent). In this scenario, there are some similarities between the two faiths, but there are also be quite a few differences. There are other examples where there would be more compatible faith narratives. In this case, a child can have a Buddhist parent and a Christian parent, and there would tend not to be major differences that would clash against the other faith narrative. The last example comes from Christianity and the schism between Catholicism and Protestantism. This example illustrates a generally agreed-upon set of beliefs within the faith narratives. However, there are stories and traditions that are essential differences between the faiths. These cause tension and also different reactions, depending on other cultural stories connected to these faith narratives. Therefore, with some of these differences, cognitive dissonance allows a child to believe in both faiths without having to find a method to harmonize them. It is important to note these cases because such instances will affect the different multifaith narratives produced in the family. It bears repeating that all multifaith narratives are different. However, a multifaith narrative has a feeling of familiarity for all people who identify with it.

Children acquiring a multifaith narrative is best described as belonging to two separate worlds simultaneously. This concept comes from earlier in this chapter and Du

Bois's (1903) discussion of double consciousness. The children can belong to both faith narratives and, at the same, create a distinct multifaith narrative, which stems from Baxter (2004) and her notion of dialectics. This idea also evokes Homi Bhabha's (1994) concept of hybridity. Bhabha (1994) looks at identity from a postcolonial perspective and describes a person's identity as being between the colonizer and the colonized identity, which creates the postcolonial identity. This is the liminal space of the third identity, that of hybridity (Bhabha, 1994). The idea of being in two different spaces will create some issues with the world outside of the immediate family. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

The children in a multifaith family will experience something different from those in a traditional family with only a single faith narrative. Existing in their family's construction are two competing faith narratives. This can potentially be a confusing situation, as many people not in the family might think. However, not every narrative must exist in a presubscribed pattern. Therefore, there is a possibility (especially with faith narratives that draw from beliefs in something not bounded by rationality) for multiple narratives to exist in their own form or in another form combining the two or more original faiths.

The narratives in the family environment allow for the child to belong to both faith narratives, thus creating a multifaith narrative. As mentioned, this can take the form of an interweaving of the two (or more) faith narratives, or of a person feeling like his or her multifaith narratives allow for existence in both places at the same time. Both of these scenarios deal with the creation of a multifaith narrative from two (or more) of the traditional world faith narratives (this refers back to the idea that most parents come from

a traditional faith narrative, but as this moves into the future, you can see a multifaith person partnering with a single faith person or another multifaith person). The children will develop their own unique understandings of these faiths and their own multifaith narratives. Sometimes it might make them reject both, but as mentioned in the three parental typologies, these are still a part of a person because of the involvement of cultural storytelling fused with a faith narrative.

The different aspects of coherence from the child's perspective are the understandings of the faith narratives presented to him or her. It is a unique situation and one that is different from situations encountered in the traditional family. In time, this might become the normal experience for more children as the barriers between faith and family change in a more diverse world.

At this time, I would like to include the typology to give some examples of Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active situations for a child in each one of these categories.

Passive - Passive

The Passive/Passive child or children learns the narratives of the family through the parents (Baxter, 2004; Bratter & Heard, 2009). In a Passive/Passive family, the child will not learn more than the stories of faith from the parents. In these instances, the children will tend to have about the same religiosity as their parents. The interesting issue in this situation is that the child can become more connected to his or her faith because of interactions with extended family members. The communication between, for example, a grandparent and a grandchild can pass on narratives of the family's faith, or at least ignite

a spark in the child to seek out more information about his or her faith or even become active in that faith.

Passive - Active

The Passive/Active child differs from the Passive/Active child because one of his or her parents actively engages with him or her about their faith. An example is of a Christian parent taking the child to Sunday school to be more active in the community, while the Muslim parent does not take the child to a Mosque because he or she does not want to participate in his or her faith. The active engagement and involvement of one parent with the child communicates faith and can even lead to the prioritization of one faith over the other. However, as I explained in the previous sections of this chapter, this does not necessarily mean that a multifaith identity is not forged in the family. This is because a child can still access the other passive faith because of the stories the parent may tell about his or her upbringing. In addition, as mentioned, the extended family could communicate that faith narrative to the child.

Active - Active

The Active/Active child learns two communicated faiths. These faiths become a part of the child, and there are different ways that a child can figure out his or her own multifaith identity. I say this because in the Active/Active multifaith family, the parents may not be prioritizing one religion over the other. Therefore, as I mentioned before, the child adopts different mechanisms for creating a multifaith identity. This can happen because of a dialectical engagement with his or her parents, cognitive dissonance, learning about the uniqueness of their identity (bi/multiracial theory), and living by

recognizing that he or she has a double consciousness to his or her identity. These conceptualizations occur because the parents are communicating their shared faiths. In this type, a child's multifaith identity varies depending on the faith inputs. The child's multifaith identity is as unique as the faiths, plus the culture and ethnicities that color those faiths.

The next part of this chapter focuses on the fidelity of the multifaith family and narrative. It will discuss the impact of fidelity on the narrative and also include the typologies to explain the concept with some additional examples.

Fidelity

The next part of the narrative paradigm is fidelity. In Chapter 2 of this project, Fisher (1987) was described as explaining fidelity as the process of comparing the narrative to our beliefs and experiences and seeing if it will hold up against those qualities. There are a couple of ways to look at a multifaith narrative and fidelity. The best way to examine this is twofold: The first is the perspective of the parents and the children, which will be discussed in this chapter. The other perspective is of the general community and their understanding of a multifaith narrative. This part will be covered extensively in Chapter 6.

Parents

The parents in a multifaith family will face challenges with respect to fidelity. The coherence of a multifaith narrative can exist in a family and the variations discussed earlier in this chapter. The harder part is this narrative making sense in relation to the outside world. Therefore, a multifaith narrative's fidelity is going to constantly be

evaluated against the outside perspective and that of a single faith narrative, like any of the major ones in our societies.

The crux of the fidelity issue lies within the essence of our understanding of faith narratives. For many people, a person can only belong to one faith narrative; for a person to claim to be a part of two (or more) faiths seems foreign. Logically, many people perceive the differences between the faiths as incompatible. For these people or communities, there is not a possible mechanism to reconcile these differences. The issue then becomes a logical paradox for most people because these narratives, to them, cannot be held together in one's cognitive processes because of the contradictions this could create. It is also important to state that for many people the membership or belonging in their certain faith group is vital to their self-construction. It goes against their self-concept for someone to claim that he or she belongs to two different faiths. This calls to mind the days when kids would play tag or other games, and the rules would change; there would be a fight because the other kids would say it is not possible and that the rules are being made up as you go. This becomes the fidelity problem that the parents in a multifaith family will face.

The parents in a multifaith family will be tasked with sometimes explaining the inner workings of the family to outsiders because questions will arise about the nature of having children learn the narratives of two faiths. They will also face questions about their own parenting because people consider it strange or against tradition. Other people will express their feelings about the participation in such faith traditions and services because they perceive the other parent not to be a part of the group.

The multifaith narrative can be explained in different ways, depending on the mix and the way in which it was done. The parents will be the ones explaining this to others because it does sound unlike our traditional understanding of faith. The parents will have to be the ones to do it because their children will have a harder time at their young ages communicating the diversity of the narratives to non-family members. However, as the children age, they will be capable of putting these different faith narratives, experiences and understandings of them in context for those who do have questions.

In the next part, I am going to discuss narrative fidelity in relation to the family typologies. This is will help give some context to the discussion on multifaith families and their narrative fitting into society.

Passive - Passive

The fidelity in a Passive/Passive parental dyad follows a similar path as narrative coherence. There is not a concern for the narrative to fit in with the greater society because there is not really an active participation with the faith. The only situation where narrative fidelity would come into play would be if a parent or a child started to actively participate in his or her faith. If a parent starts to participate in his or her faith, then he or she will automatically move into the Passive/Active typology. If both parents start to participate, then they will move into the Active/Active typology. In the case of the child exploring his or her multifaith identity, then the parents can help the child by working with him or her to make sure to fit the narrative into society. Otherwise, the parents may not help, leaving the child to navigate it alone.

Passive - Active

The next typology addresses narrative fidelity of a Passive/Active situation. The parents may encounter situations with the active parent's faith community where they will have to explain the faith in which they are raising their child. In many of these instances, the family will say that the child is being raised in one particular faith. This allows them not to have to challenge the fidelity of the faith narrative because their faith community already accepts the singular faith narrative. The challenge for narrative fidelity comes when the parents feel as though the child can be a part of both religions and it is the child's choice to figure out how he or she wants to engage in the faiths. In this case, the parents may have to help with narrative fidelity because it may become difficult for their child to voice his or her decision.

Active - Active

The Active/Active parents will have to contend with narrative fidelity more than the previous two typologies. This is because both parents engage their faith, and this creates an environment foreign to most faith communities. Therefore, it will take some sort of explanation of the multifaith narrative to hopefully get the community to accept their narrative. In addition, the narrative fits into the worldview of the family. This means that the multifaith familial environment can exist without much testing of narrative fidelity because the family is creating this new narrative.

The next section will examine the role of narrative fidelity for the children in a multifaith family. Their experience of this narrative will be both similar and different to the experience of their parents.

Children

The children in multifaith families find themselves in a different position than the parents. The issue with narrative fidelity is one that they will experience for most of their lives because it is always an ongoing reconciliation with the outside world. The difference between the parents' and the children's interaction with fidelity comes from the genesis of the multifaith narrative.

The environment created by the parents in a multifaith family fosters a belief in the multifaith narrative by the children. The parents can intentionally do this, or not, but the fact remains that a family environment that values both faiths exists. The children grow up knowing the different stories and traditions coming from the parents and their respective single faith narratives. The combination of these narratives, which form the multifaith narrative, can occur differently in each child. There is not a clear defined path for the multifaith narrative to travel. There is no blueprint where each child learns the exact same multifaith narrative. Instead, the narrative adapts to the individual, and the individual is then tasked to (cognitively) explain it to himself or herself and to the non-family members that are asking the questions. This can be difficult for children because, as mentioned before, it is difficult to articulate this narrative to other people.

The hardest element of fidelity for children is the continued explanation of the multifaith narrative. This continuous action becomes a part of the multifaith narrative, the family, and the individual to illuminate non-family members on the topic. This is not to say that these people start to proselytize a message of the existence of multifaith people. Rather, once a person espouses a multifaith narrative, there are undoubtedly questions from people looking to understand the position or to contradict the possibility of it. The

ambiguity of the situation causes alarm for people not necessarily comfortable with such an idea. Children become adept at explaining their position because they are continuously coming into contact with the faith narratives of their counterparts. It helps them understand their own narratives as they move forward because there is an ongoing interaction.

As mentioned previously in this chapter, the contact between multifaith families or individuals creates an understanding of their own personal narratives. There will be differences because of the faiths that construct the multifaith narratives, but the similarities between the people tend to unite them. The understanding of parents trying to pass their faith narratives to their children and the manner in which it is done resonates with these people. Just the fact that they both understand the questions people ask of them about their multifaith narratives helps a great deal. The more people come in contact with other multifaith individuals, the more that it becomes clearer that the fidelity of the narrative can exist not just within the family, but also in society.

Passive - Passive

This category of Passive/Passive for children follows the same pattern as for the parents. The child will probably not have to worry about the fidelity of a multifaith narrative because he or she is not participating in any faith narratives. As I mentioned before, the only situation that changes this action is if the child adopts one, or both, of the faiths of his or her parents. In this situation, the child will then move into one of the other categories depending on if he or she adopted one faith or two.

Passive - Active

The next category in regard to narrative fidelity for the child is Passive/Active. The child will or will not have to fit the multifaith narrative into society. As I mentioned in the parental Passive/Active typology, the child in these circumstances usually picks up on the one faith and identifies with it. Therefore, the child then bypasses the explanation of his or her faith narrative. However, in the instance that the child picks up both faith narratives, he or she will have to help fit the multifaith narrative into society. Otherwise, the child will not have to deal with narrative fidelity with his or her own family, unless there is the extreme situation of a parent being dominating to the point where he or she is already making the family a singular faith family through various actions.

Active - Active

The last typology deals with the Active/Active narrative fidelity of the child. This is the one category where the child will have to find a technique for expressing a multifaith narrative to the community. This can be difficult for a child because he or she might not have the capacity to explain the narrative, and this can make narrative fidelity a problematic issue for the child. It could take years for the child to figure out how to express his or her identity; hopefully, the parents would also help to make sure the narrative fidelity is being fit into the community. In either instance, narrative fidelity is not a problem for the Active/Active family, but more a continuing issue with the faith community and society.

Conclusion

This chapter laid out some of the central themes for the project. The first is the use of narrative coherence and fidelity from the narrative paradigm. These two concepts

help to focus the dissertation on the multifaith narrative and the continuous manner in which the family tries to make sense of it and also fit it into the accepted narratives of society. The other theme is the family typologies of Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active. The typologies create a structure to assist in trying to categorize all the different variations of a multifaith family. In the next three chapters, I will use these typologies to categorize the interactions between the multifaith family and extended family members and the religious community, and also the multifaith family's representation in popular culture. The next chapter will focus on the extended family and their impact on a multifaith family.

CHAPTER 5
MULTIFAITH EXTENDED FAMILY

Chapter 5 continues to explore the dynamics of a multifaith family through Fisher's narrative paradigm. This chapter will look at the role of the grandparents and other extended family members in the formation of the multifaith narrative and family. It will examine the different aspects they contribute that either aid or constrain the multifaith family. The chapter will also discuss the two parts of the narrative paradigm: coherence and fidelity. The chapter will include the three different categories of participation in the narrative (typologies) as put forth in the previous chapter: Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active. Furthermore, it will discuss the connections of the grandparents, aunts, uncles, and godparents to the multifaith family. I will be discussing the relationships between the extended family member and the multifaith family in each typology. The relationships include those involving the extended family member, parent, and child. The goal is to explore these relationships because they will have an influence on the multifaith family.

Grandparents

The main focus of this chapter is the extended family. As mentioned, in this project, the extended family includes grandparents, aunts, uncles and godparents. In this section, I will specifically be examining the role of the grandparent in a multifaith family.

The grandparents in a multifaith family play different roles and have different interests in this new family. Traditionally, a family with grandparents would suggest the presence of four grandparents. However, with the changing nature of families, there could be anywhere from zero to eight grandparents, depending on if any have passed

away or if there are step-grandparents or remarriages. All of these issues bring about many different scenarios. For the sake of this chapter, the discussion will focus on the more traditional approach of having two sets of grandparents, which would normally be four grandparents. This is not to dismiss any other variation of the aforementioned possibilities, but to allow for a more linear approach to describing the nature of grandparents in relation to a multifaith family.

Coherence

Grandparents play multiple roles in a multifaith family, and this chapter will cover as many of the interactions as possible. The first part will describe the coherence of the multifaith narrative for grandparents in two regards. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this project, Fisher (1987) describes coherence as rationally making sense of a particular narrative. The first section of coherence will focus on the original faith narratives. The second section will discuss the interplay with the newly formed multifaith narrative and the understanding or lack of understanding of this new faith narrative. The goal is to examine the roles of grandparents in the faith narratives of the multifaith family. It is also to discover the influence grandparents have on multifaith narratives.

Grandparents as Historian

As mentioned in Chapter 3 of this project, Brussoni and Boon (1998) define grandparents as the historians of the family. This can be seen in the plot of an episode of *The Goldbergs* where the grandfather traces the family's history in response to his daughter wanting to celebrate a new holiday called Super Hanukkah (Friedman & Schneider, 2015). The grandfather is trying to impress upon his daughter that her

ancestors would not appreciate changing the holiday to compete with Christmas. Grandparents interact with their children in a parent–child dyadic relationship, whereas grandparents interact with their grandchildren in a grandparent–grandchild dyadic relationship. Going back to Chapter 3 of this project, Soliz (2007) explains that grandparents are usually supportive of their grandchildren, which creates a happier relationship. In most cases, grandparents are not in charge of disciplining the grandchildren. This is the parents' duty. Therefore, this supportive quality creates the positive relationship. Now, I should point out that this changes for grandparents who are primary caregivers to their grandchildren. In those relationships, the grandparent–grandchild relationship changes. I am thinking of the example of grandparents raising grandchildren whose parents overdosed on opioids, which sadly is becoming a bigger issue at the time of writing this project.

The grandparents on the sides of both parents want to have some influence over decisions of culture and faith related to their grandchildren. I would like to refer back to Chapter 3, with Williams and Nussbaum (2001) describing grandparents as being part of the socialization process of the grandchildren. The reasoning is that they would like to continue their own faith narratives and be able to celebrate this part of their world with their grandchildren as well. This need will become a sticking point for some families and can cause problems with interpersonal relationships.

The next couple of paragraphs will give different examples of grandparents keeping their children to their family's faith. For the rest of the section, the perspective can be seen from a grandchild's perspective because it will provide a better understanding of the relationship between the parents in a multifaith family and their

parents. Otherwise, these few examples will seem like parent and child communicative problems, but they should be understood in the greater context of grandparent and parent. The reasoning is that the familial roles will change and the parent/grandparent's own perspectives on family communication will change as well.

There are many different examples of this friction between grandparents and their respective child who is now the parent in a multifaith family. One example comes from grandparents who impose their faith on their child and force him or her to raise the child in the respective faith of their family. This could look like a Catholic grandmother telling her daughter that she must raise her grandchild in the faith because otherwise she will not talk to her anymore. The situation being forced upon the parent can cause a rift between the grandparent and himself or herself, or at least some kind of tension between the two. These statements become key communicative events that affect the formulation of a multifaith narrative. Now, depending on the intent of the parent, he or she may have always wanted to raise the child in his or her respective faith, so there could not be an issue if this does occur. However, if the parent is undecided about the faith with which to raise his or her child, something like this grandparental blackmail can become problematic and be a significant story for how the family became a multifaith family.

Another example of grandparents keeping the faith is in the marriage traditions of both parents. This is a great example because it is one that many people will face when they marry someone outside of their faith. The parents (grandparents) of the couple can become adamant about the marriage ceremony. This can range from the location (e.g., church, synagogue, mosque, temple) to the actual faith elements of the marriage

ceremony. Conflict can make marriage ceremonies a major crisis if some of these demands by the grandparents are not met.

The marriage issue illustrates the adherence of the parents to the faith (including the stories and traditions) of the grandparents. The importance of the faith to the grandparents can supersede the desires of the parents. For many people, the need to have the other partner convert to make it easier for these faith traditions to be celebrated becomes a sticking point in the family. Other people will have two separate ceremonies because they want to respect the grandparents and their faiths. The idea is to get around some of the faith details that would prevent people from getting married by a priest, rabbi, imam, or other religious officiant. However, this can still be a bit of a problem because, depending on the progressiveness of the officiant, he or she may not marry people of different faiths, and thus it becomes even more of an issue. Nowadays, there are more religious officiants in many different faiths performing marriages with traditions from both faiths. This is a compromise to allow people to get married to someone outside of the faith and at the same time have the opportunity to create a different kind of marriage ceremony where traditions are shared and celebrated together.

Another example comes from grandparents of a same-sex couple not agreeing with their lifestyle. In this situation, the grandparents might push their faith on the couple as a way to get the grandchildren to be a part of their lives. An instance of the grandparents shunning the same-sex couple because of their relationship can push the couple further from the faith of the grandparents. These scenarios illustrate the precarious relationships among grandparents, parents, and children.

All of these disputes take us back to the original concern: the grandparents making sure that the parents participate in their faith, but also laying the foundation for the parents to raise the grandchildren in the same faith celebrated by the ancestors of the family.

Grandparents Supporting Multifaith Narratives

There are positive aspects of grandparents acting as historians and tradition keepers. As Brussoni and Boon (1998) mentioned, in Chapter 3 of this project, the grandparents become storytellers and tell the histories of the family. By keeping with tradition and holding one's narrative ground, the grandparents will actually help create a multifaith family. The grandparents' actions might not necessarily be an outright acceptance of a new multifaith family narrative, but the process of wanting to engage in their traditions will create an environment where a multifaith family has no choice but to be created.

The purpose of this part of coherence is to describe the opposite effect of keeping the original faith alive. The grandparents will ultimately be a part of the multifaith family. The first reason is as mentioned at the beginning of this section. The grandparents, in wanting the parents to continue their family's faith narratives, will undoubtedly be a part of the creation of a multifaith family since both parents might have to respect their own faith narratives. This then will lead to some sort of blending of the two faith narratives in to a multifaith narrative, as mentioned in Chapter 4 of this project. It is probably not the intention of the grandparents, but the protecting of their own faith narrative ground will lead to this result.

It is important to mention that this is not the case with every version of a multifaith family. Some grandparents may play another role in the family. For example, as mentioned in the previous section, some parents will decide to convert to the religion of their partner, or in some cases, the parents will forgo teaching their children any part of their family's faith narratives. In these cases, the grandparents are the ones who could bypass the parents and teach the grandchildren the stories and traditions of the faith. In this manner, the grandparents will create parts of the multifaith family because they are trying to pass along the stories and traditions of the faith. For instance, if a parent was Methodist but converts to Catholicism to marry his partner, a grandparent still has the potential to teach the grandchildren the faith narratives of Methodism. Therefore, the grandparent is helping to create a multifaith family.

The last part of this section deals with the propagation of the original faith narratives. The previous chapter discussed stories and traditions as being an integral part to the faith narrative. The grandparents will become supporters of a multifaith narrative in two different manners. The first manner is because they want to keep the traditions of their own faith narrative alive and want to celebrate their faith with their children and grandchildren. I would like to refer back to Chapter 3 and O'Neil's (2007) discussion of the grandparents as models for relationships for grandchildren. As supporters of the multifaith family, the grandparents exemplify an inclusive family environment. This can have a major impact on the grandchildren because it does not dismiss their multifaith family environment.

The second manner is because the grandparents could genuinely accept the notion that this new family is going to try to create a multifaith narrative so they can be a part of

both original faith narratives. The purpose of this is to honor and respect the grandparents and the ancestors before them. In either case, the grandparents will want to be a part of the faith celebrations of their children and grandchildren. Wanting to be a part of these traditions will help further the multifaith narrative because it is inclusive and exists because the family wants to celebrate the grandparents' original faith narratives for both families.

The grandparents play an important role in a multifaith family. The next part of the coherence section will take a look at the grandparents through the typology introduced in Chapter 3. These categories will include examples in relation to the multifaith family, the grandparent–parent relationship, and the grandparent–grandchild relationship.

Passive - Passive

The Passive/Passive multifaith family will have an interesting relationship with the grandparents. The parents and the grandparents may have a positive relationship or a negative relationship, depending on the importance of faith to the grandparents. As mentioned before, the parents are not engaging in their faith, so it is not going to be a major part of their lives. The grandparents may be very active in their faith or not active, which will dictate the amount of discussion about faith between the parents and the grandparents. This engagement between the grandparents and parents can inform the multifaith narrative and add to the coherence of it.

The grandparent–grandchild relationship can follow a similar pattern as the grandparent–parent relationship. The grandparent may not take an interest in discussing faith with his or her grandchild, so the relationship stays within the Passive/Passive

designation. However, if the grandparent is active in his or her faith, there is the possibility that the grandparent will share the faith with the grandchild, and this could influence the grandchild to be more active in his or her faith. This can reinforce a multifaith narrative for the grandchild.

Passive - Active

The Passive/Active multifaith family will have multiple dimensions to the relationship with the grandparents. One example is related to the parents. As mentioned, the grandparents can try to influence the faith narrative of the multifaith family. In this situation, the passive parent might feel more pressure to adhere to the grandparents' wishes. It is also the same for the active parent. They may feel pressure to engage the faith narrative at the same level as the grandparent. In either scenario, there can be tension between the parents and the grandparents. Another example is if the multifaith family has two sets of grandparents active in their faith. A Passive/Active family can find that there is a communication issue for the grandparents on the passive side because that parent is not engaging his or her faith. This can lead to some coherence issues for the multifaith narrative because the grandparents are not able to discuss their faith with the family.

The children in a Passive/Passive scenario will have the difficulty of maintaining a similar faith relationship with their grandparents. The active side of the family will share in the traditions of their faith. This can lead the family to celebrate traditions or holidays with that side of the family more often than the passive side. Therefore, the grandchildren may have dissimilar relationships with each set of grandparents. This can

affect the multifaith narrative and prevent it from making complete sense to a child. It may take until later in life for the child to understand both faiths of the family.

Active - Active

The category of the Active/Active multifaith family will encounter a tug of war among the grandparents, parents, and grandchildren. In this situation, the grandparents will be interacting with the faith of the family and having an influence in the engagement of the multifaith narrative. I am referring back to an example of a multifaith family consisting of individuals of two Christian faiths trying to celebrate Christmas while navigating competition for family time from the grandparents. There will be some decisions to be made by the parents and children about which grandparents the family will visit on what day around the holiday. For example, Christmas Eve is spent with one set of grandparents, while Christmas day is spent with the other set of grandparents. These types of examples will have a major impact on the formation of a multifaith narrative for a family.

Fidelity

The next part of Fisher's narrative paradigm is fidelity. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Fisher (1987) clarifies that fidelity is the process of comparing the narrative to our beliefs and experiences and seeing if it will hold up against those qualities. For a multifaith family and their narrative, the comparison is against the beliefs of the extended members of the family and of the religious communities. These are also the groups that originate aspects of the multifaith narrative. Therefore, the fidelity of a multifaith narrative can exist in a gray in-between area. This section, since it is discussing

grandparents, will focus on the fidelity of the multifaith narrative from the perspective of the grandparents.

There are two different perspectives to look at fidelity from the grandparents' perspective. The first is the idea of a multifaith family and narrative compared against the grandparent's own understanding of faith. The other is the acceptance of the fidelity of the multifaith narrative or the rejection of that particular faith narrative.

Comparing Against Faith

Grandparents whose children and grandchildren are in a multifaith family can have challenges with this new narrative and their own faith. It will raise questions about the nature of faith narratives and might even make the grandparents challenge their own idea of faith. The grandparents could want the parents of the multifaith family to continue the faith narratives they instilled in them as their own children.

The comparison of a multifaith narrative to an original faith narrative starts with the extended family and then gets to the religious community, which is covered in depth in Chapter 6. The grandparents are the first people to come into contact with the family's multifaith narrative, and it is the task of the family (children and grandchildren) to challenge the fidelity issues of the narrative with the grandparents. However, in some cases, the grandparents might be the people helping to create the multifaith narrative, so it becomes something they are more a part of than they may have originally intended. Therefore, the fidelity issue comes down the fact of whether the grandparents want to accept or reject the multifaith narrative of the children and grandchildren.

Accept or Reject the Multifaith Narrative

The other part of fidelity is the grandparents either accepting or rejecting the multifaith narrative. The acceptance of the narrative can be the total acceptance of the family's multifaith narrative as constructed by the parents and children but with the input of the grandparents, or it can be some variation of this, where the grandparents recognize that the parents are trying to incorporate the different faith narratives into a distinct multifaith narrative for that family. The grandparents can still celebrate and be a part of the traditions and stories of the family because they were not discarded with the creation of the multifaith narrative. Instead, those narratives play roles in the family's multifaith narrative.

The rejection of such a multifaith narrative is because the grandparents do not find the multifaith narrative to fit with their worldview of faith. This can be for many reasons: They do not think that a family of two or more faiths can exist; they are not pleased that the family has not prioritized the original faith over the other; they do not agree with the marriage in the first place (whether it is a heterosexual or a same-sex marriage); or the parents have disrespected the family and the ancestors by not continuing the exact same faith narrative as the previous family members. Any of these reasons can cause a rejection of the multifaith narrative. The rejection does not have to be permanent, but it can complicate family member interaction and communication until it can be reconciled sometime in the future.

The next three sections of this chapter are going to follow the same pattern as Chapter 4; the role of the grandparents in the different family situations will be explored. The sections are Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active. It is important to

note that in this chapter these segments fall outside of coherence and fidelity because it is better to examine the communication between the family members rather than rehashing the already established inner workings of the faith narratives.

Passive - Passive

The Passive/Passive section will look at two distinct roles the grandparents can play in the multifaith family narrative. The first role is as the individuals who will teach the children of the family some of the different traditions and stories of the original faiths, as mentioned by Williams and Nussbaum (2001) in Chapter 3. The other role is one that allows the parents of the multifaith family to find their own direction forward with their faith narratives.

The extended family members of a Passive/Passive family will be the people passing along the traditions and the stories of the original faith. The idea is that the grandparents will share these important faith and cultural identities with the children of a multifaith family, even if the parents are not going to actively engage in their respective faiths. A good example is a parent not wanting to participate in their Catholic tradition of Lent and not explaining it to or talking about it with their children. However, if the children visit their grandmother and she is practicing the tradition of not eating meat on Fridays, the children will still learn something about their family and heritage from those interactions with her. The relationship between the grandmother and the grandchild still communicates these faith traditions, and it can create awareness in the grandchild of something beyond what he or she already knows about himself or herself culturally and spiritually. Another good example is a grandfather presiding over Passover Seder and a

grandchild experiencing this, even though it may not be something performed in his or her own household.

The Passive/Passive multifaith family creates a space for the grandparents to share their stories and traditions of faith. In this process, the grandparents may knowing or unwittingly help reinforce the multifaith narrative of the family. It could have never been their intention, and maybe they would have rather had the family keep the singular faith tradition. However, they play a role in a multifaith family.

Alternatively, grandparents may not interfere in the multifaith family dynamic. This does not mean that they will not discuss faith or the culture tied to it, but the extended family is providing space for the multifaith family to figure out their own narrative. In this case, the grandparents are becoming a little bit passive themselves. They may talk about their faith, but maybe they are not actively celebrating traditions in front of the multifaith family. The extended family is not trying to get the family to be more like them, but instead are trying to find a middle ground for there to be a variety of different interactions about faith. The almost Passive/Passive/Passive typology is something that might become more likely as the nature of faith changes in societies.

Passive - Active

The Passive/Active description is more complicated than the Passive/Passive situation. There are the two standing descriptions of both sets of grandparents being the communicators of the original faith narratives, or of the grandparents being the extended family members who will stay out of the way and let the parents of the multifaith family decide the level of involvement of their faith. These two constructs can be options for the extended family for all of the typologies. However, in the Passive/Active multifaith

family typology, new issues are brought to the foreground. The first is territoriality of the original faith families. The other is the deferment of the multifaith family to the extended family of the active faith parent. Both of these topics will be covered in this section of the chapter.

Territoriality becomes an important issue with multifaith families as much as it is for other families. The way territoriality works in a multifaith family comes down to the grandparents' dynamics with the parents. The Passive/Active multifaith family means that one parent is actively engaging his or her faith in the family, while the other can still tell stories of his or her faith but is not actively taking part in it. Therefore, this can cause a problem with the grandparents because the active parent and his or her corresponding parents (grandparents) are actively involved in that particular faith narrative of the family. The passive parent may not seek the involvement of his or her parents (grandparents), and this can cause an issue, especially if those grandparents are active within their own faith communities. The prioritizing of faith between the parents can cause a territorial battle between the grandparents. This does not mean that there will be an actual war between the two sets of grandparents, but it can create an unbalancing and hurt feeling in their relationships with their children (the parents).

A good example of territoriality is of a multifaith family where there is a Catholic parent and a Muslim parent. The Muslim parent does not actively participate in his traditions, but does tell the children the stories of his faith and culture. The other parent actively takes the children to church and participates in all holidays. For the sets of grandparents, the Catholic pair can feel like they are elevated in status because the grandchildren and their daughter (parent) are actively taking part in their faith. The

Muslim grandparents might feel like they are being pushed aside because they are not being active within their own faith with their grandchildren and son (parent). This can cause a clash between the grandparents, which could be literal or figurative, depending on the people, but it most certainly can become an issue for the parents and their ongoing relationship with the grandparents. Both sets of grandparents want to protect their own territory within the extended family, and this can bring a whole new set of issues to the multifaith family.

The other part of this section deals with the actual or perceived preference of one set of grandparents over the other set. As an outgrowth of territoriality, the deference of the multifaith family toward the active or passive set of grandparents because of actual or perceived higher interaction is a problem and sometimes solution, as in overcompensation, to the issue of territoriality. It would be great if the multifaith family could spend an even amount of time with both grandparents, but the natural active participation of both families in the original faith can make it something the family members bond over. Therefore, the reaction of the left-out set of grandparents to this constant interaction can cause problems, and sometimes, the overcompensating of the family toward the passive family can also make the other family feel like they are being taken for granted.

Territoriality and deferment can create different issues for the multifaith family and their extended families. This issue does not disappear in a Passive/Active multifaith family. It will be something that both families will have to work on to find a reasonable compromise.

Active - Active

The last typology of a multifaith family deals with extended family in similar methods as reviewed in the previous two sections. There can be territoriality and deferment when the multifaith parents discuss the role of the grandparents in the faith formation of the grandchildren. The grandparents can relate the stories of faith and culture to the grandchildren as in all the sections, and there can also be passive behavior by the grandparents where they let the parents take over with the continuation of the faith narratives. However, there is one new category, and that is compromise.

The Active/Active multifaith family will encounter one major issue compared to the other typologies. There can be pushing and pulling by both sets of grandparents to their respective faiths, like in all the sections, but in this case, the parents are now actively engaging their own faith, so this can complicate the territoriality and deferment noted in the previous sections. The effect is to have both parents trying to accommodate all the grandparents. Unlike in Passive/Active, the Active/Active family will have to navigate not only their extended families, but also the relationship of the parents because there will come a time when the calendar and time can clash. Therefore, compromise becomes the key element of an Active/Active multifaith family. This may seem like a minor point because all families will have to compromise at some point in their relationships. However, in a multifaith family, this will be as or more important because there will be times when holidays and celebrations overlap and cause the parents to make hard decisions about attending which event.

The best example of compromise can be found in a multifaith family where the parents are Christian and Jewish. The parents will have to balance the demands of the

grandparents around the winter and spring holidays because there is the occasion for overlap on a few of the major faith celebrations. The winter holidays can see Chanukah and Christmas coincide on certain years. This can cause tension and requests from grandparents to attend their respective holiday celebrations. Now, this is not an usual conflict because it happens only so often. However, Passover and Easter will overlap many years, and this can become an ongoing issue for the extended family and the parents in the multifaith family. Therefore, compromise is a key component of navigating these pitfalls in an Active/Active multifaith family. The parents can make arrangements to make everyone happy by splitting time between the families and planning their travel plans around these dates. The multifaith family also can ask the extended family to travel to their residence for the holidays to make it easier on themselves or on the extended family. The main point is to try to find the compromise in these situations to appease both the family and the extended family.

The Active/Active family is the version of the multifaith family that will need to find the solution to the confusion of the holidays and the time spent during those periods of the year. Sometimes it can have a simple solution because the holidays do not coincide. Other times, like if you have a Protestant and a Catholic multifaith family, the holidays are the same, and the parents and grandparents will have to compromise about the visiting dates and times. This adds another aspect to this category of multifaith family because there will need to be some resolution to address the wants of the family and the extended family.

Aunts and Uncles

As mentioned in Chapter 3 of this project, Ellingson and Sotirin (2006) use the term "kin-keeping" to explain the function of aunts and uncles as third-party family members who help express the needs of the family. This means that other members of the extended family can play roles in the multifaith narrative. Referring to Milardo (2005), aunts and uncles, like grandparents, can help shape the multifaith narrative in the way that they are historians of the family. However, there are other functions that aunts and uncles perform that are different than those of grandparents. This comes down to the fact that their relationship with the parents differs than that of the grandparents and parents. Therefore, it is important to explore the relationships among aunts, uncles, and parents.

Coherence

The issue of coherence with aunts and uncles comes from the same source as the parents: the grandparents. For this situation, this project will focus on the interactions between aunts and uncles who are the biological or adoptive brothers and sisters of the parents in questions. The source of the original faith narrative is from the grandparents, but depending on the situation, the aunts and uncles may play a different role or the same role as the grandparents.

The first part of coherence for aunts and uncles will look at the promotion of the original faith narrative. Aunts and uncles can assume the same role as the grandparents in the formation of the multifaith narrative because they can both promote the importance of the original faith narrative and carry on the traditions and stories of that faith. For instance, an aunt or uncle can live his or her life by a given faith narrative and want his or her brother or sister to do the same. The continuity of faith can be very important because

115

it is the faith that the aunt or uncle grew up knowing and would like to continue. In these cases, the aunts and uncles will want the parents to observe the same faith, thus making it more of a possibility that the parents will create a multifaith narrative with their own family.

Another part of this first section refers back to the grandparents and the approach they can take to keep the stories and traditions of the original faith alive, even if the family does not want to participate in this narrative. The aunts and uncles can be the family members who keep the traditions and stories alive because they can interact with the children and the parents, thus facilitating a passage of the faith narrative to the new family. In this capacity, the aunts and uncles can mimic the grandparents' role but without the parent–child relationship of the grandparent and parent. The difference in these dynamics can change the adoption of the original faith narrative.

This section also deals with the possibility of the aunts and uncles not taking a part in the original faith narrative. This could be for a multitude of different reasons, but the important aspect is that they are not going to propagate the original faith narrative of the family. In these cases, the aunts and uncles might be a refuge for the parents because they can discuss the ongoing developments with the grandparents, or they can discuss if a multifaith family is the direction to take their family's faith narrative.

The two different scenarios allow for the parents in the multifaith family to have neutral family members in the situation. This gives the parents an opportunity to think about their own situation or to seek advice on the method they can use to have a conversation with their parents (the grandparents). The laissez-faire attitude of the aunt and uncle can actually be a benefit to the multifaith family and extended family during

the process of figuring out the dynamics of the situation. As Ellingson and Sotirin (2010) and Millardo (2010) discuss in Chapter 3 of this project, aunts and uncles have the capability to act as a buffer in difficult circumstances, which can help solve those issues. The ability for the aunt and uncle to undertake this role shows the difference between relationships of grandparents and aunts and uncles with the parents.

The next sections will focus on coherence through the typologies first introduced in Chapter 4 of this project. The goal is to apply these categories to aunts and uncles to explain coherence in relation to a multifaith family and narrative.

Passive - Passive

In a Passive/Passive multifaith family, the multifaith narrative forms because of some storytelling from the parents, grandparents, aunts, or uncles. Therefore, in this typology, aunts and uncles will provide greater context for the faith narrative to their nieces and nephews. The aunts and uncles can help make sense of a multifaith narrative in the Passive/Passive typology. They can act as storytellers and confidants to their nieces and nephews by answering questions the parents might not want to answer or might not be able to answer. These two examples are the extent to which aunts and uncles function in a Passive/Passive multifaith family.

Passive - Active

The aunts and uncles in a Passive/Active multifaith family will have some of the same effects as the Passive/Passive typology. I am specifically referring to telling stories about the faith of the family. However, in this situation, there is another wrinkle. The aunts and uncles on the active side of the family will have more of a role in the faith dynamic of the family than the aunts and uncles on the passive side. This does not mean

that the passive side of the family does nothing for the narrative, but it is relegated more to storytelling. The active side of the family will get to engage in storytelling, traditions, and holidays with the family. This activity can have more of an impact on the multifaith family and on the development of a multifaith narrative.

Active - Active

The Active/Active multifaith family will have aunts and uncles who are more engaged in faith formation of the multifaith family. It may seem counterintuitive because the parents in these situations are actively engaging their own faith narratives; thus, there might not be any impact from the aunts and uncles. However, like in the Passive/Active multifaith family, both sets of aunts and uncles are able to engage the multifaith family in their faith narratives. This leads to the family taking part in traditions and celebrating holidays together. There is one caveat: The aunt and uncles on both sides of the family can have good relationships at some of these family functions. In the worst cases, they can have some animosity toward one another, depending on the relationships of both sets of extended family.

The next part of this section on aunts and uncles will explore fidelity in regard to the relationships among aunts, uncles, and the multifaith family. The purpose is to find the areas where the fidelity of the multifaith narrative is reinforced or damaged by the aunts and uncles.

Fidelity

Aunts and uncles are in a similar situation as the grandparents when it comes to fidelity. There are two ways in which aunts and uncles will compare the fidelity of a multifaith narrative with their own. The first comes with understanding the idea of

multifaith narrative, and the second is the acceptance or rejection of the multifaith narrative. This section will cover those distinctions.

There will be a comparison for the aunts and uncles to make against the multifaith narrative. As mentioned in the coherence section, aunts and uncles might want to share their faith with their brothers or sisters as they develop their multifaith family. Like the grandparents, aunts and uncles in this situation would like for the multifaith family to keep their faith narrative. Since a multifaith family would keep the narrative, this should be easier for the aunt and uncle to understand. However, in these situations, questions always abound; this is a good development because it will hopefully lead to some understanding between the aunts and uncles and the parents.

There is also the situation where the aunts and uncles do not have any concerns about the multifaith narrative. This is in reference to the part in the aunt and uncle coherence section discussing aunts and uncles who are not engaging the original faith narrative. In this case, the aunts and uncles may still have questions about the multifaith family and the narratives incorporated into the family. However, there may not be a fervent insistence on keeping the original faith narratives as part of the family. Therefore, this might lessen the need to question the fitness of the narrative within their perceptive framework.

The aunts and uncles who want to keep their original faith narrative may outright reject the fidelity of the multifaith narrative. They may not see it as a narrative that stands within their perspective and the perspective of greater society. However, other aunts and uncles who are still keeping their original faith narrative may accept the multifaith narrative because they, after all their questions, still feel it can be a narrative, which fits

in their perspective. In either case, the aunts and uncles still engaging their own faith narrative can come to different decisions on the fidelity of the multifaith narrative and the multifaith family.

The other set of aunts and uncles is not actively performing the faith and can come to similar conclusions about the fidelity of the multifaith narrative. These aunts and uncles could reject the narrative because it is a faith narrative; maybe in their own religious background, they are rejecting certain faith narratives or not wanting to participate in a specific one. Therefore, this can lead to rejection of the multifaith narrative. The other outcome is for the aunts and uncles to accept the multifaith narrative because the fidelity of the narrative fits their lassiez-faire attitude about faith narratives. Therefore, the idea of a multifaith narrative does not challenge their own faith concepts and the need to reject it does not occur.

Both of these aunt and uncle situations and the acceptance or rejection of the fidelity of the multifaith narrative are unique compared to the grandparents. The aunt and uncle do not share the same relationship as the grandparents, so the acceptance or rejection comes from a different perspective; this will still impact the multifaith family, but in a manner different than the grandparents.

The next section will look at fidelity from the perspective of the three typologies, which will help address some of the issues arising from different faith perspectives of the aunts and uncles. It will also examine the similarities between the aunts and uncles and the multifaith family. There will be some discussion of the relationship between aunts and uncles and their nieces and nephews where applicable.

Passive - Passive

The aunts and uncles in relation to a Passive/Passive multifaith family will encounter two specific issues. The first is with the parents, and the second is with their nieces or nephews.

The first issue is because of the parents not actively engaging their faith narratives, which can affect their relationship with their brother or sister (uncle or aunt) because their sibling might actively engage the faith. This could possibly lead to some friction between the parents and their siblings. However, the parents and their siblings can share the same religious engagement, and then there will not be any issues between them.

The other issue will arise if the aunts and uncles are active in their faith. In this situation, the aunts or uncles may feel the need to discuss their faith with their nieces or nephews because the parents do not. This can obviously lead to a contentious relationship between the parents and their siblings if this does occur. However, there is also the perspective that the aunts and uncles may just relate their own family faith narrative to their nieces or nephews, which may actually not cause any friction between the parents and the aunts or uncles. This is because the act is more informational in nature than an attempt to get the nieces or nephews to convert or actively commit to a faith.

Passive - Active

The Passive/Active multifaith typology will affect aunts and uncles by seemingly elevating the faith of the siblings of one of the parents over the other faiths. However, this may not always be the case. Since the siblings of one parent will be already actively engaging in the active parent's faith, there will not be any questions around the fidelity of

121

the faith narrative. This could possibly change if the aunts and uncles do not support the idea of a multifaith narrative. The result would be the aunts and uncles dismissing the notion of the multifaith framework. This could potentially have an impact on the multifaith family and the children by openly rejecting the fact that the child comes from parents of two different faiths.

The other issue is that the passive parent's siblings might feel like there is preferential treatment for the other parent's siblings. The family may not participate in the same faith traditions of the passive parents. Therefore, this would make that parent's family feel left out or, at worst, rejected. In this scenario, the fidelity of the multifaith narrative can be distorted to not include the passive parent's faith narrative.

Active - Active

The Active/Active multifaith family will not see as many issues as the prior two typologies in regard to the aunts and uncles and the fidelity of the multifaith narrative. Aunts and uncles will engage their faith narrative with the multifaith family. This will cut down on the inconsistencies of faith engagement. However, it can create the issue of sharing time with the family, and in the extreme case, the aunts and uncles may look at the family as being of their faith, thus dismissing the other faith in the process. Sharing time is an important issue for families with two distinct Christian faiths, like Catholicism and Lutheranism. In these cases, there will have to be preplanning concerning which family to join for Easter or Christmas. It could also work for them to split time between the families on those holidays. This scenario also works for the dismissal of the other faith because the aunts and uncles only see the family for their particular Sunday

services. The example illustrates that it might not be a dismissal by negation but more because the aunts and uncles feel the multifaith family identifies with them.

The next major section of this chapter will discuss the role of godparents in a multifaith family. The purpose is to highlight the impact of these faith individuals that can shape the multifaith family like grandparents, aunts, and uncles.

Godparents

The field of communication does not really discuss the role of godparents and their interactions as a part of family. Therefore, the literature on godparents mainly comes from theological or historical texts. This section will contain some elaborations based on this information. The role of godparents has an effect on the multifaith family but in a different fashion than that of a grandparent, aunt, or uncle. The place to start is with historical background on the genesis of godparents.

The concept of godparents can be traced to needing a sponsor for an adult or infant baptism (Lynch, 1986). Adults needed a sponsor who would vouch for their good character, while infants, being of good character, needed a sponsor to answer for them at the baptism (Lynch, 1986). Most godparents in early Christianity were the parents of the child (Ramshaw, 1994). However, this started to change when more parishioners began to choose non-parental people to be the godparents. This would oftentimes create a familial bond among the infant, parents, and godparents (Ramshaw, 1994). Eventually, the Catholic Church ruled in the ninth century that only non-parents could be godparents for children (Ramshaw, 1994). These new rules elevated godparents to the level of coparent, something that is still prevalent in southern and eastern parts of Europe, plus Latin American and the Philippines (Ramshaw, 1994). Furthermore, godparents became a

means of social alliance and a way to add a wealthy or more powerful patron connection

to the family (Ramshaw, 1994). A major development that resulted from these alliances

was the creation of strict rules to outlaw sex between godparents and godchildren (Lynch,

1986). The Catholic Church treated the godparent relationship as a familial bond and

compared sex within this relationship, between godparents and godchildren, to incest and

thus punished this behavior. This did not change until 1917 (Ramshaw, 1994). Only the

Eastern Orthodox Church still follows these older rules. The reason that these

relationships are governed closely is because of the duties the godparents have to teach

their godchildren about the faith.

The godparents were tasked with teaching the godchild the Lord's Prayer and the

Apostles' Creed (Lynch, 1986). In the High Middle Ages, the godparents were even

responsible for teaching the child the Ava Maria (Lynch, 1986). However, after the

Reformation, all of these things started to change, mainly because the Catholic Church

wanted to reemphasize the role of the parents in the spiritual development of the children

(Ramshaw, 1994). Today, the godparents are tasked only with being present at the

baptism and being partly responsible for the religious upbringing of their godchild. There

are still some relationships where godparents buy gifts for their godchild. However, that

is more dependent on the cultural significance of the godparent to the family. This is a

factor outside of just the rules of the faith.

Godparents are not limited to the Christian faith, but the only other faith that uses

the terminology of godparent is Judaism. The main duty of this person is to take the male

baby to the mohel for circumcision. Unlike in Christianity, godparents in Judaism are not

responsible for the spiritual upbringing of the child. This is the duty of the parents and the community. Otherwise, godparents are solely a Christian tradition.

The next two sections discuss the coherence and fidelity of godparents in relation to a multifaith narrative. Since the information on godparents mainly pertains to the Christian faith and there is not a lot of information from our field, there is going to be quite a lot of extrapolation happening in the following two sections. I hesitate to describe it as perfect, but it will at least explore the possible interactions between multifaith families and godparents.

Coherence

Godparents play a role in the coherence of a multifaith family. The godparents, as mentioned at the beginning of this section on extended families, are to play a role in the spiritual upbringing of a Christian godchild. The godparents can have the same access to and influence on a child as the grandparents, aunts, or uncles. Therefore, they can play a huge role in the development of a multifaith family and individual. The first part of coherence will look at the influence a godparent can have on the faith side of the multifaith family, and the second part will examine some of the modern issues arising from a godparent's relation to the family.

The influence of godparents affects a multifaith family with one or more Christian parents. The job is for the godparent to engage, teach, or represent the ideals of the respective dominations of Christianity. Therefore, the godparents will exert some influence over the faith of the child in a multifaith family.

In regard to a multifaith family that has only one Christian parent, the godparents can have as much spiritual interaction with their godchild as is deemed fit by the parents

125

and within the boundaries that the specific faith sets. These situations allow for the one side of the multifaith family to have another person involved in the development of a multifaith family, whether this person is an actual family member, like an aunt or uncle, or a close family friend. In either scenario, the Christian side of the family will have another person interacting with the faith of the family. This can be positive as it allows another person to help with the spiritual side of the family, or it can be negative and seen as unfairly tipping the scales to the Christian side of the family. The challenge is to strike a balance that suits both parents.

A multifaith family with two Christian denominations might have a more difficult time with godparents than a family with one Christian parent. Although the family will have Christianity as a common bond, the different denominations will have specific, almost territorial positions when discussing the boundaries between the faiths. This can cause disagreements involving in which faith to baptize the child and who will be selected as the godparents. Does a family pick two godparents from each faith, is there one representative from each faith, or is it even possible to overlap? These questions, coupled with the importance of ethnicity and culture to the respective faiths, can have a major impact on deciding on godparents and their roles in the spiritual education of the godchild. All of these concerns create a situation that the parents in the multifaith family must navigate and can cause a strain in their relationship and with their parents and/or siblings.

The second part of coherence involves the hurdles facing godparents today. The relation between the family and Christianity can be a huge barrier to godparents and even to the baptism of a child in the first place. For instance, some Christian denominations

take a hardline stance on same-sex marriage, and this can ostracize those individuals from even taking part in a baptism for their child and therefore naming godparents. They might even name godparents without the consent of the faith. An example of this situation is the parents choosing godparents but without the blessing of their church or religious institution. This then puts in doubt whether the child will have any spiritual education. Another example is that many people today are naming godparents as more of an honorary position, rather than as an extended part of the family focusing on the spiritual well-being of the godchild. However, in other cases, godparents can be helpful (e.g., single parents needing or wanting another person to be involved in their child's spiritual upbringing, a blended family looking to be inclusive of the new extended family). All of these scenarios explain the shift in our conceptualization of godparents today, especially as religiosity is not as high as it used to be around the country.

The coherence of the multifaith narrative can either be improved by the godparents, or it can be a pitfall for the family in deciding on the actual impact that the godparent will have over the spiritual rearing of the child. Therefore, godparents do not damage the coherence of a multifaith family. They can actually improve it. However, the downside is that the godparents can make an already shaky situation worse. It will fall back on the parents to agree upon the nature of the multifaith family and the boundaries for the godparents, with respect to that family's multifaith narrative.

At this time, I want to use the typologies I introduced in Chapter 4 to help explain the relationship between the multifaith family and their chosen godparents. The next three sections will look at the effects that the godparents have on the coherence of a multifaith narrative. Unlike the previous typologies in regard to the grandparents, aunts,

and uncles, the typologies for the godparents include situations where there will be no effect on the multifaith family or narrative.

Passive - Passive

The first typology of a Passive/Passive multifaith family does not have any relationship with godparents. As mentioned, godparents are usually associated with Christianity, and there is a level of commitment to this tradition, which would indicate an active faith person, based on the typologies. Therefore, godparents do not play a role in creating a coherent multifaith narrative in a Passive/Passive situation.

Passive - Active

The Passive/Active typology is interesting because it suggests that one of the parents will be Christian, unless otherwise denoted by the family. This means that the godparents are responsible for part of the spiritual upbringing of the child. In these cases, the godparents can have a direct role in making sense of the multifaith narrative. This would mean promoting the active faith over the passive faith. The active engagement helps to texture the multifaith narrative. However, if the godparents are on the weaker spectrum of the active demarcation, then the influence of the godparent will be less. A good example is of godparents buying only a Christmas and a birthday present for their godchild and not really impacting their spiritual growth.

Active - Active

The godparents in an Active/Active multifaith family will play a role in creating a unique multifaith narrative. This is because the multifaith family will, in most cases, be a Christian family with two distinct faiths. A good example is a Catholic and Baptist multifaith family. The godparents will reinforce both sides of the faith narrative, and this

will reinforce the multifaith narrative of the family. I will also add that the strength of the godparent's involvement will be a factor. As mentioned in the Passive/Active typology, if one set of godparents only sends gifts on special occasions, while the other goes to services with the godchild, there will be a difference in the reinforcement of the faith narrative for the multifaith family.

The next section will discuss the bearing of godparents on the fidelity of multifaith families and their narratives.

Fidelity

Godparents play a role in the coherence of a multifaith family by reinforcing one side, or both sides, of the family. If it is both sides, it will be in a multifaith family where both parents are Christian but of different faiths. However, when it comes to fidelity, the godparents may actually make it harder for a multifaith narrative to exist in the family.

The role of the godparent is to spiritually educate the godchild. This is the role the faith organization would like for the godparents. If the godparents are by the book, this can obviously help the godchild understand one aspect of his or her multifaith family better. However, it can also challenge the fidelity of that narrative because the godparents could promote the singular faith narrative, which is in line with the teaching of their faith. If this does occur, the godparents could put in the fidelity of the multifaith narrative in jeopardy.

The version of godparents strengthening the fidelity of a multifaith narrative is if the parents pick godparents who differ from the ideal candidates in the eyes of the church. The parents are intentionally picking godparents who are acceptable by the standards of the faith but will support the parents in their multifaith spiritual education of

the children. Therefore, it becomes the parents' duty to decide on the role of the godparents in their children's life and pick the people who support the multifaith family narrative or godparents that specifically fill the needs of one of the faiths. The challenge is for the parents to agree on the best course of action for their family.

Passive - Passive

Fidelity, like coherence, does not exist for godparents in a Passive/Passive multifaith family. This is because there will not be godparents in this iteration of a multifaith family.

Passive - Active

The fidelity in a Passive/Active multifaith family turns out to be the opposite of the coherence version of this typology. In regard to coherence in the Passive/Active typology, the godparents reinforce one side of the multifaith family. This aids in developing a distinct multifaith narrative. However, it can challenge the fidelity of the narrative. The godparents in the process of engaging the faith narrative can also reject a multifaith narrative by negation. The godparents may suggest that there is only one faith for the family, and this would test the fidelity of the multifaith narrative. The parents would have to decide on the involvement of the godparents so that this issue would not arise.

Active - Active

The Active/Active multifaith family will encounter the same issue with fidelity as the Passive/Active family. However, in this circumstance, there are two sets of godparents. This leads to a total acceptance, partial acceptance, or rejection of the

multifaith narrative. The godparents affect the fidelity of the multifaith narrative because they are actively engaged with their faith narrative. The result will have some influence on the multifaith narrative, and this can affect whether the multifaith narrative will hold up in other places, like the faith community. The hope would be for the godparents to be supportive of the multifaith narrative; this is important for the parents to consider when selecting godparents.

Conclusion

The purpose of Chapter 5 was to describe the interactions between the extended family members and the multifaith family. I specifically focused on grandparents, aunts, uncles, and godparents because these are the family members who will have the most frequent faith interactions with a multifaith family. The chapter also explored the effect the extended family had on the coherence and fidelity of a multifaith family. The multifaith family typologies helped to illustrate the impact of the extended family on faith formation. In all of the categories, the extended family will have some involvement in the creation of a multifaith narrative. The chapter also illustrates the challenges a multifaith family will encounter with people not in the immediate family. This issue will be explored more in the next chapter when I discuss the interactions between the multifaith family and the faith community.

CHAPTER 6
MULTIFAITH FAMILY AND THE FAITH COMMUNITY

Chapter 6 explores the relationship of a multifaith family and the community through Fisher's (1987) narrative paradigm discussed in Chapter 2. The chapter will look at each typology of a multifaith family and the family's interactions with the faith community. Also, the chapter will discuss the two parts of the narrative paradigm in relation to coherence and fidelity. This will be applied to the multifaith family and their respective faith communities. Chapter 6 departs from the previous two chapters by focusing the attention on the multifaith family and not on the individuated parts of the parents and children. This does not mean that these perspectives are gone from the chapter; rather, the goal is to highlight the individuals' interactions as a family unit. The chapter starts with a brief synopsis of some of the world's largest religious community's thoughts on interfaith marriage. Then the typologies are included in regard to the coherence and fidelity of the multifaith narrative.

The first section of Chapter 6 examines a selection of faith communities and their views on interfaith marriage. The goal of the next section is to underscore the major world religions by offering examples of their faith doctrines. The following few examples will illustrate the faith environment facing multifaith families.

Faith Communities' Views on Interfaith Marriage

The first part of this chapter discusses various faiths' views on interfaith marriage. The objective is to give an overview of some of the larger religious groups around the world and the statements they have made on the topic. The idea is to paint a picture of the various stances on this topic. It should be noted that most of the faiths usually would like

one of the two people in the marriage to convert. This will be described in each subsection, but it is usually a held practice, except in the cases of Hinduism and Buddhism. Therefore, the next few parts explain thoughts on interfaith marriage and the avenues that a couple can take to get permission from the faith institution or community.

Christianity

Christianity has the most subgroups or denominations out of the five faiths covered in this section. For the Christianity section, I am looking at Roman Catholicism, Mormonism, and Unitarian Universalism as the three distinct faiths within this group. Roman Catholicism has the most rules on interfaith marriage within Christianity, and Mormonism has the lowest level of interfaith marriage of any religious group. Unitarian Universalism is a progressive religion with its roots in Christianity. With this in mind, these three examples will highlight some key thoughts on interfaith marriage.

Roman Catholicism

In Roman Catholicism, there are two distinct dispensations for marrying a person outside of the faith. The first is for a Catholic marrying another Christian who is not Catholic. In this scenario, the Catholic partner needs to get consent from a priest, which is called permission to enter into a mixed marriage (Catholic Marriage FAQs, 2018). If the priest grants this request, then the couple can marry. The other dispensation is for a Catholic marrying a non-Christian. This request is called a dispensation from disparity of cult (Catholic Marriage FAQs, 2018). This is also at the request of a priest. Therefore, the requesting priest has control over the congregant's marriage. Some priests may grant these dispensations, whereas other priests may not because they do not think it is

appropriate for the person to be marrying outside of the faith. The only sure way of getting a Catholic priest to marry an interfaith couple is to have the non-Catholic convert to Catholicism.

There is another issue for a multifaith couple trying to get married in the Catholic faith, and this is marriage preparation class. These classes can be difficult to navigate depending on the parish. Ecumenical and Interfaith Marriages, from For Your Marriage, (2018) describes this further:

> …the non-Catholic spouse is no longer required to promise to take an active role in raising the children in the Catholic faith, but instead to be informed at an appropriate time of these promises which the Catholic party has to make, so that it is clear that the other party is truly aware of the promise and obligation of the Catholic party. (Marriage preparation section, para. 6)

The Catholic faith is trying to make it easier for multifaith couples to marry, but there is still the hurdle of selecting a religion in which to raise children. What happens if the multifaith family wants to raise the children in both religions? The answer comes from the topic of raising a child in a religion outside of Catholicism. Catholic Marriage FAQs (2018) states that "the diocese can still grant permission for the marriage, as long as the Catholic party promises to do all he or she can to fulfill that promise [of raising the child within Catholicism]" (para. 4). Therefore, if both parents participate in the classes and have permission of the priest to marry, there might not be an issue because, technically, a multifaith family is trying to raise the child in both religions.

Receiving a blessing for the marriage and participating in marriage preparation classes can be high hurdles for a multifaith couple to clear. These issues help to better

understand the challenges of a multifaith couple seeking to get married in the Catholic Church.

Mormonism

The other Christian denomination I would like to highlight is Mormonism because of its lower rate of interfaith marriage. There are a few reasons for this low number. The first is the Mormon notion of eternal families. The concept of eternal families is not new to Christianity. However, the Mormons believe that the only pathway to having an eternal family is to be married in the Mormon temple (Riess, 2013). The only people who can be married in a Mormon temple are Mormons, so this reinforces the idea of marrying only within the faith (Riess, 2013). The next reason involves young adult Mormons meeting during their missionary work, thus increasing the likelihood of finding a partner within the faith community (Riess, 2013). Another reason is the banning of premarital sex (Riess, 2013). This practice pushes young adults to get married at younger ages, and this can eliminate the chance of meeting someone outside of the faith. This echoes the Catholic Church's policy of abstinence, and it is noteworthy that Mormons link it to earlier marriage. Another reason for low interfaith marriages within Mormonism is the level of commitment of Mormons to their community (Riess, 2013). The high level of interaction of Mormon families with their community can scare away prospective non-Mormon spouses. The next point follows up to the previous one. Mormons are welcoming to non-Mormon spouses. Mormons do not push away those marrying into the community, and this leads to more people converting to the religion at a later time (Riess, 2013). This sounds counterintuitive, but the strong interaction with the community leads to more conversions. Mormons also do not have a great reputation in

the greater public sphere (Riess, 2013). Many people view Mormons as oddities because of their founding, tenets, and geographical location. This unknown can lead people to find them strange, and this can keep them from wanting to interact with the Mormon community. All of these issues lead to fewer interactions with the outside community, and this lowers the amount of interfaith marriages.

Unitarian Universalism

Unitarian Universalism is branch of liberal Christianity. It is a combination of Unitarian and Universalism. This merger of the Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association took place in 1961 (Timeline of Significant Events, n.d.). There are seven tenets of Unitarian Universalism. According to the Unitarian Universalism Association (UUA) The Seven Principals (2018), the seven principals are as follows:

> 1st Principle: The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
>
> 2nd Principle: Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
>
> 3rd Principle: Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
>
> 4th Principle: A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
>
> 5th Principle: The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
>
> 6th Principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
>
> 7th Principle: Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. (para. 2)

These principles bring together progressive perspectives on faith to be inclusive for a diverse congregation. These tenets form Unitarian Universalism's thoughts on interfaith marriage.

The UUA's viewpoint on interfaith marriage is one of acceptance. According to Gaia Brown, quoted in Alden (n.d.), "Unitarian Universalist congregations are deliberate in their welcoming of all kinds of families; we feel that diversity is a treasure that enriches us all" (p. 9). The community tries to reach out to interfaith families in different ways. An example of this engagement is the celebration of traditions. Gaia Brown, via Alden (n.d.), explains:

> In many Unitarian Universalist congregations, they can expect to find that they are far from alone! We are often the "right fit" for interfaith families. Many congregations honor major Jewish, Christian, and other religious holidays. A Seder might be held days before an Easter service, for instance. Both the Jewish and the Christian scriptures, along with the sacred writings and thought of many other religions, form the basis of many of our curricula. We know there is value in all of them. (pp. 9–10)

The goal of the UUA is to welcome all families to their congregations. This example illustrates the extent to which Unitarian Universalism tries to be inclusive of interfaith families. Unitarian Universalism is one example of a progressive branch of Christianity that seeks to incorporate interfaith families into their flock.

Judaism

There are four major branches of Judaism. The most conservative group is known as Orthodox Jews. The more liberal denominations are Conservative, Reform, and

Reconstruction. The two largest groups in the United States are the Conservative and Reform branches. In this section, I am going to look at the Conservative and Reform communities' thoughts on interfaith marriage.

Conservative

The most Conservative branch of Judaism is the Orthodox branch. They follow the strict interpretations of the Talmud on marriage. The Conservative branch is a little more liberal than the Orthodox branch, but still retains much of the same beliefs on marriage. The Conservative community does not recognize interfaith marriage between Jews and non-Jews. The marriage does not exist according to Conservative Jewish standards. However, more recently, the Conservative community has tried to reach out to interfaith couples. The Leadership Council of Conservative Judaism (1995) released a statement on intermarriage that included this key passage from the text:

> In the past, intermarriage . . . was viewed as an act of rebellion, a rejection of Judaism. Jews who intermarried were essentially excommunicated. But now, intermarriage is often the result of living in an open society. . . . If our children end up marrying non-Jews, we should not reject them. We should continue to give our love and by that retain a measure of influence in their lives, Jewishly and otherwise. Life consists of constant growth and our adult children may yet reach a stage when Judaism has new meaning for them. However, the marriage between a Jew and non-Jew is not a celebration for the Jewish community….

This statement makes clear the thought process of the Conservative movement. If a person wants to marry outside of the faith, he or she will probably have to leave the community.

Reform

The largest branch of liberal Judaism is the Reform branch. Reform Judaism was created to be a progressive branch of Judaism. According to the Jewish Virtual Library, Reform Judaism: The Tenets of Reform Judaism (n.d.),

> [Reform Judaism] started in the 1800s in Germany during the emancipation and encouraged the examination of religion with an eye toward rationality and egalitarianism. Reform Judaism differs from the other major movements in that it views both the Oral and Written laws as a product of human hands (specifically, it views the Torah as divinely inspired, but written in the language of the time in which it was given). The laws reflect their times, but contain many timeless truths. The Reform movement stresses retention of the key principles of Judaism. As for practice, it strongly recommends individual study of the traditional practices; however, the adherent is free to follow only those practices that increase the sanctity of their relationship to God. Reform Judaism also stresses equality between the sexes. (para. 1-2)

Reform Judaism tries to embody a progressive spirit and can be thought of as the most modern version of Judaism.

In regard to marriage, Reform Judaism initially held some of the same beliefs as the Conservative branch when it came to interfaith marriage. However, this position has changed over the years, and the Reform branch does not make too many hardline comments on interfaith marriage anymore (Wertheimer, 2005). The rabbis have even stopped trying to make the non-Jewish spouse convert (Wertheimer, 2005). The Reform branch recognizes interfaith marriage as a part of the community; instead of making it

more difficult, this branch is trying to be more inclusive to interfaith couples. One reason that the Reform movement is trying to be more inclusive is because they want the children of interfaith families to be a part of the community one day.

All of these aspects of Reform Judaism shed a light on the areas where their interpretation of sacred literature diverges with Conservative Judaism. It offers an approach to Judaism that fits into a modern time period.

Islam

There are three distinct rules for interfaith marriage in Islam. These tenets come from a key section of the Qur'an. According to Lamrabret (2013), this passage states the following:

> Do not marry idolatresses (al mushrikāt) till they believe; and certainly a believing maid is better than an idolatress even though she would please you; and do not marry idolaters (al Mushrikīn) till they believe (hata yūminū), and certainly a believing slave is better than an idolater, even though he would please you. These invite to the Fire, and Allah invites to the Garden and to forgiveness by His grace, and makes clear His revelations to mankind so that they may remember (Qur'an 2:221). (para. 5)

Lamrabet (2013) extrapolates this key passage into the following three principles. The first principle allows Muslim men to marry a woman outside of the faith only if she is a Christian or a Jew; it is deemed reasonable because those two faiths are known as people of the book (Lamrabet, 2013). The next principle is that a Muslim man cannot marry a polytheistic woman (Lamrabet, 2013). In this case, the polytheistic woman is usually a Hindu woman. This is not specified in the text, but most times, those of the Hindu

140

religion are the people who fall into that category. The woman would have to convert to Islam for the man to marry her. The last principle is that a Muslim woman cannot marry a person who is not Muslim (Lamrabet, 2013). The only way for her to marry him is for that man to convert to Islam. All of these rules imply that only men and women can be married. It is almost impossible for same-sex couples to get married in Islam.

Hinduism

There are eight types of marriage in Hinduism. These are considered ancient types of marriage because of their location in the Manu Smriti or the Laws of Manu (Das, 2017). It is important to understand these types of marriage because they still have an effect on contemporary Hindu practices (Das, 2017). There are approved types of marriage, Prashasta, and undesirable types of marriage, Aprashast (Das, 2017). Das (2017) gives the following description of approved marriages:

> Rite of Brahmana (Brahma): In this form of marriage, the father of the bride choses a man learned in the Vedas and known for his good conduct, and gives his daughter in marriage to him after decking her with jewels and costly garments. This is considered the best type of marriage. It still exists in modern India, where carefully arranged marriages are the norm. Brahmana is sullied somewhat through the practice of dowry payments among some groups.
>
> Rite of the Gods (Daiva): In this form, the daughter is groomed with ornaments and "gifted" to a priest who duly officiates the wedding ceremony, during which a sacrifice is performed. Even in ancient times, this form of marriage was considered inferior to Brahmana, and was largely discontinued.

141

Rite of the Rishis (Arsha): In this variation, the father gives away his daughter

after receiving a cow and a bull from the bridegroom. This was not considered a

form of payment or dowry, however, but a gift of appreciation. But because it

resembled a "sale" of the bride, it was considered an inferior form of marriage to

Brahmana, and gradually was discontinued.

Rite of the Prajapati (Prajapatya): Here, the father gives away his daughter after

blessing the couple by reciting the words "May both of you perform together your

dharma." The couple is expected to perform civic and religious duties together,

and because these duties are imposed on the couple as a condition of marriage,

Prajapati is considered the least desirable of the four Prashasta forms. (para. 3)

These four types of Hindu marriage are considered to be the approved types of marriage.

As mentioned, these marriages are arranged between the bride's family and the groom's

family. In these instances, these marriages are acceptable by Hindu standards. The next

four types of marriages, as described by Das (2017), are considered to be undesirable:

Rite of the Asuras (Demons): In this form of marriage, the bridegroom receives a

maiden after bestowing wealth to the bride and her kinsmen. It is widely regarded

as the "selling" of a bride, and was considered greatly inferior to the four

Prashasta forms of marriage. It is no longer practiced among Hindus.

Rite of the Gandharva: This form of marriage involves the voluntary union of a

maiden and her lover arising out of physical desire and sexual intercourse.

Although it resembles western marriage in that it arises out of the free choice of

the couples without the participation of any other family members, it is not in

practice in modern India, although a similar type of marriage commonly known as a "love marriage" does exist.

Rite of the Rakshasa*:* This is the forcible abduction of a maiden from her home after her kinsmen have been slain or wounded and their houses invaded. This violent, forcible form of marriage thankfully no longer exists.

Rite of the Pisaka*:* In this form, a man uses stealth to seduce a girl who is sleeping or intoxicated or who is mentally imbalanced or handicapped. It is hard to distinguish such a form of "marriage" from rape, and thankfully it does not exist in modern India. (para. 4)

The Aprashast marriages emphasize the bride in their descriptions; this goes against the customs of Hindu culture; therefore, these types of marriages are considered to be undesirable. Both of these categories provide a better understanding of Hinduism's conceptualization of marriage. As mentioned before, these types are from an ancient book and still play a role in present-day Hindu society.

The ancient Hindu texts do not have any statements against interfaith marriage. Much like Islam, there are cultural issues with a Hindu marrying a Muslim. However, most of the literature discusses the problems with marrying someone outside of your social class (Trigunayat, 2014). This becomes more of an issue for Hindus than marrying a person outside of your faith.

Culture plays a major factor in marriage in Hinduism. Therefore, it still could be difficult for a person to marry someone outside of the faith. Incompatibility in social status can hinder any potential marriage.

Buddhism

Buddhism, much like Hinduism, has a different perspective on marriage than Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. As mentioned, Hinduism looks at marriage as an issue between social classes. Buddhism describes marriage as part of the secular world (Personal Ceremonies, 2012). According to O'Brien (2018), who quotes the historian Damien Keown, "early documents mention a variety of temporary and permanent arrangements entered into for both emotional and economic reasons, and in different parts of Buddhist Asia both polygamy and polyandry have been tolerated" (How Buddhism regards Marriage section, para. 5). This arrangement sounds like a marriage, but does not offer any spiritual bond. Therefore, the rules of marriage are found in secular society and not in the sacred texts of Buddhism. Some people who are being married will also ask for a blessing from the monks before or after the ceremony (Personal Ceremonies, 2012). Otherwise, Buddhism does not have many rules regarding interfaith marriage.

The next section will discuss the coherence of a multifaith narrative with the faith community. It will look at the interactions between the two groups, and it will also include the typologies introduced in Chapter 4.

Coherence

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Fisher's (1987) narrative paradigm describes coherence as the structure of the narrative and the ability for it to make sense within the structures of society. The first half of the chapter will explore the coherence of the narrative from the multifaith family and the community. The purpose is to understand the dynamics of the narrative within the thinking of both the family and the community. This

will then connect to fidelity, which will highlight the emergence of a conflict between the narrative of the multifaith family and the community.

The most pressing issue for a multifaith family in regard to coherence is communicating the faith narrative of the family. This will not always be an easy task. It highly depends on the traditional or progressive nature of the faith community. Nevertheless, it will be the multifaith family who must communicate the faith and make it comprehensible for the faith community. The better the family can explain the narrative, the more likely the faith community will accept it.

At this time, I would like to dive into the three typologies of Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active. I have already discussed the formulation of a multifaith family and narrative in Chapter 4. Therefore, I am going to use those concepts in relation to faith communities in these three typologies. The direction of these typologies will look at the ability of the multifaith family to explain their narrative to their faith communities. The actual acceptance of a multifaith narrative from the community will be explored in the fidelity section of this chapter.

Passive - Passive

Since coherence deals with a narrative's ability to make sense, the first typology of Passive/Passive will not find any friction with the faith community. The parents in a Passive/Passive dyad are not going to have to explain the faith of the family to a faith community. This is because the family is not actively engaging in their faith or with the faith community. The Passive/Passive typology is not going to encounter issues with coherence.

Passive - Active

The Passive/Active family will have to explain the narrative of their faith to their faith community, but it will be straightforward. In these cases, the family will say that the family is the active faith and describe themselves in this manner for the purpose of simplicity. It is easier for a family to explain this version of their faith to the faith community because it is accessible and it makes the inclusion of the family smoother within the faith community. The only issue arises when the parents are not together (e.g., at a mass) because the other parent is at home not partaking in the faith tradition of the other parent. This may lead to questions, and this will have to be explained or ignored, depending on the preference of the active parent.

Active - Active

The typology of the Active/Active family is going to have to make a concerted effort to articulate the specific multifaith narrative for their family to their faith communities. The goal for the family is to make their narrative understandable to the faith community. This can be as simple as saying that the family practices both faiths and will be participating in both faith communities to the best of their abilities, or it can be as complicated as explaining the synthesis of their faiths and how the family celebrates this fusion of their faiths. There is also the possibility that they will never address their multifaith narrative with the faith community, but this could lead to issues arising in the future.

One last thought with an Active/Active family is that the parents will need to equip their children with an explanation for their multifaith narrative. This is because the children may receive questions from members of the faith community, and it would be

wise for the parents to explain the multifaith narrative to the children. The parents can be engaged by telling their children that if anyone has any questions to talk to them, or the parents can assess whether the child can describe the multifaith narrative to another person and let that person answer any questions. This will only help the family's interactions with the faith community and will also help support the children.

The next section of Chapter 6 will examine the fidelity of a multifaith narrative in reference to the faith community. This part of the chapter is crucial to the multifaith family because it describes the interactions with the faith community and their acceptance or rejection of the multifaith narrative.

Fidelity

Fidelity is the key part of this chapter. Unlike the previous two chapters, where fidelity is compared in the context of the family to the internal environment and the extended family, this chapter explores fidelity in relation to the greater faith community and their perspective on the multifaith family. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Fisher (1987) explains fidelity as the process of comparing the narrative to our beliefs and experiences and seeing if it will hold up against those qualities. With this in mind, this part of the chapter will examine fidelity not from the perspective of the family but from that of the multifaith family in relation to the community.

The first part of fidelity will look at the multifaith family. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the multifaith family will face challenges in regard to their narrative fidelity as it relates to their faith communities. This means that the faith community will constantly evaluate the multifaith family's narrative fidelity. It is important to note that, at this time, there can be acceptance of the multifaith narrative by the faith community. However,

147

since faith communities do change with people in the congregation and the hierarchy, there does become a need to restate the multifaith family's narrative.

The next issue deals with society's concept of faith. I mentioned in Chapter 4 that a major problem for a multifaith family is explaining that a family can practice, or be a part of, two or more faiths. For many people outside the family (and this can include the extended family), a person can only be one faith. The faith community, depending on if they are traditional or progressive, can be weary or welcoming of a multifaith narrative. For many congregants and the hierarchy, it is good to be surrounded by people who share the exact same faith as your community. This is an area where there might be friction between a multifaith family and their community.

The last area of concern is the actual explanation of a multifaith narrative to the faith community. As mentioned in Chapter 4 and in the coherence section of this chapter, the parents will have to find an approach to discussing their multifaith narrative. This can be anything from not discussing it and trying to blend into the community to proactively defining the family to seek acceptance by the faith community. Either method could work, depending on the multifaith family and community. However, there will always be questions about the family and even the parents' decisions to raise children in both faiths, and this can cause some friction between the multifaith family and their faith community. The parents would be wise to take the lead on discussing their multifaith family with their faith communities because children can have a burdensome experience trying to explain their family to others. However, as they get older, it might become easier. I will discuss this more in the next section of fidelity.

The second part of fidelity highlights the interactions of the children in a multifaith family with the faith community. The children can have a different experience than the parents, and it is good to look at those interactions.

The children inhabit the multifaith narrative more than any other family member. The multifaith ecosystem is set up by the parents but has layers to it. For example, the grandparents, aunts, and uncles all play roles in the multifaith family, as discussed in Chapter 4. This is not to mention any other relative involved with the family, like cousins, great-aunts, great-uncles, or close family friends. The children become the multifaith individuals mentioned throughout this project. They will be the ones who take the multifaith narrative to the community, and the community will respond in a variety of ways. This is because those in the community feel like they have some say on the upbringing of children who are a part of the community.

The first concept is the rejection of the multifaith narrative. The community will want the parents to pick their faith narrative for the children and will make it known to the parents. However, if this does not work, the community will attempt to persuade the multifaith child to choose only the community's faith. A common statement from the community is as follows: "It is nice your parents let you choose which faith you want to be." These interactions not only dismiss the multifaith narrative to prioritize the original faith narrative, but also make the child's choice a choice between parents. The community feels that the child should be a part of that community, and the only means of doing so is for the child to accept the faith and reject the multifaith narrative.

The second concept is rejection because of the faith. The same idea applies for the faith narrative as it does for the cultural narrative. If a person claims to be two separate

cultures, the community will label the person as the different or more unique culture than the one of the community. A good example is of a multifaith child who is Muslim and Christian. If the child lives in either a predominantly Muslim or Christian community, the opposite faith will be emphasized because it is different than the group's faith. The child will not be labeled as Christian but as Muslim. The rejection does not occur because it is just a dismissal of the multifaith narrative.

The third concept is acceptance by the community. The acceptance in this case is a practical acceptance. The reason for this type of acceptance is the pragmatic notion of the community wanting to include more people in that faith community. As mentioned earlier, there are many faith communities seeing a drop in their members. Acceptance in this case is not because they accept the actual multifaith narrative and think it exists. The community is accepting the individual because they claim to believe in the same faith narrative as the community. Therefore, it is better to accept the multifaith individual than not.

The last concept of this section is acceptance because the community actually accepts the multifaith narrative. This version of acceptance represents the altruistic version of the two different types of acceptance. The community accepts the multifaith narrative of the family and wants them to join the community and take part in the faith rituals and traditions. As discussed earlier, this type of acceptance will occur in more liberal faith communities where the rules of the faith are loosely interpreted.

Finally, it is important to mention that all faith communities will have pockets of people who agree or disagree with the multifaith community. In this context, people in leadership positions and the general congregation represent the community. Therefore,

you can find communities where the leadership will disagree with the multifaith narrative and others where people in the congregation will disagree, but the leadership is accepting of the multifaith narrative. It is unlikely to find many places with a harmonized agreement on accepting a multifaith narrative.

The third part of fidelity deals with the faith community and their understanding of the multifaith narrative. The faith communities are the original communities of the different faiths that construct the multifaith family; a good example of this is a Jewish and Christian multifaith family. The "original" faith communities in this example are Judaism and Christianity. This section will look specifically at the originating faith communities.

Faith communities can have a difficult time digesting the multifaith faith narrative. The reason for this comes from two major issues. The first is the narrative, and the second is the questioning of their own faith and the rules that surround it. The multifaith narrative suggests that a family, or more specifically a person, can hold two different faith narratives in their mind and being, as I discussed in Chapter 4 with Du Bois (1903) and double consciousness. This general thought goes against the fidelity of most faith communities, but especially that of the monotheist faiths like Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The notion that a family or an individual could do this violates the normally recalcitrant faith narrative of the original faith communities. This is an understandable reaction because these faith narratives have existed for 5,000, 2,000, and 1,000 years, respectively. The amount of time taken to forge these narratives makes the faith communities hold their narrative ground. The idea of a multifaith family can challenge their notion of their own faith narrative. The multifaith narrative can make

them question the nature of the multifaith narrative, but also their relationship with their faith narrative.

The fourth part of fidelity is the questioning of the multifaith narrative by the faith community. The faith community holds the narrative of their faith as a part of their identity. The shared faith creates a strong feeling of community, and this bond becomes important to the sense of self for many within the community. Therefore, when a multifaith family puts forth the idea of an individual or a family sharing two dissimilar faiths, it challenges the fidelity of the faith community. As Mahoney et al. (2003) discussed in Chapter 2, these new issues in society can test the faith community's understanding of the sacred family. The questioning of the multifaith narrative becomes a method for the faith community to challenge and dismantle this new narrative, which confronts the rules of the faith community and many faiths in general. An example of this conflict is when a person from the faith community will ask the question, "Which faith are you?" or comment, "You must confuse your children" and "You can't be here because you are not [insert faith here]." The questioning and the comments to the multifaith family illustrate the battle between the two narratives. The older original faith narrative has misgivings toward the newer multifaith narrative. These arguments will be discussed in the next three sections in respect to the three categories of a multifaith family.

There is one important note to mention at this time. There are many people within the faith community that understand and can accept a multifaith narrative after it is explained to them. For example, my parents were lucky enough to find a priest who articulated his position that they just needed to raise their children with some sort of

connection to a higher power. This was in the 1970s when this was not a prevalent thought in many religious communities. In relation to this, they also had to find a rabbi progressive enough to officiate an interfaith marriage. They had to go to another Jewish community to find this rabbi. In these cases, these people tend to see the multifaith narrative not as a challenge of the authority of the original faith, but as an outgrowth of changing society and faith. However, for this project, the community will tend to focus on the dissimilarities between the multifaith narrative and the faith communities.

Multifaith Family and Community

This section of the chapter will investigate the relationships between the three different categories of multifaith families and the faith communities they represent. The goal is to describe the interactions between the family and community. The categories all have differing experiences with faith communities and some similar experiences as well. The sections will shed light on the obstacles that remain for a multifaith narrative to be accepted by some in the faith community.

Passive - Passive

The Passive/Passive multifaith family has an interesting relationship with their faith community. The relationship can be one of non-interaction or one of confrontation, depending on the interaction with the community. There is also the potential of acceptance, which was discussed at the end of the fidelity section. The other two categories will have some sort of acceptance or confrontation with a chance for non-interaction, but that is unlikely to happen.

The first part of the Passive/Passive typology is non-interaction. Non-interaction means that the Passive/Passive family is not actively engaged in the faith community. Inaction is a major part of the Passive/Passive category. Therefore, it is possible for a Passive/Passive multifaith family not to engage in any relation with a faith community because they are not actively being a part of their faith. The relationship between the faith community and the multifaith family starts and ends with the family deciding to remove themselves from the community of their respective faith narratives. This could be for multiple reasons, but a good example is of a same-sex couple not feeling included in a faith community because of the community's beliefs. Therefore, the couple may become less religious and decide not to interact with the faith community.

The other part of the Passive/Passive multifaith family is the conflict they could encounter with the faith community. However, the level to which this becomes an issue can all depend on the family. The clash between the family and the community can occur during the interaction of individuals in the family and the greater community. Instead of the conflict occurring because the family wants to go to church, synagogue, or another place of worship, the conflict will occur during regular interactions with the community; this will end with an individual from the faith community questioning the idea of a multifaith family and narrative. This is the instance of conflict between the Passive/Passive multifaith family and the faith community. It does not happen because the family is actively engaging with the faith community. Rather, it occurs because of a singular instance in the greater community and an interaction with someone from the faith community. A good example is a multifaith individual talking to a friend and the friend's questioning of the narrative construction of the family and the background faith

154

that together create the multifaith narrative. This questioning becomes a conflict that a Passive/Passive multifaith family or individual could encounter.

The unique part of a Passive/Passive situation is that the conflict could easily be brushed off because of the non-interaction and the nature of the Passive/Passive multifaith family or individual. Even though there is some sort of friction, it might not be something that causes animosity between the Passive/Passive family and the individual from the faith community.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, non-interaction and confrontation from the greater community are two experiences that a Passive/Passive multifaith family can tackle. Most of the time, the non-interaction will occur because the family is not actively engaging the faith community. However, it is important to remember that there might also be a conflict between the two faith narratives out in greater society.

Passive - Active

The Passive/Active multifaith family can follow the same description as the Passive/Passive family with non-interaction or confrontation. However, there are important differences concerning non-interaction and confrontation with the Passive/Passive family versus the Passive/Active family. The Passive/Active typology will focus on those distinctions because the content and context will change.

The first part of the Passive/Active typology will unpack non-interaction. Non-interaction in a Passive/Active multifaith family involves one parent not interacting in the faith community with the other parent interacting in the faith community. It is essentially the one parent staying at home with the other parent going to services in the faith community with or without the children, depending on whether there are any children or

155

if they are old enough to go to services. Non-interaction emphasizes the parent who is not

actively engaging his or her faith and not interacting with the faith community. A good

example of this is one parent going to church on Sundays and the other parent (of a

different Christian faith or of another totally different faith) staying at home and not

going to faith services. This highlights the difference between the Passive/Passive

multifaith family and the Passive/Active multifaith family. The Passive/Passive family

will have both parents staying at home and not interacting with the faith communities,

while the Passive/Active family will have only the one parent not interacting. However,

this is only half of the story. A Passive/Active multifaith family will encounter other

challenges in the conflict stage of interaction with the faith community.

The second part of this section deals with the confrontation that a Passive/Active

multifaith family could deal with in the faith community. As mentioned in this chapter,

there can be people within the faith community who will not have an issue with a

multifaith narrative. They can understand and accept this narrative, as well as the family,

in the faith community. For the purposes of this section, the focus will be on the issues

that arise when the faith community does not accept the multifaith narrative.

The friction between the Passive/Active multifaith family and the community

stems from the involvement of the active parent and the sporadic presence of the passive

parent. The issue arises from the faith community only recognizing the singular faith

narrative of their community and focusing on the inclusion rules of that narrative. The

faith community does not agree with the multifaith parents wanting to include their

children in the faith community because they also identify as part of the other faith.

However, in a Passive/Active multifaith family, this can be sidestepped if the active

parent is the person taking the children to any faith service or rite of passage. This free

pass allows the family to hide the other faith member of the family so that the faith

community does not necessarily know or see the person who triggers an ostracizing

response from the community. A good example is of a Catholic parent taking the children

to Sunday mass, but the congregation does not know that the other parent, who is Jewish,

is staying at home and watching football. This action will minimize any confrontation.

However, another example is of a passive Catholic parent taking the children to Hebrew

school because the active Jewish parent cannot do it. This can cause a conflict because

the faith community sees and is reminded of the multifaith family, which can lead to

statements like, "Your kids are not really Jewish," from some members of the

congregation. This questioning echoes the concept of gatekeeping. This is when a

gatekeeper, like a congregation member, is controlling the access to the dominant, or

master, narrative (Messel, 2015). In this example, the question has a negative

connotation. However, if another gatekeeper made a welcoming statement to the parent,

then it could have a positive effect. This is a conflict that Passive/Active multifaith

families can encounter, but it is also important to note the role of children.

The conflicts between the Passive/Active multifaith family and the faith

community are between the parents and the community, but often they revolve around the

faith of the children. The children are a focal point for the faith community because these

individuals embody the multifaith narrative more than any family member. I am thinking

of the Catholic Church and their instructions of raising children in the faith. This not only

affects the parents' role but also the godparents' role, as mentioned in Chapter 5 of this

project. Therefore, the parents (who originate from a singular faith narrative) are not the

issue for the community because they are already a part of the community. The faith community wants the children to be members of their community. In many cases, they want them to be a part of only their community. This is a conflict that will become a major issue within the Active/Active multifaith family.

Active - Active

The last section of the multifaith family and their relationship with the community will focus on the Active/Active multifaith family. Unlike the previous two typologies of Passive/Passive and Passive/Active, the Active/Active multifaith family will find that confrontation and acceptance are two different communicative perspectives from the faith community.

The first part of the Active/Active section will describe contentious interactions with the faith community. However, as stated in the other sections, there are people within the community who are accepting of a multifaith narrative, and this will be covered in the second part of this section.

The previous two sections include a description of the multifaith family having a conflict with the faith community. The conflict involves disagreement concerning the faith narrative and the multifaith narrative. The faith community finds the multifaith narrative to be foreign and different from the rules of their faith. The Passive/Passive and the Passive/Active typologies can *maybe* find themselves in contention with the faith community, but the Active/Active multifaith family will find themselves in conflict with the faith community. This is because the Active/Active multifaith family will try to be engaging in both faith communities; this duality, plus the overlap in activities, will certainly find some in the faith community questioning the multifaith narrative of the

family. However, as with the Unitarian Universalist Church, there are religious communities that welcome multifaith families; for some of those families, being able to celebrate both faiths makes these progressive faith communities a better option for them.

A good example of the interaction between an Active/Active multifaith family and the community involves Catholic and Protestant parents wanting to have their children be a part of both churches. The multifaith family can easily envision taking part in both services, as well as having the children learn the differences between them. However, for the faith community, having an outside member of their faith taking part in the services can be problematic. For many faiths, the religious institution and the community would rather have the outside member convert to the faith because then that person can be accepted into the religious community. In an Active/Active multifaith family, the other faith parent will not convert because he or she is actively involved in another faith. Therefore, a common practice for an Active/Active multifaith family is having the other parent stay at home during services or, in the case that he or she does attend the service, not participating out of respect for the faith community. In the example just given, this would be the Protestant parent not taking communion, which he or she would not want to do since it is not a part of his or her faith in the first place. This respects the faith community and also allows the multifaith family to participate in both of their faiths.

The last part of this section is acceptance from the faith community. The reason it is included in this section is because an Active/Active multifaith family interacts with their multifaith narrative and the faith community more than the other multifaith family categories. Acceptance is found in all of the categories, but it is an outcome more

prevalent in an Active/Active family situation. The reason for this is because the Active/Active multifaith family will be engaging the faith community to the point where there needs to be a resolution, such as the family being accepted by the community or the family being accepted by another faith community.

More and more faiths, like Catholicism, have become more liberal with their definitions of members over the years, especially because of dwindling numbers. This allows for more congregations to find acceptance in these more liberal communities. The same can be said for Jewish congregations that fall into the Reform or Reconstruction categories. Those communities have fewer faith guidelines for accepting members. The other outcome is for multifaith families to find other progressive faith communities. An example of this is the Unitarian Universalist Church, which is more accepting of different congregants. This can be an outlet for some multifaith families, but, in most cases, they tend to stay within their faith communities, in the liberal sects of those faith communities.

Conclusion

The largest test of a multifaith family and their narrative comes from their interactions with the faith community. The coherence and the fidelity of the multifaith narrative are subject to greater scrutiny from the faith community. This is because the faith community has specific rules for worship. The beginning of this chapter describes the policies and procedures of the world's largest religions in regard to the concept of interfaith marriage. The goal is to describe the points of conflict that multifaith families can find when interacting with faith communities. The chapter also addresses these issues with the typologies introduced in Chapter 4. Each type of multifaith family can find greater or lesser acceptance, depending on their construction.

The goal of this chapter was to examine the issues between the faith community and multifaith families. The takeaway is that not all interactions between a multifaith family and a faith community are negative. Rather, the situation depends on the composition of the multifaith family and whether the faith community is more progressive or traditional in their construction. If these elements synchronize between both parties, then there will be greater acceptance of the multifaith family. However, if there is a disagreement, then the multifaith family will find it harder to be accepted in that particular faith community. Looking to the future, the relationship discussed in this chapter is an ongoing interaction. The affiliation between multifaith families and the faith community will face many of the same issues, but it will also evolve over time. The evolution of this relationship will be fascinating to observe.

CHAPTER 7
MULTIFAITH NARRATIVE AS REPRESENTED IN POPULAR CULTURE

The reason I am including popular culture within the framework of this project is twofold. The first reason is that the function of popular culture is to reflect societal narratives through different communication mediums, and the second reason is that popular culture opens new narratives to unaware parts of society. I am going to first discuss popular culture literature in the context of the multifaith narrative as an entryway to understanding the later examples of multifaith family, narrative, and identity represented in popular culture. I am also including a brief history of Hollywood because it is an interesting discussion on the formation of many of these different multifaith examples as a result of the sociological construction of the entertainment industry. The final part of this chapter will use an example of science fiction to illustrate the potential direction of multifaith narratives in the future.

Communication plays a major role in popular culture. In this introduction, I would like to briefly examine one dimension of communication in popular culture, which is critical rhetoric. This will also be a part of the next section on popular culture literature and a multifaith narrative. Therefore, a good place to start the discussion on critical rhetoric in/of popular culture comes from Art Herbig (2016) and his description of the difference between the two phrases. He states that "rhetoric in popular culture treats popular culture as if it speaks and creates . . . [whereas] rhetoric in popular culture seems to insinuate that rhetoric is a dimension of popular culture as there are dimensions of popular culture that exist without implications" (Herbig, 2016, p. 101). The distinction

between the two different voices of rhetoric details the challenge of connecting rhetoric to popular culture. Herbig (2016) adds to his definition:

Not all of culture is rhetoric, but popular culture is culture's discursive from. Understanding popular culture this way distinguishes popular culture from culture based on the idea that the word "popular" suggests that people are attempting to create and manage meanings of the many different forms culture can take. (p. 102)

He then gives the following example: "Kim Kardashian can exist in the world without being popular culture, while a discursive Kim Kardashian becomes a centerpiece for discussions about gender, wealth, and reality" (Herbig, 2016, p. 102). Herbig (2016) maps out a course for understanding the role of critical rhetoric in popular culture.

The next section will examine the role of critical rhetoric in a multifaith narrative in popular culture. I will also look at the role of interpersonal relationships and their representation in a multifaith narrative in popular culture.

Popular Culture Literature and Multifaith Narrative

There are two areas of discussion I am going to explore in this section. The first relates to the critical rhetorical nature of popular culture. The second stems from an interpersonal perspective. Since this entire project involves different research from the interpersonal side of communication, it seems only fitting to include some research on popular culture in this chapter. The purpose of this literature is to connect popular culture to the representation of a multifaith narrative. Later in the chapter, I will discuss more specific examples that relate to multifaith narratives.

At this time, I would like to refer back to the introduction of this chapter and apply Herbig's (2016) concept of critical rhetoric to a multifaith narrative. The critical rhetoric of a multifaith narrative revolves around the question of religious identity. The movement toward multifaith families and multifaith identity confronts the normative understanding of religious identity. I will describe in the next section of this chapter the sociological history of Jewish immigrants moving to Hollywood. This story becomes a snapshot of an ever-changing religious landscape where people are marrying outside of their faith. The religious microcosm of Hollywood presents popular culture with its first taste of multifaith individuals. The television and movies of Hollywood include references to multifaith people, and the narrative finds its way into the homes of people across the country. The multifaith narrative becomes more noticeable around the 1990s, when television starts to examine, in depth, the relationship between parents and children (Tyus, 2015). At this time, more multifaith individuals were being represented in television shows, like *Rugrats* (which I will discuss more in the multifaith examples section of this chapter). This representation continues to this day with movies like *The Big Sick*, where a Muslim man marries a Christian girl. The growing change in religious identity is the central point of contention in the rhetoric of multifaith narratives. A multifaith narrative challenges popular notions about faith and muddies the waters on religious identity in this historical moment of religious polarization.

Interpersonal relationships also have the potential to be a means for better understanding the current interpersonal literature on pop culture. Jimmie Manning (2016) offers this explanation for the current interpersonal focus in popular culture: "Most tend to explore a particular relational identity, especially how that identity is accepted,

rejected, marginalized, or celebrated within a particular culture" (p. 153). This is a great

area to explore in interpersonal relationships, and I will be mentioning this representation

later in the chapter when I work through my typologies and the examples of those

categories. However, Manning (2016) wants to take this subject in a different direction

when he says that "actual studies exploring relational interaction, whether as it is

represented or produced in popular culture or it results from popular culture consumption,

are limited and difficult to find" (pp. 153–154). The movement toward unpacking the

topic becomes a central theme for his essay. The following explication will examine this

concept in more detail.

Manning (2016) describes the three metaphors often used in research on

relationships:

> For effect studies, the metaphors of popular culture as relational motivators (i.e.,
>
> popular culture motivates people to feel sexual or violent toward others) and
>
> popular culture as relational assumption-maker (i.e. some close relationships seem
>
> more normal than others) frequently come into play. That latter metaphor also
>
> works for many content analysis studies, although content analysis studies also
>
> deal with representation. For the humanist studies that critique relationships – or,
>
> more often relational identity – a third metaphor is also apt: popular culture as
>
> relational informant. That is, for better or worse, representations of relationships
>
> in popular culture can deeply impact how individuals, cultures, and societies
>
> respond to the relationships and the people who are in them. (p. 154)

These metaphors are constant lenses for examining popular culture. Manning (2016)

wants to move the conversation in the direction of the five metaphors he feels would help

accomplish that goal: popular culture as a significant relational moment, connector, indicator, relational artifact, and relational building block. Using these new metaphors, I am going to discuss the connection to a multifaith narrative.

The first metaphor is popular culture as a significant relational moment. Manning (2016) describes this as "popular culture is a part of – and often actually constitutes – the significant moments people share in their relationships" (p. 154). One connection to a multifaith narrative in popular culture is Ross from *Friends* trying his hardest during an episode to teach his son about Hanukkah and dressing as the Holiday Armadillo (Malin & Halvorson, 2000). I know this example is not one of a television viewer, but it illustrates the same event albeit in fictional form on television.

The next metaphor is popular culture as connector. Manning (2016) explains this as "relational connections can be pre-existing and made deeper through a new shared popular culture interest; yet it might be some aspect of popular culture itself that draws people together" (p. 155). A good example representing a multifaith perspective is "The Chanukah Song" by Adam Sandler (1994). He performed this song on *Saturday Night Live*, and it quickly became an instant hit and even gets airtime around the holidays today. The song mentions actors who are "half Jews," and the yelling of the lyric "not too shabby" is a moment for the audience to be a part of the song. "The Chanukah Song" has become a point of connection for many people growing up during the 1990s.

The third metaphor is popular culture as indicator. This is described as "popular culture preferences also suggest who we are relating with and how we might go about doing it" (Manning, 2016, p. 156). I think the episode of *The Simpsons* where Lisa becomes a Buddhist illustrates acceptance of the multifaith narrative (Freiberger &

Moore, 2001). If a parent watches this episode, he or she can relate better to a child who is adopting a faith outside of the family. This episode acts as a guide for parents to navigate a situation where a child's faith is expanding.

Popular culture as relational artifact is the fourth metaphor. Manning (2016) states that "conceptualizing popular culture as artifact in relationship studies would allow scholars to look at the meaning of objects in relationships" (p. 157). I would like to use as an example my mother recording for me the *Rugrats* Passover episode (Gaffney, Germain, Greenberg, Lipman, & Duffy, 1995). My mother is not Jewish, but she wanted me to be able to watch this episode to connect to the Jewish side of my family. I cherished this object because it connected me to my multifaith family. I wish I still had the original recording, but luckily enough, Nickelodeon still airs it around Passover.

The last metaphor is popular culture as relational building block. This is defined as "objects become extensions of relationships, and in many cases it is likely that some objects are more a central part of a relationship's constitution (Manning, 2016, p. 158). For this example, I want to call back to the *Rugrats* Passover episode recording that my mom made for me. I tend to record (not on a VHS tape, like my mom's recording, but DVR) the same *Rugrats* Passover episode, plus some other similar shows, so I can show them to my girlfriend. These shows connect our relationship to the multifaith narrative of my family and one that she actively likes to celebrate. The ability for me to share these objects and have her be as excited as I am about them is something I treasure.

Popular culture literature offers different theories and methods for better understanding its impact on society. I wanted to use these two approaches to illustrate at least some of the possible research perspectives. The next section will discuss the

167

sociohistorical characteristics of Hollywood, which plays a major role in the genesis of multifaith narratives in popular culture.

Birth of Hollywood

The focus on the multifaith family in popular culture comes from the changing demographics of the United States. I would like to include in this project a brief history of the founders of Hollywood and the change that resulted in popular culture because of their work. The following discussion uses the research on this subject by Neal Gabler (1988). He wrote a book called *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews invented Hollywood*. I feel that this exploration provides a sociological context that sets the stage for many of the multifaith examples I will be discussing in the later sections of this chapter.

The story starts when a few immigrant Jews founded Hollywood. They originally were showing the movies being distributed by Thomas Edison and other filmmakers. These films tended to reflect American society as seen by the establishment of the early 1900s. The best-known film of this period is *The Birth of a Nation*. This movie portrays the Ku Klux Klan as the saviors of America and the protectors of American culture from African Americans and incoming immigrants. The elements being portrayed in these early films clearly show the American culture as wished by the White Anglo-Saxon establishment. Jewish theater owners like Adolph Zukor, Carl Laemmele, Louis B. Mayer, William Fox, and the Warner brothers would show these films because no other films were available. Since these films portrayed Jews as greedy and other working-class people as animals, these theater owners started to produce their own movies (Gabler, 1988).

The movies produced by these men would tend to walk two lines: They either would stay within high culture because movies of that era were seen in that manner or would cater to low culture or popular culture. Jews seemed perfectly positioned to accomplish this because their culture stressed education, music, and art. However, at the same time, their place within American society (on the fringes) helped them understand the role of popular culture in the lives of immigrants and working-class people in America (Gabler, 1988).

Thomas Edison, as a response to these new movies being produced, created the Edison Film Trust in 1908. The trust made it easier for Edison and other members to crack down on any films being produced by outsiders. This negatively affected the Jewish theater owners. To get around these restrictions, the owners decided to head west, toward California. Laemmele would found Universal Studios and the town of Universal City. Zukor created Paramount Pictures. Fox would come to own 20th Century Fox. Mayer would partner with Goldwyn and form MGM, and Warner would work with his brothers to make Warner Brothers Studio. Seven years after Edison created the trust, it was dissolved because it was considered a monopoly by the United States government (Gabler, 1988).

Another part of this founding was central to changing American culture. These major studios found their own niches within the movie industry and would produce unique movies under their banner. There were many times when the studio founders chose movies that represented stories familiar to the struggle of Jewish immigrants. The characters tended to be outsiders or people trying to overcome the odds (Gabler, 1988). However, all of the studios mythologized an American culture that valued the working

and middle classes, and that tried to be diverse like the makeup of the cultures of America (Gabler, 1988). Therefore, what transpired was a counterculture, one that showed the hopes and dreams of Jewish immigrants, that was finally adopted by all Americans. The irony of the situation is that the Jewish studio owners did all of this because they were not originally accepted by the established American culture of the time (Gabler, 1988).

The last major part of this particular story is that the movie moguls would marry outside of their faith. One of the ways to show assimilation into a culture is to marry into it. Therefore, many of the studio moguls would end up marrying gentile women or remarrying to them (Gabler, 1988). The time period of all of this was from the 1920s to 1950s. The pattern of intermarrying was not localized to Hollywood. However, these future writers and producers would become the people who created the multifaith stories represented on film or television. As the intermixing continued, more and more multifaith people came to the foreground.

The next section of this chapter is going to explore examples of multifaith family, narrative, or identity as represented in popular culture. They are organized in the typologies I introduced in Chapter 3: Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active.

Multifaith Examples in Popular Culture

This next section continues the multifaith family typology put forth in Chapter 4. I am organizing the examples of multifaith family, narrative, and identity in popular culture within these typologies. I will admit that there can be some discrepancy related to the exact placement of some of the examples because there can be some argument about the finer details of these samples. However, I do feel like I placed these examples in the

correct locations and that these examples will help color the diverse expressions of a multifaith family, narrative, or identity.

Passive - Passive

The Passive/Passive examples in popular culture are not that abundant. Most of the examples in this section of the chapter fit the Passive/Active or Active/Active typologies. There are three instances where a Passive/Passive multifaith situation comes to light. The first is from the Polish movie *Ida*, the second is a brief conversation about Crypto-Jews, and the third is from an early episode of the television show *ER*.

The movie *Ida* is a good illustration of faith being hidden from a person because of circumstances out of his or her control (Abraham & Pawlikowski, 2013). The story starts with Anna, a novice Polish nun, preparing to take vows. However, it is revealed that Anna's parents were really Jewish and that her real name is Ida Lebenstein. Her parents and brother were murdered during the Nazi occupation of Poland. For the rest of the movie, Ida tries to come to terms with the fact that she is Jewish but was passed off as a Christian baby so she could survive. It ends with her swaying between the two realities and eventually settling on going back to becoming a nun. The movie *Ida* opens up the discussion on Passive/Passive families to include the idea of finding out more about one's ancestors and the reality of trying to connect to those who came before us.

Another example of a Passive/Passive multifaith family is the ethnographic category known as Crypto-Jews. Crypto-Jews are Spanish Jews who professed Catholicism to escape the Spanish Inquisition or other types of conversion and violence (Jacobs, 2002). Crypto-Jews may seem like a departure from the other examples in this chapter. However, the reason I am including Crypto-Jews in the popular culture section is

because of renewed interest in family genealogy. There are shows on television like *Finding Your Roots* and *Who Do You Think You Are?* which trace celebrities' genealogy. The latter show uses the website Ancestry.com to help find archival research. Ancestry.com is also popular for people interested in learning more about their own families. These services, in addition to genetic testing services like 23andMe, are popular in this historical moment. Therefore, Crypto-Jews and other hidden historical groups are becoming more relevant in popular consciousness.

The last example dealing with a Passive/Passive multifaith situation is *ER*. The episode "A Miracle Happens Here" contains a storyline of a missing infant who was taken from an elderly lady during a carjacking (Flint & Leder, 1995). The story takes place in December around Christmas. The grandmother, as we later find out, is a Holocaust survivor, and she discusses hope with Dr. Mark Greene. It is at this time we find out that Dr. Greene is half Jewish. This the first instance of a main character in a primetime show being multifaith. At the end of the episode, the grandmother is reunited with her granddaughter, and the rest of the family joins her to celebrate Hanukkah. Dr. Greene celebrates with them and then returns to talk to his daughter about his, and her, roots. I place it in the Passive/Passive category because they never address this character trait again in the show.

Passive - Active

One of the earlier depictions of a multifaith person was during *Saturday Night Live*. There were two specific scenes. The first was during Mike Myers's Coffee Talk with Linda Richman (Myers, 1994). The character of Linda Richman was based upon his then-mother-in-law, and Myers played an older Jewish lady who interviews guests on a

public access television show. In one of the skits, she interviews Helen Hunt. Hunt tells Linda that she is Methodist and Jewish. Linda responds by yelling "Mushu!" This is a play on the words "mu" for Methodist and "shew" for Jewish. Linda also describes a friend of hers who is Catholic and Jewish as a cashew.

The other major *Saturday Night Live* skit was "The Chanukah Song" by Adam Sandler (1994). This 1994 Weekend Update piece became one of the most memorable musical numbers done on *Saturday Night Live*. Sandler introduces the song as something for little Jewish boys and girls to enjoy because there are not too many Hanukkah songs. He then proceeds to list famous Jewish actors. He also includes actors who are half Jewish or a quarter Jewish, as a nod to those people who are multifaith.

These two skits fit in with the other television shows of the time. These programs are depicting a new identity in America. The new identity becomes relevant because it is reflecting individuals' own experiences, but the general mixing of more cultures and faith boundaries becomes less noticeable to those coming of age in the 1990s.

A pattern is notable with all of the television shows from the 1990s. The mention of any multifaith individual or family corresponds with Christmastime. The reason for this is because the holidays are the best examples of traditions in action. The celebration of these holidays revolves around the traditions. The traditions carry the stories of the faith as well of the culture that surrounds it. The coinciding of Hanukkah and Christmas gave the writers and creators of these television shows an opportunity to celebrate these new traditions and situations in a new story. Since television is always looking for a new storyline or plot, a multifaith family or individual was something new to bring into the picture in the 1990s.

The holidays also allowed for some other multifaith situations to be explored. As previously noted, *The Simpsons* aired an episode where Lisa, being down on Christianity, explores a connection to Buddhism (Freiberger, 2001). Lisa thinks she needs to stop celebrating Christmas because she has become a Buddhist. Marge becomes upset that her daughter does not want to take part in the family traditions anymore and purposely leaves her out of the Christmas traditions. She even goes as far as pretending to buy Lisa the pony she has always wanted for Christmas. This is a good example of the manner in which many extended families will interact with a person who is multifaith. The end of the episode features Richard Gere, and he helps Lisa find the balance between being a Buddhist and a Christian. He explains to Lisa that Buddhists can take part in the celebration of any holiday. There are no set rules dictating a strict adherence to specific traditions. This change in attitude represents a similar experience for all multifaith individuals. It is the connection between different traditions and the celebration of these stories with different families and even friends. A major part of holiday traditions is to be inclusive of people. Rarely do people leave out other parties when celebrating. For instance, at Passover, Jews leave an open chair for anyone who may come to the house looking for a place to rest. It is an old tradition that dates back thousands of years. Other faiths have similar traditions, and these become a key part of multifaith families' functionality within the holiday season.

The last example of a Passive/Active situation is from the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (Goetzman, Hanks, Wilson & Zwick, 2002). This movie focuses on the interactions of Toula Portokalos, her fiancé Ian Miller, and her big Greek family. There are a couple of major hurdles for Toula and Ian's relationship in the movie, but the one

that is pertinent to this project is the inability for her and Ian to get married in a Greek Orthodox church because Ian is not of that faith. For them to get married in a Greek Orthodox church, Ian must convert. Ian's conversion also convinces Toula's family that he is the right person for their daughter, and they start to accept him into their family. *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* illustrates a common theme in Passive/Active multifaith families. This is the topic of conversion. There is not a correct answer to the question of conversion because it is for the couple to make. However, in the case of conversion, the person does not lose his or her old faith background. It is still a part of that person, and this makes for interesting conditions for the multifaith family moving forward.

Active - Active

There are many examples of individuals coming from Active/Active multifaith families on television. I am going to discuss those examples in this section, plus I am going to cover a newer movie, *The Big Sick*, and a podcast interview that Marc Maron conducted with Mila Kunis. I think that these television shows, movies, and podcast offer a more concrete illustration of Active/Active multifaith families, which will provide a better understanding of this discussion.

The first example of an Active/Active multifaith situation comes from the show *Bridget Loves Bernie* (Cramer, 1972). This is probably the first known television program to depict a multifaith couple. Bridget Fitzgerald is an Irish Catholic teacher, and Bernie Steinberg is a Jewish cab driver. The show follows their marriage and lives as they try to navigate the familial interactions and their respective communities. The show lasted only one season before it was canceled because of vocal opposition to the idea of an interfaith marriage ("Bridget Loves Bernie," 1973). The show was ahead of its time, and the notion

175

of a multifaith family being on television elicited a negative response from religious groups. The next television shows to discuss multifaith families did not become common until the 1990s.

The second example comes from a television show called *The O.C.* The show's main character, Seth Cohen, has a Christian mother and a Jewish father. He creates a holiday called Chrismukkah to celebrate his multifaith identity. He combines the different aspects of Hanukkah and Christmas to create this new holiday (Savage & Bookstaver, 2003). *The O.C.* aired this episode in 2003. It is one of the first shows to openly discuss multifaith identity and even developed a new holiday that represents people from multifaith families. The timing is important to note because this show and its Chrismukkah episode come after quite a few television programs discuss the combination of holidays or the celebration of both holidays; however, nothing came close to actually acknowledging the combination of these two narratives.

This unique December holiday actually was adopted and celebrated by other multifaith individuals. It is important to highlight the fact that the mixing of Christmas and Hanukkah traditions did occur before this episode, but that the invented holiday of Chrismukkah would later become a more common name for the holiday. A few years before the invention of Chrismukkah, the holiday of Festivus was created by the television show *Seinfeld* and became popular with many of the show's fans (O'Keefe, Berg, Schaffer & Ackerman, 1997). So, the late 1990s and early 2000s became a breeding ground for cultural touchstone moments like these "new" holidays. These programs are still popular because adult viewers continue to be nostalgic for them and

there are always newer generations of fans because these shows still air somewhere in syndication.

Another example of an Active/Active multifaith family comes from the show *Friends*. Ross and Monica, two of the show's main characters, are Jewish and celebrate Hanukkah and Christmas with their friends. However, the episode titled "The One with the Holiday Armadillo," plays on the fact that Ross wants to teach his son (who is being raised by his ex-wife and her partner as Christian) about Hanukkah with Christmas right around the corner (Malin, 2000). This episode from 2000 illustrates the difficulty for parents to celebrate both faiths.

The perspective of this *Friends* episode is centered on Ross. As he tries to figure out an appropriate manner to teach his son about his Jewish roots, he realizes he is competing with Santa and all the other bigger-than-life narratives of a secular Christmas. Therefore, he ends up with an armadillo costume instead of a Santa outfit, but he turns this mistake into a teaching moment for the tradition of Hanukkah (Malin & Halvorson, 2000).

Friends is not the only show to examine the trials of being a parent in a multifaith family. *Frasier* created an episode around the misadventures of the main character (Frasier) trying to write a speech for his son's bar mitzvah. This 2002 episode (which coincidentally aired on the same night as the *Friends* episode with the Holiday Armadillo) lets us (the viewers) watch Frasier's attempt to write a speech in Hebrew, even though he is not Jewish (Johnson & Epps, 2002). He tries to get a Jewish colleague to write the speech for him, but after some misunderstandings, the colleague writes the speech in Klingon. From there, a bunch of humorous events unfold at the bar mitzvah.

Both of these shows do a good job of illustrating the navigation of multifaith families by using the different traditions. These mistakes or mix-ups tend to be common within a multifaith family and usually bring back memories for anyone who is watching. However, these especially stand out to a multifaith individual because his or her family has probably gone through similar hilarious events.

Although some shows do not return to their multifaith storylines, a multifaith character or plot becomes a regular occurrence on subsequent episodes of shows like *Friends, Frasier*, and *The O.C.* The mentioning of a multifaith person or family starts to become more frequent, and it is because of the timing of these television shows. The children of baby boomers, or even the baby boomers themselves, wrote these shows. The families of many of these writers may have been multifaith, or perhaps they were starting a multifaith family of their own. Hollywood has many Jewish artists, so it is not unimaginable that there would be interfaith relationships.

One of the first shows to actually have a few episodes about a multifaith family is *Rugrats*. Created by Paul Germain, Gabor Csupo, and Arlene Klasky, the cartoon follows the adventures of Tommy Pickles and his friends. The babies and Tommy's toddler cousin go through all of the normal life lessons. The show started in 1990 and became a hit with elementary school–age students. Tommy, who is the main character, was modeled after Klasky's son (Graham, 1998). She decided to make Tommy a child within a multifaith family because it reflected her son's situation. Therefore, as previously noted, *Rugrats* had an entire episode in 1995 dedicated to Passover (Gaffney, Germain, Greenberg, & Lipman, 1995). It is important to note that *Rugrats* episodes were usually two 15-minute episodes put together. The Passover episode stood out because not too

many television shows up to that time discussed anything outside of the normal Christmas episodes. *Rugrats* did have multiple Christmas episodes and even Hanukkah and Kwanzaa episodes later in its television run (Ansolabehere et al., 1992; Casemiro & Likomanov, 2002; Gorey, Hall, Herndon & Bell, 2001; Mittenthal & Duffy, 1997; Stem, Weiss & Muzquiz, 1996). The major difference between *Rugrats* and other television shows depicting a multifaith person is that the former covered the parental dynamic in a multifaith family. Most other shows (e.g., *ER*, *Friends*, *Frasier*, *The O.C.*) looked at one individual's perspective. *Rugrats* showed communication between the two parents, between the parents and the child, and among the child and the child's friends. This show did a particularly good job in making the multifaith family look inclusive and loving, rather than dysfunctional and confused. This allowed for people who were not multifaith to get a window into a multifaith family's world—or at least gave a non-Jewish or Christian person a chance to see a family celebrating a different holiday than that of his or her own world experience.

Another major impact that *Rugrats* and these other shows had on popular culture was to create a link to the growing number of people who are in multifaith families of their own. These viewers saw a representation of their family life on television for the first time. It gave them the opportunity to find out that there are other people living in the same situation. There was a representation of their experiences and the new growing population of multifaith families and individuals. These television shows and movies started to become more prevalent and take different forms later in the 2000s.

The next movie to talk about is *The Big Sick* (Apatow & Showalter, 2017). This movie is based on the real life courtship of Kumail Nanjiani and his wife, Emily Gordon.

The movie is great at describing the trials and tribulations of a Muslim man trying to court a non-Muslim woman. The plot of the movie creates tension between Kumail and his future wife's family for a short moment because he is Muslim, which is associated with terrorism. However, the greater moment of insight comes with Kumail's relationship with his own family. Kumail's family acts like a traditional Pakistani family wanting to arrange the marriage of their son. However, Kumail, not being the most observant Muslim, does not follow these traditional rules. The conflict comes from these opposing viewpoints.

Kumail's story resembles the situation of many of the people who wrote so many of those television shows in the 1990s about multifaith people. His story is becoming the new normal as more and more Americans assimilate and move outside of their familial traditions.

The movement away from family tradition becomes a cornerstone of multifaith families. The parents become the objects of tension for the children; in the case of grandchildren, they carry those narratives for the grandchildren. There is a role for extended family, and in *The Big Sick*, it is covered with humor and genuine detail. The original conflict tends to create, or mold, the creation of the multifaith family. It also becomes an ongoing source of friction for the children of those parents. However, it can become better over time as both extended families become used to the new family. However, in other situations, it can become insurmountable, and those family members are ostracized, which is also covered in *The Big Sick*. This movie becomes the newest example of multifaith families' representation in popular culture.

The final example for an Active/Active multifaith family comes from a podcast interview that Marc Maron did with Mila Kunis (Maron, 2018). In many of his podcasts, Maron likes to ask his celebrity guests about their religious upbringing. He seems to enjoy asking his guests about their religious experience. Therefore, in this episode of *WTF with Marc Maron*, he asks Mila Kunis about her religious upbringing. She explains that she is Jewish and, eventually, the questions get to her relationship with her husband, Ashton Kutcher. It turns out that Kutcher is not Jewish but rather from a denomination of Christianity, and his family is from Iowa. Kunis describes her relationship with Kutcher and his active interest in understanding and learning more about Judaism. She also brings up the fact that she likes to go back to his family home and celebrate Christmas with his family. This relationship offers a glimpse at an Active/Active parental dyad, where both parents care about the other's faith and want to be inclusive of the other person. I feel that this example illustrates a more modern example of an Active/Active multifaith family and narrative.

The Active/Active category contains many examples. My hope is that these illustrate a number of popular culture moments where the viewer may have missed a description of a multifaith family, narrative, or identity. The next section will briefly discuss a science fiction example, which could illuminate the path forward for the multifaith narrative.

A Sci-Fi Vision of a Multifaith Future

For this section, I would like to turn to an episode of the television show *Futurama*, created by Matt Groening. He is best known for creating *The Simpsons*. *Futurama* follows the exploits of Philip J. Fry (a 20th century man cryogenically frozen

and unthawed in the year 3000), Bender (a smart-mouthed robot), and Leela (a one-eyed female mutant). These characters find themselves in a multitude of situations familiar to the science fiction genre. To illustrate this vision of a multifaith future, I want to specifically reference an episode of *Futurama* based upon *The Twilight Zone* episode titled "The Little People" (Serling & Claxton, 1962). The plot revolves around two astronauts finding a tiny civilization the size of ants; they become gods to these tiny people (Serling, 1962). The episode reflects our understanding of God, and this theme is used in the *Futurama* episode "Godfellas" (Keeler & Dietter, 2002). The show looks at all aspects of this theme, and one of them directly addresses a multifaith narrative.

The direction of a multifaith representation in popular culture can be surmised with a reference to the *Futurama* episode "Godfellas." In this episode, Bender is lost in space, and Fry is trying to find him (Keeler, 2002). He seeks out advice from many different spiritual leaders. Since it is the year 3000, there is a montage of unique characters he encounters. I want to highlight a specific character who is from the First Amalgamated Church. His name is Father Changstein El-Gamal. This character epitomizes the prevalence and continued evolution of multifaith individuals. *Futurama* is making a nod to the eventual confluence of all faiths, as represented by Father Changstein El-Gamal. This episode puts forth a good prediction of the multifaith individual. In the future, a multifaith person could be more than just two faiths and instead a whole assortment of faiths. This pop culture moment seems to predict a possible future.

Conclusion

Chapter 7 examined popular culture and how it communicates a multifaith narrative. I use the perspectives of critical rhetoric and interpersonal relationships to discuss the impact of communication on popular culture. This chapter also gave me the opportunity to discuss the sociohistorical context of Hollywood and the influence this had on representing a multifaith family, identity, or narrative in popular culture. The three typologies of Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active allowed for a better discussion of these examples and their representation of those categories. I end the chapter with a reference to *Futurama* because I feel it best represents the future of multifaith families and multifaith narratives.

CHAPTER 8
CONCLUSION

The goal of this project, to borrow a phrase from Yiddish, is to noodge (nudge) the conversation and literature about interfaith families in a direction incorporating the perspective that a family can actually celebrate an amalgamation of two faiths or celebrate two faiths as distinct yet vital parts of their familial core. The idea behind switching the nomenclature from interfaith to multifaith was to highlight the positives and negatives of these families and to not just make the conversation about the tension or friction that comes with the denotation of an interfaith relationship. The next part will be a brief summary of this project. Then I will look at the implications for the field of communication and offer some thoughts for future research at the end of the chapter.

The second chapter of this project discusses the work of Ricoeur, Carr, and Fisher in relation to narratives. I chose Fisher's narrative paradigm for this project because it is a foundational concept in the field of communication. In particular, I looked at the concepts of coherence and fidelity because those two ideas, which are part of the narrative paradigm, help in understanding the sense-making and acceptance of a narrative. This becomes vitally important to studying and understanding a multifaith narrative and how it is created, maintained, and fitted to society.

Chapter 3 is the family communication and interfaith literature review for the project. It discusses the variety of theories used in family communication and highlighted important texts for the study of grandparents, aunts, and uncles. The chapter also examines the interfaith literature because it would be applied in the later chapters. As mentioned, this chapter acts as a repository for the research I would use later in the project.

The fourth chapter examines the multifaith family and their relationships. This chapter is the cornerstone to the whole project. It offers relational dialectics, cognitive dissonance, double consciousness, and bi/multiracial research as key concepts for better understanding multifaith families. I also introduce three typologies (Passive/Passive, Passive/Active, and Active/Active) to better interpret the dyadic relationship of the parents and also to categorize the different types of multifaith families. I discuss the role of children in multifaith families and try to lend some semblance of understanding to their communicative experience. All of this is explored through the concepts of coherence and fidelity introduced in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5 looks at the role of the extended family in the formation and interactions of a multifaith family. The extended family includes grandparents, aunts, uncles, and godparents. The extended family can be supportive or unsupportive of a multifaith family. In either case, it will have an effect on a multifaith family. The goal of this chapter was to explore these issues.

The sixth chapter explores the interactions and acceptance of multifaith families in their faith communities. Multifaith families will have positive or negative relationships within their faith communities, depending on the traditional or progressive nature of these groups. The narrative coherence and fidelity of the multifaith family will come under more scrutiny with the faith community than with other relationships. Issues relating to coherence and fidelity will be an ongoing aspect of the relationship between the faith community and the multifaith family, especially if the faith community is more traditional in nature.

The seventh chapter focuses on the multifaith family as represented in popular culture. This chapter discusses the social history of Hollywood and its role in producing media that show multifaith families. I also look for examples of the three typologies in popular culture. The goal was to illustrate the overt (*Rugrats*) and the under-the-radar portrayals (*Friends)* of multifaith families and individuals.

The next section will consider the implications for the field of communication in regard to this project. How do multifaith families expand the discussion of interfaith family communication?

Implications for the Field of Communication

As mentioned, the aim of this project was to look at interfaith families through a holistic lens. The interfaith communication literature does a great job of defining the interfaith family and describing their hardships and good qualities. My goal was to try to look at the interfaith family as post-interfaith. This means describing the actions of the parents after they decide on their faith relationship, such as if the family will be both faiths or maybe an amalgamation of their faiths. This does not mean that the interfaith research was discarded; rather, my intent was to examine the multifaith family, their inner workings, and the how this family came to exist. I also wanted to discuss the good experiences and the hardships of these families. Hopefully, this was a success and offers some takeaways for the field of communication.

One such takeaway is that using the term multifaith may help break the boundaries of the term interfaith. The term interfaith can be limiting because it implies some conflict and the need for resolution. The term multifaith broadens the scope of the research to include families that have made decisions regarding the faith construction of

their family. This can include families who celebrate both faiths equally. It does not assume that there is always going to be friction in the relationship.

Another takeaway comes from defining the multifaith family. There is an innumerable amount of combinations of faiths. Faith is not limited to just the religious element, but should also include ethnic and cultural perspectives. Therefore, if a multifaith family is created with two parents, one being Jewish and the other being Catholic, the outcome may vary from a similar family. This is because there are Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews, and Orthodox to Reform levels of commitment. The same idea applies to Catholic parents. Are they Roman Catholic or Byzantine Catholic, and are they Irish, Italian, Latino, or another ethncity? These unique qualities can change the construction of a multifaith family; this needs to be considered when discussing the research.

The final takeaway is for family communication. Family communication needs to focus more on multifaith families. There is some research on interfaith families, but it would behoove the area of family communication to take a deeper look at multifaith families. Furthermore, the growth of multifaith families will have repercussions in other segments of the literature. For example, same-sex marriages can be multifaith marriages. Adoptive parents can be multifaith. Some multifaith families could be in the process of incorporating a third faith because one parent is already from a multifaith family. Family communication should try to incorporate these elements because it will help illustrate the complexity of present-day families.

The last section of the conclusion will offer some thoughts on future directions for multifaith research. These areas can build upon some of the idea from this project and other existing family communication literature.

Looking to the Future

Multifaith marriages and families are growing subset of those respective categories. The Pew Research Center studies, from Chapter 1, describe the growth of multifaith adults and marriages with multifaith marriages being about 20% higher than 40 years ago. Therefore, this project and further research can help explain the nuanced and sometimes complicated construction of multifaith families and their narrative within society. I would like to cover three specific areas that I think are important for future exploration in regard to multifaith families and multifaith narratives.

The first area to examine is the connection between multifaith persons. This means studying the shared multifaith narrative of people who classify as having a multifaith identity. I mention this in Chapter 4 of this project, and it remains a fascinating proposition. Multifaith people share a common bond because they have communicated and experienced this world. The interesting aspect is that multifaith identity does not require the same inputs of faiths for people to understand the other. I do not want to disqualify the idea that having the same two faiths would make the connection stronger; rather, the fact remains that if a person has a totally different set of faiths than the other person, there is a shared connection of trying to navigate and communicate a multifaith perspective. The ability to examine the shared multifaith narrative is a promising area for more research.

The second area for continued research is the interaction of multifaith families and the faith communities to which they belong. Chapter 6 discussed the interaction of multifaith families and the acceptance of such an identity in religious communities. The inclusion or the exclusion of multifaith families on the part of the religious community is a point of emphasis because it is an ongoing challenge. As seen, some communities intentionally reach out to multifaith families, and others do not feel that multifaith families are a part of their community because they violated an aspect of religious doctrine. This becomes an issue for continued research because the dyadic response from the multifaith family and the faith community challenges normative thought on religious identification and worship.

Finally, the third area is not necessarily an area for more study, but rather a call for focused qualitative studies on multifaith families. There needs to be studies where the questions for the respondents are geared toward inquiring about a multifaith narrative and experience. The ability to allow multifaith families or multifaith individuals to tell their stories is vital to finding out about the connections and differences separating their narratives from those of single faith families. It also acts a repository of information for people trying to find a shared life experience with other multifaith families or individuals. This can open a wider discourse on multifaith families and multifaith narratives.

REFERENCES

Abraham, E. (Producer), & Pawlikowski, P. (Director). (2013). *Ida* [Motion Picture]. Poland: Solopan.

Alden, S. F. (n.d.). Let's talk about interfaith families. *In Unitarian Universalist Association.* Retrieved from https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/documents/aldensparrow/interfaithfamilies.pdf

Andrejevic, M. (2009). Visceral literacy: Reality TV, savvy viewers, and auto-spies. In Murray S. & Ouellette L. (Eds.), *Reality TV: Remaking Television Culture* (pp. 321-342). NYU Press.

Ansolabehere, J., Calandra, V., Gaffney, P., Greenberg, J. & Thutt, W. J. (Writer), & Swenson, C. (Director). (1992). The Santa experience [Television Episode]. In A. Klasky, G. Cuspo, & P. Germain (Producer), *Rugrats*. Burbank, CA. Nickelodeon.

Apatow, J. (Producer), & Showalter, M. (Director). (2017). *The big sick* [Motion Picture]. United States: Amazon Studios.

Arnett, J. J., & Jensen, L. A., (2002). A congregation of one: individualized religious beliefs among emerging adults. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 17*, 451-467.

Baltes, P. B. (1987). Theoretical propositions of lifespan developmental psychology: On the dynamics between growth and decline. *Developmental Psychology, 23*, 611-626.

Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L. M. (1991). Attachment styles among young adults: A test of a four-category model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 71*, 94-109.

Baxter, L. A. (2004). Relationships as dialogues. *Personal Relationships, 11*, 1-22.

Baxter, L. A. (2007). Problematizing the problem in communication: A dialogic perspective. *Communication Monographs, 74*, 118-124.

Baxter, L. A. & Montgomery, B. M. (1996). *Relating: Dialogues and dialectics*. New York, NY: Guilford.

Baxter, L. A., Norwood, K., Asbury, B., Jannusch, A., & Scharp, K. M. (2012). Narrative coherence in online stories told by members of adoption the triad. *Journal of Family Communication 12,* 265-283.

Beckerman, N. L., & Shepherd, L. (2002). Couple therapy: Identification of conflict areas. *Family Therapy, 29*, 77-87.

Bhabha, H. (1994). *The location of culture*. London: Routledge.

Blau, P. M. (1977) *Inequality and heterogeneity*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base: Parent-child attachment and healthy human development*. New York, NY: Basic Books

Branch, S. E., Wilson, K. M., & Agnew, C. R. (2013). Committed to Oprah, Homer, or House: Using the investment model to understand parasocial relationships. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture, 2*(2), 96-109.

Bratter, J., & Heard, H. E. (2009). Mother's, father's, or both? Parental gender and parent-child interactions in the racial classification of adolescents. *Sociological Forum, 24*(3), 658-688.

Bridget loves Bernie attacked by Jewish groups. (1973, February 7). *The New York Times*.

Brooks, C. (2007, November). Parental communication and its influence on biracial identity. Paper presented at the National Communication Associate Conference Chicago, IL.

Brooks, M. (2005). The American family on television. *A chronology of 121 shows, 1948-2004*. Jefferson, NC. McFarland & Company.

Brown, R. K., & Brown, R. E. (2011). The challenge of religious pluralism: The association between interfaith contact and religious pluralism. *Review of Religious Research, 53*, 323-340.

Brunner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brussoni, M. J., & Boon, S. D. (1998). Grandparental impact in young adults' relationships with their closest grandparents: The role of relational strength and emotion closeness. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 46*, 267-286.

Bryant, J., & Bryant, J. (2006). Implications of living in a wired family: New directions in family and media research. In L. H. Turner & R. West (Eds.), *The family communication sourcebook* (pp. 297-314). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bryant, C. M., & Conger, R. D. (1999). Martial success and domains of social support in long-term relationships: Does the influence of network member ever end? *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 61*, 437-450.

Bryant, C. M., Conger, R. D., & Meehan, J. M. (2001). The influence of in-laws on change in marital success. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 63*, 614-626.

Bugental, D. B., Shennum, W., Frank, M., & Ekman, P. (2001). "True lies": Children's

    abuse history and power attributions as influences on deception detection. *Journal*

    of Personality and Social Psychology, 63, 613-628.

Carr, D. (1986a). *Time, narrative, and history*. Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana

    University Press.

Carr, D. (1986b). Narrative and the real world: An argument for continuity. *History and*

    Theory 25: 117-131.

Casemiro, E. (Writer), & Likomanov, B. (Director). (2002). Babes in Toyland part 1 & 2

    [Television Episode]. In A. Klasky, G. Cuspo, & P. Germain (Producer), *Rugrats*.

    Burbank, CA. Nickelodeon.

Catholic Marriage FAQS (2018). In *For Your Marriage*. Retrieved from

    http://www.foryourmarriage.org/catholic-marriage-faqs/

Chinitz, J. & Brown, R. A. (2001). Religious homogamy, marital conflict, and stability in

    same-faith and interfaith Jewish marriages. *Journal for the Scientific Study of*

    Religion, 40, 723-733.

Colaner, C. W. (2009). Exploring the communication of evangelical families: The impact

    of evangelical gender role ideology on family communication patterns.

    Communication Studies, 60, 97-113.

Colaner, C. W., Soliz, J., & Nelson, L. R. (2014). Communicatively managing religious

    identity difference in parent-child relationships. The role of accommodative and

    non-accommodative communication. *Journal of Family Communication, 14*(4),

    310-327.

Coyne, S., Bushman, B., & Nathanson, A. (2012). Media and the family: A note from the guest editors. *Family Relations, 61*(3), 359-362.

Cramer, D. (Producer). (1972). Bridget loves Bernie [Television Series]. United States: Sony Pictures Television.

Curtis, K. T., & Ellison, C. G. (2002). Religious heterogamy and marital conflict: findings from the national survey of families and households. *Journal of Family Issues, 23*, 551-576.

Das, S. (2017, August 23). 8 types of Hindu marriage found in the laws of Manu. In *Thoughtco* Retrieved from https://www.thoughtco.com/types-of-hindu-marriage-1770476

Dates, J. L., & Stroman, C. A. (2001). Portrayals of families of color on television. In J. Bryant & J. A. Bryant (Eds.), *Television and the American family* (2nd ed., pp. 207-228). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Davidson, J. D. & Widman, T. (2002). The effect of group size on interfaith marriage among Catholics. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 41*, 397-404.

Deetz, S. (2001). Conceptual foundations. In F.M. Jablin & Putnam (Eds.), *The new handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 3-46). Thousands Oaks, CA: Sage.

Diggs, R. C., & Socha, T. (2004). Communication, families, and exploring the boundaries of cultural diversity. In A. L. Vangelesti (Ed.), *Handbook of family communication* (pp. 249-266). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Dowling, W. (2011). *Ricoeur on time and narrative: An introduction to temps et recit*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

Du Bois, W. E. B. (1903/1994). *The souls of black folk*. New York, Avenel, NJ: Gramercy Books.

Eaton, S. C. (1994). Marriage between Jews and non-Jews: Counseling implications. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development, 22*, 210-214.

Ecumenical and interfaith marriages (2018). In *For your marriage*. Retrieved from http://www.foryourmarriage.org/interfaith-marriages/

Edgell, P. (2005). *Religion and family in a changing society*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ellingson, L. L., & Sotirin, P. J. (2006). Exploring young adults' perspective on communication with aunts. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 23*, 483-501.

Ellingson, L. L., & Sotirin, P. J. (2010). *Aunting: Cultural practices that sustain family and community life*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.

Feeny, J. A. (1999). Adult romantic attachment and couple relationships. In J. Cassidy & Shaver (Eds.) *Handbook of attachment: Theory, research, and applications* (pp. 355-377). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. California: Stanford University Press.

Fiese, B. H., & Sameroff, A. J. (1999). The family narrative consortium: A multidimensional approach to narratives. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development, 62*, 1-36.

Fisher, W. R. (1987). *Human communication as narration: Toward a philosophy of reason, value, and action*. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press.

Fitzpatrick, M. A. (1977). A typological examination of communication in relationships. In R. B. Rubin (Ed.), *Communication yearbook 1* (pp. 263-275). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.

Fitzpatrick, M. A., & Ritchie, L. D. (1994). Communication schemata with the family: Multiple perspectives on family interaction. *Human Communication Research, 20*, 275-301.

Flint, C. (Writer), & Leder, M. (Director). (1995). A miracle happens here [Television Episode]. In M. Crichton, J. Wells & L. Woodward (Producer), *ER*. Burbank, CA. Warner Bros.

Foucault, M. (1980). *The history of sexuality, volume 1: An introduction* (R. Hurley, Trans.). New York, NY: Vintage.

Fowler, C., & Fisher, C. (2015). Intergenerational family relationships. In L. Turner & R. West (Eds.), *The sage handbook of family communication* (pp. 204-219). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Frattaroli, J. (2006). Experimental disclosure and its moderators: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 132*, 823-865.

Freiberger, B. (Writer), & Moore, S. D. (Director). (2001). She of little faith [Television Episode]. In M. Groening, J. Brooks, & S. Simon. (Producer), *The Simpsons*. Los Angeles, CA. 20th Century Fox.

Friedman, L. (Writer), & Schneider, L. (Director). (2015). A Christmas story [Television Episode]. In A. Goldberg (Producer), *The Goldbergs*. Culver City, CA. Sony Pictures.

Gabler, N. (1988). *An empire of their own: How the Jews invented Hollywood*. New York, NY: Crown Publishers, Inc.

Gaffney, P., Germain, P., Greenberg, J. & Lipman, R. (Writer), & Duffy, J (Director). (1995). Passover [Television Episode]. In A. Klasky, G. Cuspo, & P. Germain (Producer), *Rugrats*. Burbank, CA. Nickelodeon.

Gillespie, C. (Director). (2007). *Lars and the real girl* [Motion picture]. United States: MGM.

Glenn, C. (2013). White masculinity and the TV sitcom *Dad*: Tracing the "progression" of portrayals of fatherhood. In R. Jackson II & J. Moshin (Eds.), *Communicating marginalized masculinities: Identity politics in TV, film, and new media* (p. 174-188). New York, NY: Routledge.

Goetzman, G., Hanks, T., & Wilson, R. (Producer), & Zwick, J. (Director). (2002). *My big fat Greek wedding* [Motion Picture]. United States: Gold Circle Films.

Goltz, D. B, & Zingsheim, J. (2010). It's not a wedding, it's a gayla: Queer resistance and normative recuperation. *Text and Performance Quarterly, 30*, 290-312.

Goodall, H. L., Jr. (2005). Narrative inheritance: A nuclear family with toxic secrets. *Qualitative Inquiry, 11*, 492-513.

Gorey, J., Hall, L. & Herndon, B. (Writer), & Bell, A. (Director). (2001). Kwanzaa [Television Episode]. In A. Klasky, G. Cuspo, & P. Germain (Producer), *Rugrats*. Burbank, CA. Nickelodeon.

Graham, J. (1998). *The ultimate Rugrats fan book*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Harrigan, M. M. (2010). Exploring the narrative process: An analysis of the adoption stories mothers tell their internationally adopted children. *Journal of Family Communication, 10*, 24-39.

Harwood, J., & Lin, M. (2000). Affiliation, pride, exchange, and distance in grandparents' accounts of relationships with their college-aged grandchildren. *Journal of Communication, 50*, 31-47.

Hatfield, E. (2009). Equity theory. In H. T. Reis & S. Sprecher (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of human relationships* (Vol. 1, pp. 534-537). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hatfield, E., Walster, G., & Berscheid, E. (1978). *Equity: Theory and research*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Heider, F. (1958). *They psychology of interpersonal relations*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Heins, M. (2007). Media effects. In *Not in front of the children: 'Indecency,' censorship, and the innocence of youth* (pp. 228-253). Rutgers University Press.

Herbig, A. (2016). Critical rhetoric and popular culture: Examining rhetoric's relationship to the popular. In A. F. Herrman & A. Herbig (Eds.). *Communication perspectives on popular culture*. (pp. 101-113). Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.

Hobart, M. (2013). My best friend's brother's cousin knew this guy who . . .: Hoaxes, legends, warnings, and fisher's narrative paradigm. *Communication Teacher 27* (2). 90-93.

Holmberg, D., Orbuch, T. L., & Veroff, J. (2004). *Thrice-told tales: Married couples tell their stories*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence, Erlbaum, Associates.

Homans, G. C. (1958). Social behavior as exchange. *American Journal of Sociology, 63*, 597-606.

Hoppin, S. (2016). Applying the narrative paradigm to the vaccine debates. *American Communication Journal*, *18*(2), 45–55.

Horowitz, J. A, (1999). Negotiating couplehood: The process of resolving the December dilemma among interfaith couples. *Family Processes, 38*, 303-323.

Hughes, P. C. & Dickson, F. C. (2005). Communication, marital satisfaction, and religious orientation, and interfaith marriages. *Journal of Family Communication, 5*, 25-41.

Hughes, P. C. & Dickson, F. C. (2006). Relational dynamics in interfaith marriages. In L. H. Turner & R. West (Eds.), *The family communication sourcebook* (pp. 373-388). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Iannarino, N. (2018). What a loser that guy was: Norm Macdonald's humorous critique of the romantic/warrior narrative. *Journal of Communication Inquiry 42*(3) 241-257.

Jacobs, J. (2002). Hidden heritage: The legacy of the crypto-Jews. Berkely, CA: University of California Press.

Japp, P. M., & Japp, D. K. (2005). Desperately seeking legitimacy: Narrative of a biomedically invisible disease. In L. H Harter, P. M. Japp, & C. S. Beck (Eds.), *Narratives, health, and healing: Communication theory, research, and practice* (pp. 107-130). New York, NY: Routledge.

Johnson, S. (Writer), & Epps, S. (Director). (2002). Star Mitzvah [Television Episode]. In D. Angell, D. Lee & P. Casey (Producer), *Frasier*. Los Angeles, CA. Paramount.

Jorgenson, J., & Bochner, A. P. (2004). Imagining stories through stories and rituals. In

    A. L. Vangelisti (Eds.), *Handbook of family communication* (pp. 513-538).

    Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kalmjin, M. (1998). Intermarriage and homogamy: Causes, patterns, and trends. *Annual*

    Review of Sociology, 24, 395-421.

Kantor, D., & Lehr, W. (1975). *Inside the family*. San Franciso, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Keeler, K. (Writer), & Dietter, S. (Director). (2002). Godfellas [Television Episode]. In

    M. Groening & D. Cohen (Producer), *Futurama*. Los Angeles, CA. 20th Century

    Fox.

Kelley, H. H., & Thibaut, J. W. (1978). *Interpersonal relationships: A theory of*

    interdependence. New York, NY: John Wiley.

Kleman, E. E., Everett, M. K., & Egbert, N. (2009). Social support strategies among

    women of faith. *Journal of Communication and Religion, 32*, 157-193.

Koenig Kellas, J. (2005). Family ties: Communication identity through jointly told family

    stories. *Communication Monographs, 72*, 365-389.

Koenig Kellas, J. (2008). Narrative theories: Making sense of interpersonal

    communication. In L. A. Baxter & D. O. Braithwaite (Eds.), *Engaging theories in*

    interpersonal communication (pp. 241-255). Thousands Oak, CA:Sage.

Koenig Kellas, J., & Manusov, V. (2003). What's in a story? The relationship between

    narrative completeness and adjustment to relationship dissolution. *Journal of*

    Social and Personal Relationships, 20, 285-307.

Koenig Kellas, J., Trees, A. R., Schordt, P., LeClair-Underberg, C., & Willer, E. K.

    (2010). Exploring links between well-being and interactional sense-making in

married couples' jointly told stories of stress. *Journal of Family Communication,*
10, 174-193.

Koenig Kellas, J. & Trees, A. R. (2013). Family stories and storytelling: Windows into
the family soul. In A. L. Vangelisti (Ed.), Handbook of family communication
(2nd ed., pp. 391-406). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Koenig Kellas, J., & Kranstuber Horstman, H. (2015). Communicated narrative sense-
making: Understanding family narratives. Storytelling, and the construction of
meaning through a communicative lens. In L. Turner & R. West (Eds.), *The sage*
handbook of family communication (pp. 76-90). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kranstuber Horstman, H. (2013). "Love stories aren't always like the movies": The
positive and negative relational implication of inherited parental courtship stories.
In J. Koenig Kellas (Ed.) *Family storytelling: Negotiating identity, teaching*
lessons, and making meaning. New York, NY: Routledge.

Kuhn, A. (1974). *The logic of social systems: A unified deductive, systems-based,*
approach to social science. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Labov, W. (1999). The transformation of experience in narrative. In A. Jaworski and N.
Coupland (Eds.), *The discourse reader* (pp. 221–235). New York, NY: Routledge.

Lamrabet, A. (2013, January 18). *What does the Qur'an say about the interfaith*
marriage? Retrieved from http://asma-lamrabet.com/articles/what-does-the-qur-
an-say-about-the-interfaith-marriage

Langellier, K. M., & Peterson, E. E. (2004). *Storytelling in daily life: Performing*
narrative. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race and family life*. Berkeley, CA:
University of California Press.

Leadership Council of Conservative Judaism (1995). *Statement on Intermarriage*.

Leonard, M. (2009). "It's better to stick to your own kind": Teenager's views on cross-community marriages in Northern Ireland. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 35*, 97-113.

Linde, C. (1993). *Life stories: The creation of coherence*. New York, NY: Oxford
University Press.

Lynch, J. (1986). *Godparents and kinship in early medieval Europe*. Princeton, NJ:
Princeton University.

Mahoney, A. (2010). Religion in families, 1999-2009: A relational spirituality framework. *Journal of Marriage & Family, 72*, 805-827. doi:10.1111/j.1741-3737.2010.00732.x

Mahoney, A., Paragament, K. I., Murray-Swank, A., & Murray-Swank, N. (2003). Religion and the sanctification of family relationships. *Review of Religious Research, 44*, 220-236.

Main, M., & Solomon, J. (1990). Procedures for identifying infants as disorganized/disoriented during the Ainsworth strange situation. In M. T. Greenberg, D. Cicchetti, & E. M. Cummmings (Eds.), Attachment in the preschool years: Theory, research, and interventions (pp. 161-182). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Malin, G. (Writer), & Halvorson, G. (Director). (2000). The one with the holiday
    armadillo [Television Episode]. In D. Crane & M. Kauffman (Producer), *Friends*.
    Burbank, CA. Warner Bros.

Mandelbaum, J. (1987). Couples sharing stories. *Communication Quarterly, 35*, 144-170.

Manning, J. (2016). Rethinking studies of relationships and popular culture: Notes on
    approach, method, and (meta)theory. In A. F. Herrman & A. Herbig (Eds.).
    Communication perspectives on popular culture. (pp. 153-165). Lanham,
    Maryland: Lexington Books.

Manusov, V. (2001) Preface. In V. Manusov & J. H. Harvey (Eds.) *Attribution,*
    communication behavior, and close relationships (pp. xvii-xxi). Cambridge, UK:
    Cambridge University Press.

Marks, L. (2006). Religion and family relational health: An overview and conceptual
    model. *Journal of Religion and Health, 45*, 603-618.

Maron, M. (2018, July 30). Mila Kunis/Iliza Shlesinger. *WTF with Marc Maron*. Podcast
    retrieved from http://www.wtfpod.com/podcast/episode-937-mila-kunis-iliza-
    shlesinger

Matabane, P., & Merritt, B. (1996). African Americans on television: Twenty five years
    after Kerner. *Howard Journal of Communications, 7*(4), 329-338.

McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the*
    self. New York, NY: Guilford.

McAloney, K. (2012). Interfaith relationships in Great Britain: Prevalence and
    implication for psychological well-being. *Mental Health, Religion, & Culture*, 1-
    9.

McGoldrick, M. (1982). Ethnicity and family therapy: An overview. In M. McGoldrick,

J. K. Pearce, & J. Giordano (Eds.), *Ethnicity and family therapy* (pp. 3-30). New

York, NY: Guilford.

McLeod, J. M., & Chaffe, S. H. (1972). The construction of social reality. In J. T.

Tedeschi (Eds.) *The social influence process* (pp. 50-99). Chicago, IL: Aldine-

Atherton.

Messel, M. (2015). *Profiles in resilience: Narratives about homosexuality and access to

social capital in the social ecological systems of black sexual minority men during

secondary school*. Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University.

Metts, S., & Asbury, B. (2015). Theoretical approaches to family communication. In L.

Turner & R. West (Eds.), *The sage handbook of family communication* (pp. 41-

57). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Milardo, R. M. (2005). Generative uncle and nephew relationships. *Journal of Marriage

and Family, 67*, 1226-1236.

Milardo, R. M. (2010). *The forgotten kin: Aunts and uncles*. New York, NY: Cambridge

University Press.

Miller, R. L., & Miller, B. (1990). Mothering in the biracial child: Bridging the gaps

between African-American and white parenting styles. *Women & Therapy, 10*(1-

2), 169-179.

Mittenthal, R. (Writer), & Duffy, J. (Director). (1997). Let it snow [Television Episode].

In A. Klasky, G. Cuspo, & P. Germain (Producer), *Rugrats*. Burbank, CA.

Nickelodeon.

Monahan, M. (2011). Turbulent and dangerous spirits: Irish servitude in Barbados. In *the creolizing subject: Race, reason, and the politics of purity* (pp. 51-76). Fordham University.

Morr Serewicz, M. C., & Canary, D. J. (2008). Assessments of disclosure from the in-laws: Links among disclosure topics, family privacy orientations, and relational quality. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 25*, 333-357.

Murphy, C. (2015, June 2). Interfaith marriage is common in U.S., particularly among the recently wed. *Pew research center*. Retrieved from: http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/06/02/interfaith-marriage/

Myers, M. (Writer), & N.A. (Director). (1994). Helen Hunt and Snoop Doggy Dog [Television Episode]. In L. Michaels (Producer), *SNL*. New York, NY. NBC.

Nelsen, H. M. (1990). The religious identification of children of interfaith marriages. *Review of Religious Research, 32*, 122-134.

O'Brien, B. (2018, July 23). Romantic love and marriage in the Buddhist tradition. In *Thoughtco* Retrieved from https://www.thoughtco.com/love-marriage-and-buddhism-449586

O'Conner, T. G., Hetherington, E. M., & Clingempeel, W. G. (1997). Systems and bi-directional influences in families. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 14,* 491-504.

O'Keefe, D., Berg, A., & Schaffer, J. (Writer), & Ackerman, A. (Director). (1997). The strike [Television Episode]. In J. Seinfeld & L. David (Producer), *Seinfeld*. Los Angeles, CA. Castle Rock Entertainment.

One-in-five U.S. adults were raised in interfaith homes (2016, October 26). *Pew research center.* Retrieved from: http://www.pewforum.org/2016/10/26/one-in-five-u-s-adults-were-raised-in-interfaith-homes/

Olson, D. H. (2000). Circumplex model of marital and family systems. *Journal of Family Theraphy, 22*, 144-167.

Olson, D. H., Russell, C. S., & Sprenkle, D. H. (1983). Circumplex model of marital and family systems VI: Theoretical update. *Family Process, 22*, 69-83.

O'Neil, N. B. C. (2007). *Socialization of grandchildren by their grandparents about the attitudes and beliefs of love and marriage*. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University.

Parks, M. R. (1997). Relational communication: Theory and practice. *Human Communication Research, 3*, 372-381.

Parsons, R. N., Nalbone, D. P., Killmer, J. M., & Wetchler, J. L. (2007). Identity development, differentiation, personal, authority, and degree of religiosity as predictors of interfaith marital satisfaction. *The American Journal of Family Therapy, 35*, 343-361.

Personal Ceremonies (2012, June 6)*. Personal ceremonies: Marriage/funeral rites*. Retrieved from http://www.buddhanet.net/funeral.htm.

Peterson, L. R. (1986). Interfaith marriages and religious commitment among Catholics. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 48*, 725-735.

Petronio, S. (1991). Communication boundary management: A theoretical model of managing disclosure of private information between married couples. *Communication Theory, 1*, 311-335.

Petronio, S. (2007). Translational research endeavors and the practices of communication privacy management. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 35*, 218-222.

Pine, C. L. (1993). *Ideology and false consciousness: Marx and his historical progenitors*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Pratt, M. W., Norris, J. E., Hebblethwaite, S., & Arnold, M. L. (2008). Intergenerational transmission of values: Family generativity and adolescents' narratives of parent and grandparent value teaching. *Journal of Personality, 76*, 171-198.

Racin, L., & Dein, S. (2010). Jewish-Arab couple relationships in Israel: Underlying motives for entering and engaging in intermarriage. *Journal of Muslim Mental Health, 5*, 278-300.

Radina, M., & Cooney, T. M. (2000). Relationships quality between multiracial adolescents and their biological parents. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 70*(4), 445-454.

Ramshaw, E. (1994). Rethinking the role of godparents. *Word & World 14*(1), 43-50.

Reese, E. (1996) Conceptions of self in mother-child birth stories. *Journal of Narrative and Life History, 6*, 23-38.

Reform Judaism: The tenants of reform Judaism (n.d.). In *The Jewish virtual library a project of AICE*. Retrieved from https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-tenets-of-reform-judaism

Reiter, M. J., & Gee, C. B. (2008). Open communication and partner support in intercultural and interfaith romantic relationships: A relational maintenance approach. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 25*, 539-559.

Ricoeur, P. (1984). *Time and narrative: Volume I*. (K. McLaughlin & D. Pellauer, Trans.). Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1983).

Ricoeur, P. (1985). *Time and narrative: Volume II*. (K. McLaughlin & D. Pellauer, Trans.). Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1984).

Ricoeur, P. (1988). *Time and narrative: Volume III*. (K. McLaughlin & D. Pellauer, Trans.). Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1985).

Ricoeur, P. (1992*). Oneself as another*. (K. Blamey & D. Pellauer, Trans.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Riess, J. (2013 May, 7). *Why Mormons have the lowest rates of interfaith marriage*. Retrieved from https://religionnews.com/2013/05/07/why-mormons-have-the-lowest-rates-of-interfaith-marriage/

Ritchie, L. D. (1991). Family communication patterns: An epistemic analysis and conceptual reinterpretation. *Communication Research, 18*, 548-565.

Roberts, K. G. (2004). Texturing the narrative paradigm: Folklore and communication. *Communication Quarterly*, *52*(2), 129–142.

Robinson, J. D., & Skill, T. (2001). Five decades of families on television: From the 1950s through the 1990s. In J. Bryant & J. A. Bryant (Eds.), *Television and the American family* (2nd ed., pp. 139-162). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Rogers, L. E. (2001). Relational communication in context of family. *Journal of Family Communication, 1*, 25-35.

Rowland, R. (1988). The value of the rational world and narrative paradigms. *Central States Speech Journal. 39,* (3-4): 204–217.

Rusbult, C. E. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model: The development (and deterioration) of satisfaction and commitment in heterosexual involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 45*, 101-117.

Rusbult, C.E, & Buunk, B. P. (1993) Commitment processes in close relationships: An interdependence analysis. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 10*, 175-204.

Sandler, A. (Writer), & N.A. (Director). (1994). Roseanne and Green Day [Television Episode]. In L. Michaels (Producer), *SNL*. New York, NY. NBC.

Savage, S. (Writer), & Bookstaver, S. (Director). (2003). The best Chrismukkah ever [Television Episode]. In J. Schwartz (Producer), *The O.C*. Newport Beach, CA. Warner Bros.

Searle, J. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Oxford, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Serling, R. (Writer), & Claxton, W. (Director). (1962). The little people [Television Episode]. In B. Houghton (Producer), *The Twilight Zone*. Culver City, CA. MGM.

Sherkat, D. E. (2004). Religious intermarriage in the United States: Trends, patterns, and predictors. *Social Science Research, 33*, 606-625.

Siegel, S. M., Friedlander, M. L., Heatherington, L. (1992). Nonverbal relational control in family communication. *Journal Of Nonverbal Behavior, 16*, 117-139.

Signorelli, N. (2009). Minorities representation in prime time: 2000 to 2008. *Communication Research Reports, 26*(4), 323-336.

Signorelli, N., & Morgan, M. (2001). Television and the family. The cultivation perspective. In J. In J. Bryant & J. A. Bryant (Eds.), *Television and the American family* (2nd ed., pp. 333-351). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Soliz, J. (2007). Communicative predictors of a shared family identity: Comparison of grandchildren's perception of family-of-origin grandparents and stepgrandparetns. *Journal of Family Communication, 7*, 177-194.

Soliz, J., & Rittenour, C. E. (2012). Family as an intergroup arena. In H Giles (Ed.), *The handbook of intergroup communication* (pp. 331-343). New York, NY: Routledge.

Stem, J. D. & Weiss, D. (Writer), & Muzquiz, R. (Director). (1996). Chanukah [Television Episode]. In A. Klasky, G. Cuspo, & P. Germain (Producer), *Rugrats*. Burbank, CA. Nickelodeon.

Sterk, H., & Sisler, H. (2015). Organized religion and family communication: Support and oppression. In L. Turner & R. West (Eds.), *The sage handbook of family communication* (pp. 278-292). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stillman, S. (2007). 'The missing white girl syndrome': Disappeared women and media activism. *Gender and Development, 15*(3), 491-502.

Stone, E. (1988). *Black sheep and kissing cousins: How our family stories shape us*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Stone, E. (2004). *Black sheep and kissing cousins: How our family stories shape us*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transactional Publishers.

Tavris, C., Aronson, E. (2007). *Mistakes were made (but not by me). Why we justify foolish beliefs, bad decisions, and hurtful acts*. New York, NY: Houghton, Mifflin, Harcourt Publishing Company.

Thompson, B., Koenig Kellas, J., Soliz, J., Thompson, J., Epp, A., & Schrodt, P. (2009). Family legacies: Constructing individual and family identity through intergeneration storytelling. *Narrative Inquiry, 19*, 106-134.

Timeline of significant events in the merger of the Unitarian and Universalist churches during the 1900s (n.d.). In *Harvard divinity school: Andover-harvard theological library*. Retrieved from https://div.hds.harvard.edu/library/bms/merger_timeline_1900s.html

Timmer, S. G., & Veroff, J. (2000). Family ties and the discontinuity of divorce in black and white newlywed couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 62*, 349-361.

Trigunayat, S. (2014, August 21). Inter-caste & inter-religious marriages: Social and legal issues. In *Academike*. Retrieved from https://www.lawctopus.com/academike/inter-caste-inter-religious-marriages-social-legal-issues/

Turner, L. & West, R. (2013). Perspectives on family communication (4th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Turner, L., & West, R. (2015). The challenge of defining "family". In L. Turner & R. West (Eds.), *The sage handbook of family communication* (pp. 10-25). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tyus, J. L. (2015). It's all in the family: A historical analysis of diversity and family communication within television sitcoms. In L. Turner & R. West (Eds.), *The sage handbook of family communication* (pp. 337-351). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Uhlenberg, P. (1980). Death and the family. *Journal of Family History, 5*, 313-320.

Unitarian Universalist association the seven principals (2018, July 1). *In Unitarian Universalist association*. Retrieved https://www.uua.org/beliefs/what-we-believe/principles

Walsh, F. (2010). Spiritual diversity: Multifaith perspectives in family therapy. *Family Processes, 49*, 330-348.

Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. H., & Jackson, D. D. (1967). *Pragmatics of human communication*. New York, NY: Norton.

Weller**,** P. (2009). "How Participation Changes Things: 'Inter-Faith', 'Multi-Faith' and a New Public Imaginary", in A. Dinham; R. Furbey, and V. Lowndes (eds), *Faith in the Public Realm: Controversies, Policies and Practices*, Policy Press, Bristol, pp. 63-81.

Wertheimer, J. (2005). *All quiet on the religious front? Jewish unity, denominationalism, and postdenominationalism in the United States*. New York, NY: American Jewish Committee.

White, J. M., & Klein, D. M. (2002). *Family theories* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wilcox, W. B., Chaves, M., & Franz, D. (2004). Focused on the family? Religious

    traditions, family discourse, and pastoral practice. *Journal for Scientific Study of*

    Religion, 43, 491-504.

Williams, A., & Nussbaum, J. F. (2001). *Intergenerational communication across the life*

    span. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Wilson, A. (1990). *The piano lesson*. New York, NY: Plume.

Wilson, J., & Sandomirsky, S. (1991). Religious affiliation and the family. *Sociological*

    Forum, 6, 1070-1092.

Wilson, S. R., & Whipple, E. E. (2001). Attributions and regulative communication by

    parents participating in a community-based child physical abuse prevention

    program. In V. Manusov & J. H. Harvey (Eds.), *Attribution, commination*

    behavior, and close relationships (pp. 227-247). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge

    University Press.

Yovetich, N. A., & Rusbult, C. E. (1994). Accommodative behavior in close

    relationships: Exploring transformation of motivation. *Journal of Experimental*

    Social Psychology, 30, 138-165.