

Western University

Scholarship@Western

---

Inspiring Minds – A Digital Collection of  
Western's Graduate Research, Scholarship and  
Creative Activity

Inspiring Minds

---

September 2023

## Persistence and Survival: Searching for the Jewish Girl in Children's and Young Adult Literature

Melanie J. Fishbane Ms

Western University, mfishban@uwo.ca

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/inspiringminds>

---

### Citation of this paper:

Fishbane, Melanie J. Ms, "Persistence and Survival: Searching for the Jewish Girl in Children's and Young Adult Literature" (2023). *Inspiring Minds – A Digital Collection of Western's Graduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity*. 406.

<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/inspiringminds/406>

## Persistence and Survival: Searching for Jewish Girlhood in Children's and Young Adult Literature

Melanie J. Fishbane

My research examines how the Jewish girl protagonist survives the double alienation of subverting the traditional models of Jewish femininity, and being ostracized as a woman and a Jew within the dominant male Christian culture. Most scholarship on Jewish children's literature is primarily focused on the Holocaust, with some attention to late twentieth-century authors, like Judy Blume. The intersection of Jewish theology, feminism, and children's literature offers fruitful ground for developing a model of the Jewish girl character in English literature. As contemporary Jewish writers of children's and young adult books advocate for stories showing the rich cultural diversity of the Jewish experience, my scholarship responds to this call to action by examining the persistence of the Jewish girl character. My scholarship on Jewish literature is filling a need by exploring the coming-of-age novel and the construction of the Jewish girl in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century literature written by women.