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Victor Keith McCrory
vkmccrory@hotmail.com

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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE INCLUSION OF RELIGION IN TEXTBOOKS, by VICTOR KEITH MCCRORY, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

_____
Chara H. Bohan, Ph.D.
Committee Chair

_____
Joseph R. Feinberg, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____
Caroline C. Sullivan, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____
Lori N. Elliot, Ph.D.
Committee Member

_____
Date

_____
Joyce E. Many, Ph.D.
Associate Chair, Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology

_____
R.W. Kamphaus, Ph.D.
Dean and Distinguished Research Professor
College of Education

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

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Victor Keith McCrory

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Victor Keith McCrory
256 Wilde Trail
Athens, GA 30606

The director of this dissertation is:

Dr. Chara Bohan
Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology
College of Education
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30302-3978

VITA

V. KEITH MCCRORY

256 Wilde Trail
Athens, Georgia 30606

EDUCATION:

Ph.D.	2008	Georgia State University Teaching and Learning
M.A.	2005	Brenau University Social Studies and Science Education
B.A.	2002	The University of Mississippi Social Studies Education

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

2003-Present	Teacher, Socials Studies, Jackson County High School. Jefferson, Georgia.
2007	Georgia State University, Teaching Assistant: EDSS 6560, Principles of Social Studies Instruction:
2002-2003	Teacher, Social Studies, H.W. Byers High School, Holly Springs, Mississippi

PRESENTATIONS:

McCrory, V. K. "How is religion used in social studies textbooks used in the United States and the Middle East." Paper presented at the annual conference on Urban Issues in Literacy and Social Studies Education, Atlanta, Georgia, February 8, 2008.

McCrory, V. K. "World history teachers' attitudes towards teaching religion in the public schools." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), San Diego, CA, November 28-30, 2007.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION:

2008 Outstanding Doctoral Student Award for Research, MSIT Language, Literacy, and Social studies Education, Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia

PROFESSIONAL AND PUBLIC SERVICE:

National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Community Research Committee
NCSS Community Research committee member
JCCHS Leadership team
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) committee member
Founder International Watch Club
Co-founder National Honor Society
New teacher mentor
Head boys' soccer coach and coordinator
Head boys' middle school basketball coach
Assistant football coach

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

National Council for Social Studies (NCSS)
College and University Faculty Assembly (CUFA)
Georgia Council for the Social Studies (GCSS)
Georgia Association of Educators (GAE)
Kappa Delta Pi Educational Honor Society

ABSTRACT

SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE INCLUSION OF RELIGION IN TEXTBOOKS
by
Victor Keith McCrory

During the past two centuries, the inclusion of religious content in social studies textbooks has dramatically changed. In the late 1800s, the progressive education movement ushered in new forms of religious content in social studies textbooks (Nord, 1999). Contemporary researchers have addressed the inclusion of religious content in the United States through various textbook studies (Bellito, 1996; Sewall, 1995). Very few studies, however, have been conducted that gauge social studies teachers' perceptions of and beliefs about the manner in which religion should be included in the textbooks (Stone & Zam, 2006).

The purpose of this mixed method research study is to examine social studies educators' perceptions of and beliefs about the inclusion of religion in their textbooks. The theoretical framework guiding this study is John Dewey's theory of the democratic ideal. The democratic ideal focuses on recognizing the importance of mutual interest and diverse interaction that leads to a democratically constituted society (Dewey, 1944).

Quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in this research study. Participants included 193 members of a professional social studies education association located in the Southeastern region of the United States. Data collection occurred during the third week in January of 2008 via a web-survey. The survey included closed and

open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions were statistically analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics and Pearson's chi-square test. The open-ended questions were qualitatively examined through the use of the NVivo software program.

The quantitative results revealed the vast majority of educators (97%) believed that religion should be included in the textbooks. Statistically significant associations between race, teaching position, and level of education revealed that these groups were not satisfied with the current inclusion of religion and that future textbooks should include more religious content. The qualitative analysis further showed educators' dissatisfaction with the current inclusion of religion and demonstrated a need to provide more in-depth inclusion of religion in the textbooks. Very few educators stated they were satisfied with the inclusion of religion in the textbooks. These research findings suggest that future social studies textbooks should include more religious content pertaining to historical and contemporary events.

SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF AND BELIEFS ABOUT THE INCLUSION OF RELIGION IN TEXTBOOKS

by
Victor Keith McCrory

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the
Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Teaching and Learning
in
the Department of Middle and Secondary Instructional Technology
in
the College of Education
Georgia State University

Atlanta, GA
2008

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother who taught me the importance of education. Your strong work ethic, high character, and faith in God have been an inspiration. I want to thank my father for instilling in me a sense of patriotism, character, and humor. You have always been there to advise me on all of my major life decisions. To my sister, I could never have asked for a better one. Thank you for giving me support and encouragement. To my family in Maine, Mississippi, and Tennessee, thanks for your continual love and support.

I want to thank my committee for the support and sacrifices that they have made to ensure the completion of my dissertation. I especially want to thank my committee chair, Dr. Chara Bohan, for her patience, understanding, and hard work. She has been a tremendous teacher and mentor. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Joseph Feinberg for helping me to better understand the many methods of research as well as teaching at the university level. I sincerely appreciate Dr. Caroline Sullivan always taking extra time to help me organize my dissertation. I would also like to thank Dr. Lori Elliot for helping me intertwine qualitative and quantitative research into the dissertation.

I want to thank Summer for her unwavering kindness, compassion, and understanding. She has taught me the meaning of social grace and class. For the ghost of the past that will never let me rest until I have accomplished something meaningful, consider this partial payment.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ERIC	Educational Resources Information Center
NCSS	National Council for the Social Studies
NEA	National Educators Association

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Controversy over religious content in social studies textbooks has plagued parents, teachers, clergyman, and political leaders for over two centuries. Numerous educators believe that incorporating the study of the religions into courses, such as those already offered in social studies curriculum, is a valid way to inform students about the role religion has played throughout history (Haynes, 2001). Furthermore, students should understand the important role religion has played and continues to play in shaping the cultures of the world (Al-Hibri, Elshtain, & Haynes, 2001). Although many teachers believe that it is important to incorporate religions into their courses, the "vast majority seem to be confused about constitutional, legal, and pedagogical issues inherent in the study about religion" (Stone & Zam, 2006, p. 102).

Many teachers believe they are not qualified to teach about various religions. Social studies textbooks are important in aiding teachers and students to better understand the role of religion in historical events, morals, values, and beliefs that are shared by people around the world (Gagnon, 1987; Karpov & Lisovska, 1999; Loewen, 1995; Sewall, 1992; Shaver, 1967). Leaders in education, politics, and policy must acknowledge that the overwhelming majority of U.S. citizens believe in some form of religion (Al-Hibri et al., 2001; Haynes, 2007; Nash, 1999; Sewall, 1995; Stone & Zam, 2006). Textbook publishers should be responsible and fair with the inclusion of religion by not

being susceptible to religious and special interest groups that seek to distort or evade religious beliefs and practices (Archibald, 2004; Golden, 2006; Nord, 1995; Sewall, 1995; Tyack, 2003). Textbook studies conducted in the United States over the last 50 years have shown that religion is not adequately described in the social studies texts (Bellito, 1996; Cannon, 1990; Dutton, 1989; Harris, 1963a; Lerner, Nagai, & Rothman, 1995; Nord, 1999; Sewall, 1992, 1995; Smith, 1988; Vitz, 1985). The inadequate inclusion of religion in social studies textbooks is a major concern for educators in many countries. Textbook studies conducted in countries outside of the United States have shown that religion is not adequately included in the social studies texts throughout many parts of the world (Ahmad, 2004; Alrabaa, 2007; Bonnivard & Lefebvre, 2006; Groiss, 2001b, 2003, 2004, 2006; Ihtiyar, 2003; Reiss, 2004; Schissler & Soysal, 2005; Thomas, 2006; Urschel, 2002). In this study, adequate/sufficient are defined as providing the complete beliefs, practices morals, and values of a particular religion including relevancy with respect to historical and contemporary events. Religion has been insufficiently included in the texts used in and outside of the United States. The lack of religious inclusion is particularly troubling because of the major role that religion has played in recent events transpiring throughout the world.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, brought religious concerns to the forefront for many people throughout the world (Shea, 2006b). Studying about religion in public schools is important because “without greater knowledge of major world religions, Americans cannot hope to foster the mutual respect essential for domestic democratic success and the understanding necessary for wise foreign policy” (Lester & Roberts, 2006, p. 3). Furthermore, history cannot be taught successfully without the inclusion of

religions that shaped historical events (Nord, 1999). A recent poll found that the majority of Americans were illiterate with respect to religious concepts (Grossman, 2007). The chairman of the religion department at Boston University, Stephen Prothero (as cited in Grossman), stated, "Americans' deep ignorance of world religions—their own, their neighbor's or the combatants in Iraq, Darfur or Kashmir—is dangerous" (p. 1).

For the purpose of this study the definition of religion is derived from William James. James (1902/2004), one of the leading religious philosophers of the 20th century, states that religion is "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine" (p. 39). This relationship can be physical, moral, or ritual. Thus, the term religion is corporeal and spiritual.

Theoretical Framework

The United States is a democratic nation that prides itself on diversity and multi-culturalism. Teaching in a democratic society involves understanding the various cultures that have shaped past and present societies. Dewey (1944) states that there is "no better definition of culture than that it is the capacity for constantly expanding the range and accuracy of ones perceptions of meanings" (p. 123). Campbell (2004) believes that "by developing a cross-cultural perspective, teachers can guide students towards creating a more democratic society" (p. 40). Banks (1992a) states "multicultural education is a reform movement designed to bring about educational equity for all students, including those from different races, ethnic groups, social classes, exceptionalities, and sexual orientations" (p. 21). This multicultural education leads to what John Dewey described as

the democratic ideal. According to Dewey (1944), the democratic ideal consists of two elements:

> The two elements in our criterion both point to democracy. The first signifies not only more numerous and more varied points of shared common interest, but greater reliance upon the recognition of mutual interest as a factor in social control. The second means not only freer interaction between social groups but change in social habit—its continuous readjustment through meeting the new situations produced by varied intercourse. And these two traits are precisely what characterized the democratically constituted society. (p. 86)

One of the main foci of Dewey's democratic ideal was the importance of understanding a wide range of view points while also having the ability to adapt to the new situations that are produced as a result of the interaction between various social groups. These varying social groups may encompass myriad cultures. McMillan (1984) emphasizes that religion is a major component of cultural and historical development. He offers several reasons religion should be taught in the public schools. He believes that students cannot effectively respond to the events transpiring throughout the world without an understanding of the major role of religion. McMillan asserts that multicultural education can reduce the cultural ignorance that leads to tension and prejudice. Furthermore, the exclusion of religion from the curriculum can lead students into believing that religion is not an important factor in past and present societies (McMillan). Nord (1995) argues that multicultural education should require the instruction of religion. He states that many people "define themselves not in terms of ethnicity or nationality, but in terms of religion" (p. 226). Banks (1997) concurs and believes a more multicultural centered education could help to inform students of the cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity that is present in the United States and throughout the world.

The United States has moved past its origins as a nation confined to Protestant Christian beliefs and values to a pluralistic society that includes almost all of the religious beliefs in the world (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). The First Amendment Center is a non-partisan and nonprofit organization whose purpose is to educate and provide information to citizens about issues relating to the First Amendment. Charles Haynes and Oliver Thomas (2001), leading researchers at The First Amendment Center, state,

> The radical pluralism of faiths in the United States today makes it difficult to define religion without excluding religions that may not fit a chosen definition. If, however, citizens are to understand the role of religion in American public life and support religious liberty for all, they need to appreciate that faith is of central importance to many Americans. (p. 18)

Having an understanding of the role that religion has and continues to have in U.S. society is an important concept that students should learn to help them navigate through the various cultures represented in the United States. The myriad religious beliefs held by people living in the United States demands that students develop an understanding of the various religions practiced by people from differing cultural backgrounds. The inclusion of religion to promote multiculturalism and the democratic ideal is most often seen in textbooks. In many school districts across the United States, textbooks serve as "the de facto curriculum" (Ben-Avie, Comer, & Joyner, 2004, p. 44). Cornbleth and Waugh (1995) note that "in many places curriculum practice is still textbook driven" (p. 177). Textbooks have been a vital resource for social studies educators and students in the United States. The textbooks used in public schools are very important because they serve as a basis for instruction (Shaver, 1967). Social studies "offer the most propitious and enveloping opportunity for the natural inclusion of religion in the curriculum" (Stone & Zam, 2006, p. 91). Loewen (1995) argues the teaching of history, above all other disciplines, relies profoundly on the use of textbooks. Similarly, Shaver (1967)

emphasizes that the textbook remains "a major source of instructional materials for the great majority of social studies teachers" (p. 324). Textbooks often directly influence the concepts teachers will choose to teach in their courses (Gagnon, 1987). Although originally written by individual people, "textbooks appear to be messages from a higher authoritative social institution, the school" (Karpov & Lisovskaya, 1999 p. 527). Current textbooks are close to constituting a national curriculum because they typically determine what is taught in schools throughout the United States (Sewall, 1992). In most cases, the textbooks are taken as the final authority because many teachers lack the time or do not have the resources to offer alternative materials.

Students rely heavily on the textbooks because of a lack of alternative educational readings (Gagnon, 1987). The vast majority of students accept what their textbooks tell them as fact, never questioning the content that is included in the text (Ward, 2006). Thus, it is important to provide students with social studies textbooks that are well written, informative, interesting, and accurate. According to Sewall (1992), it is well documented that the "lack of student interest in social studies derives partly from textbooks that fail to convey the drama and epic story of the global past and many-splendored cultures" (p. 126).

Social studies textbooks, primarily history textbooks, provide an invaluable tool for teachers and students to teach and learn about religions that are prominent in the United States and the rest of the world. Most teachers rely heavily on textbooks, using them for around 70% of classroom instruction (Tyack, 2003). Many experts agree that "textbooks in the humanities and social sciences play an exceptionally important role, representing a clear embodiment of ideological discourse in education" (Karpov &

Lisovskaya, 1999 p. 528). This important role in social studies demands that educational policy makers pay close attention to the content that is included in the texts. It also affirms the need for social studies educators to have a voice in the type of information presented in the textbooks.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which social studies educators perceive that major religions of the world are included in social studies textbooks. This investigation occurred through surveying social studies educators' attitudes towards the inclusion of religion in textbooks. The survey was designed to gain an understanding of social studies educators' perceptions of and beliefs about the inclusion of religion in textbooks. The research conducted in this study could increase awareness as to the quality of religious content that is included in social studies textbooks.

Research Questions

To help attain a better understanding of the quality of religious content that is included in social studies textbooks, I examined the following questions in this study:

1. How do social studies educators believe religious content is included in the textbooks?
2. How do social studies educators believe that religious content should be included in the textbooks?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Purpose of Review

The purpose of this literature review was to investigate how religion is and has been used to uphold the teaching of multiculturalism and democratic education in social studies texts. In this study, textbook studies conducted in the United States and throughout the world are further examined for their religious content. The focal point of the review was to examine how religious content was presented in historical and contemporary events in social studies textbooks. The review of literature addressed the following questions in support of the original research questions: What religious content is included in social studies textbooks used inside and outside of the United States? How is religion used to describe historical events? How is religion depicted in contemporary societies?

Few textbook studies have specifically investigated religious content in social studies texts. From the early part of the 20th century until the present, fewer than a dozen textbook studies were conducted in the United States regarding religion in social studies textbooks. Outside of the United States, most of the textbook studies regarding religious content were conducted on textbooks from southwest Asia. The lack of research on how religion is portrayed in textbooks is alarming because religion is such a major component of culture and historical development (McMillan, 1984).

The vast majority of these textbook studies were qualitatively analyzed. Excerpts of passages relating to religion were presented and analyzed in each of these studies. To help provide a better description as to how religion is included in texts, various descriptions and passages from these textbook studies are included in the literature review. These excerpts were important to the study because embedded in social studies textbooks are "narratives and stories that nation states choose to tell about themselves and their relationship with other nations" (Crawford & Foster, 2006, p. 1). Only three of the textbook studies were quantitatively investigated. These quantitative examinations consisted of documenting the frequency in which the major religions of the world are presented in the texts. The statistical figures and analysis have been incorporated into the literature review.

The first part of the literature review includes influential factors that affect religious content in social studies textbooks and specific textbook studies conducted in the United States. The earliest social studies textbook studies were conducted in the 1950s. Since then, about a dozen social studies textbook studies pertaining to religion have been performed (Nord, 1999). The U.S. social studies textbook studies are divided into three categories. The first category comprises the earliest social studies textbook studies, while the second category consists of comprehensive studies covering more than one decade. The third category includes textbook studies conducted in the latter part of the 20th century.

Seldom are textbook studies conducted outside of the United States that explore the amount of religious content included in social studies texts. The second part of the literature review concentrates on textbook studies that have been conducted beyond the

borders of the United States. The vast majority of the studies conducted outside of the United States have taken place on textbooks from south and southwest Asia and north Africa, including Saudi Arabia, Iran, Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Israel, Pakistan, and India. Outside of the Middle-East and the United States, only a small number of textbook studies have been conducted that relate to the inclusion of religious content. Germany, France, Russia, England, Mexico, and Turkey are among the few countries in which religion in social studies textbooks have been examined. Most textbook studies conducted outside of the United States consist of single textbook studies.

The methodology in this literature review consisted of reviewing journal articles, books, and court cases pertaining to the inclusion of religion in the social studies curriculum. The primary search instrument was the online version of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database obtained through the GALILEO search engine. A primary descriptor *religion education* yielded 425 entries. All were searched for relevant religion in social studies education content. Key descriptor social studies textbooks produced only 29 papers. The descriptor *religion in social studies textbooks* did not yield any articles.

The abstracts of over 300 articles were reviewed for relevant religion in the social studies content. Citations in relevant articles were examined for additional research that was not included in the online searches of the ERIC database. Documents and reports published by influential organizations such as the First Amendment Center, Educational Research Analyst, Textbook League, the Council on Islamic Education, and the American Textbook Council were further reviewed for relevant religion in social studies content. The search revealed that very few textbook studies have been conducted in the

United States that pertain to religion in social studies texts. All pertinent textbook studies conducted over the past 50 years have been included in this review of literature.

Influential Factors Pertaining to Religion in Social Studies Textbooks

The United States is a "salad bowl" that is filled with people from myriad cultures who practice a variety of religions. The Supreme Court has recognized the cultural diversity of the United States by consistently ruling in favor of providing free exercise of religion in accordance with the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, which states that, "Congress shall make no law regarding establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." In 1947, the U.S. Supreme Court first upheld the establishment clause of the First Amendment by ruling in the *Everson v. Board of Education* case. The *Everson v. Board of Education* case pertained to spending government funds to subsidize transportation of private religious schools in New Jersey. The Supreme Court ruled upheld the establishment clause of the First Amendment by declaring that the government can not pass laws that aid one or all religions. The Supreme Court also asserted that the government could not favor one religion over another. Since the *Everson v. Board of Education* ruling, the court has upheld the belief that government must be neutral on topics of religion (Nord, 1999). Demonstrating the belief that governments must remain neutral on religious matters, Justice Hugo Black wrote the majority opinion in which he stated, "state power is no more to be used so as to handicap religions than it is to favor them" (*Everson v. Board of Education*, 1947). The 1962 U.S. Supreme Court case of *Engel v. Vitale* struck down state-sponsored prayer in public schools. Justice Hugo Black stated that government "should stay out of the business of writing or sanctioning official prayers and leave that purely religious function

to the people themselves and to those the people choose to look to for religious guidance" (*Engel v. Vitale*, 1962). Many public school teachers interpreted the decision of *Engel v. Vitale* to mean that they were not allowed to teach about religion (Sewall, 1992). The court decision states that teachers are allowed to teach about religion in the public schools. Teachers are not, however, allowed to preach and persuade students to follow a particular religion.

The U.S. Supreme Court has affirmed the importance of religious instruction which promotes multiculturalism and democratic education. The 1963 Supreme Court case of *Abington v. Schemp* upheld the teaching about religion in the public schools. The Supreme Court declared that public school teachers were allowed to teach about religions in an objective manner (Carper & Hunt, 1997). U.S. Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark, in the majority opinion, stated that, "a person cannot be fully educated without understanding the role of religion in history, culture, and politics" (*Abington v. Schemp*, 1963). Justice William J. Brennan concurred with Justice Tom Clark by adding that "the State must be steadfastly neutral in all matters of faith, and neither favor nor inhibit religion" (p. 33). Furthermore, the Supreme Court clarified that mandatory Bible reading in the public schools was unconstitutional (Doer, 1988).

The Supreme Court's decision in the *Abington v. Schemp* case continues to stand today as a cornerstone for religious and democratic education in public schools. In 1964, the American Association of School Administrators upheld the court's ruling when the association declared that the omission of religion in public schools "would appear to deny that religion has been and is important in man's history—a denial of the obvious" (Collie

& Piediscalzi, 1977). School personnel are not allowed, however, to promote or practice religion by using prayers or devotional readings of religious texts.

The role of the public school is to remain neutral by not promoting any particular religion and by not discriminating against religious beliefs (Nash, 1999). However, the role of the teacher in the public school is to present religion in an objective manner. Furthermore, teachers are charged with describing the historic influences which shaped religious ideas. Educators are tasked with informing students about the range of religious ideas by presenting students with the viewpoints and practices of various religions (Collie & Piediscalzi, 1977).

Court Cases Relating to Religion in Social Studies Textbooks

There are two prominent court cases directly tied to religious content in social studies textbooks. They reveal the hesitancy of the courts to mandate the type of religious content included in the texts. Unfortunately, the results of these cases do not promote a broader range of religious inclusion in the texts that would help to foster cross cultural perspectives that would guide students in creating a more democratic society (Campbell, 2004). The 1987 case of *Smith v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County* revealed that many people in Alabama were unhappy with the manner in which the texts promoted secular humanism. The case originally began in 1982 as the *Jaffree v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County*. More than 600 teachers, students, and parents sued the School Commissioners of Mobile County, Alabama, to prevent the use of textbooks that promoted humanism and censored, as their lawyer Tom Parker proclaimed, "the existence, history, contribution, and current role of Christianity in the U.S. and the rest of the world" (Blodgett, 1986, p. 27). Federal Judge Brevard Hand, in 1987, ruled 44

public school textbooks to be unconstitutional. The two primary types of textbooks that Judge Hand cited were American history and economics textbooks. In particular, the American history texts, Hand stated, "discriminate against the very concept of religion, and theistic religions in particular, by omissions so serious that students learning history from them would not be apprised of relative facts about America's history" (*Smith v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County*, 1987).

Judge Hand's ruling was short lived when, in August of 1987, the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the case and remanded his ruling (Ivers & O'Connor, 1988). The U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals stated that, '"if we are to eliminate everything that is objectionable to America's warring sects or inconsistent with their doctrines, we will leave public education in shreds"' (*Smith v. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County*, 1987). The Circuit Court believed that upholding Judge Hand's decision would encourage the further criticisms of the religious content in public school textbooks (Waskey, 2006). Although the case was overturned, it brought attention to the cautious bias that favored human secularism that exists in American History and other textbooks used in the public schools.

In 1983, the case of *Mozert v. Hawkins County, Tennessee Board of Education* established guidelines with respect to the religious content that could be included in public school textbooks (Vojak, 2003). The controversial textbook case involved a reader, published by Holt, which was used by the daughter of Vikki Frost (Greenwalt, 2005). Frost was dismayed at what she perceived to be the inadequate display of Protestant Christian values and the promotion of Christian Humanism that she found in her daughter's sixth grade reader (Greenwalt).

Frost brought the problem to like-minded Christians living in her community. Frost was among seven parents that alleged that the Hawkins County public schools use of the Holt readers' exposed their children to values and beliefs that opposed their religious beliefs (Reich, 2002). At first, the school system made concessions to the parents by allowing the children offended by the readers' content to either visit the library and read out of a separate textbook or to spend time working next to the classroom in the hallway (Greenwalt, 2005). After continued protest from the parents, the Hawkins County School Board chose to maintain the use of the Holt series readers. As a result, a parent, Bob Mozert, decided to take the case to court citing that under the Free Exercise Clause children had the right not to participate in an activity that violated their religious beliefs (Reich).

The case was argued in the East Tennessee United States District Court in 1987. The Court ruled in favor of Mozert (Rowell, 1987). District Court Judge Hand ruled that "children be allowed to exit their reading classes to either to the library or study hall and be taught reading at home" (Mozert v. Hawkins County, Tennessee Board of Education, 1987). In 1987, the case was overruled by the Sixth Circuit of the U.S. Court of Appeals (Reich, 2002). The majority opinion in the case was written by Chief Judge Lively, who declared that, "What is absent from this case is the critical element of compulsion to affirm or deny a religious belief or engage or refrain from engaging in a practice forbidden or required in the exercise of a plaintiff's religion" (*Mozert v. Hawkins County, Tennessee Board of Education*, 1987). Thus, the U.S. District Court of Appeal ruled that the Hawkins County Board of Education was indeed not violating the plaintiff's First Amendment rights (Vojak, 2003). The decision of *Mozert v. Hawkins County Board of*

Education set a precedent for religious fundamentalists concerned about the content that is included in their children's public school textbooks. If the religious content in the public school textbook does not reject the beliefs of the students' religion, then it is not in violation of the Free Exercise Clause. Parents who oppose public school textbooks that they believe to be contradictory to their religious beliefs have the option to either home school their children or send them to a private school (Greenwalt, 2005). Waskey (2006) believes that the Federal Courts have been willing to assist public education while trying to avoid directly supporting religion.

Support for Teaching Religion in the Public Schools

The U.S. Supreme Court has affirmed the legality of teaching about religion in the public schools. The vast majority of people in the United States also recognize the importance of teaching religion in K-12 classrooms (Nash, 1999). The people living in the United States recognize the importance of upholding the democratic ideals in which the nation was founded. These democratic ideals include the acceptance and promotion of cultural diversity.

There are myriad opportunities to teach about religion legally throughout the elementary and secondary grade levels. The elementary level offers many opportunities to teach about the religions through lessons on various communities, cultures, and family life. Teaching about the religions can occur on the secondary level through social studies, the arts, and literature (Haynes, 1990). Most states have adopted the practice of including religious instruction at the elementary and secondary education levels through its inclusion in state and national educational standards. The teaching of religion is focused on the elementary level with the study of geography and world studies. At the secondary level,

the majority of religious education is included in world and U.S. history (Douglas, 2000). Religious instruction "can be implemented with greater depth, accuracy and balance within a history program that is draped across several years, as the *Bradley Report* and the *National Standards for History* both unequivocally recommend (Douglas, p. 99).

Approximately 95% of people living in the United States claim a belief in a God and 70% state they are members of a mosque, synagogue, or church (al-Hibri et al., 2001). About 60% of Americans identified as Protestant (Sewall, 1995). Many national polls, including the Gallup polls conducted in 1988, 1991, and 1994, report that eight out of ten people in the United States would like to have religious training for their children (Nash, 1999). Nonetheless, polls have demonstrated that Americans are unaware of the religious beliefs and practices of not only their own faith but also other faiths (Haynes, 2007). A 2006 study surveying 342 social studies educators found that 99% of participants agreed that the majority of U.S. citizens favored teaching about religion in the public schools (Stone & Zam, 2006).

Surveys conducted by the National Center for Educational Information (NCEI) and the National Education Association (NEA) found that 80% of teachers belonged to a church (Leming, 1991). The NCEI survey reported that social studies teachers' beliefs in religion were similar to the larger teaching profession. Ninety-three percent of social studies teachers reported that they "sometimes prayed to God" while 43% stated that they believe religion could "answer all or most of today's problems" (p. 230). Seventy-five percent of social studies teachers claimed that they belonged to some form of a church or synagogue while 58% stated that they had been to a religious service in the last 7 days (Leming).

A study that included the 44 largest school districts in the United States revealed that there were over 100 languages spoken in the homes of the students. The vast array of languages spoken in the homes is a clear indicator of the multicultural nature of public schools. Americans live in the most religiously diverse country in the world. Furthermore, the United States is the most religious nation among all of the industrialized countries (Haynes, 2007). The National Conference for Community and Justice lists approximately 100 religious events each year which schools could observe. There are more than 1,200 religious groups located in the United States (Simmons, 1993). In essence, people in the United States live, as Carper and Hunt (1997) states, in a "global village and the American public favors the study of world religions in the public schools" (p. 2).

An alliance of 17 major educational and religious organizations which included the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) detailed the importance of including religion in the curriculum:

> Because religion plays a significant role in history and society, study about religion is essential to understanding both the nation and the world. Omission of facts about religion can give students the false impression that the religious life of humankind is insignificant or unimportant. Failure to understand even the basic symbols, practices, and concepts of the various religions makes much of history, literature, art, and contemporary life unintelligible. (Haynes & Thomas, 2001, p. 73)

The lower, middle, and high school grade levels offer opportunity for a detailed study of how religions have shaped the past and impact the present. Religion is an "automatic part" of all of the social studies courses taught at the upper middle and high school grade levels (Collie & Piediscalzi, 1977). James Ackerman proclaimed in a paper presented at the World 2000 Teaching World History and Geography Conference that "in

the secondary schools, teaching about religion will require the most work and have the greatest impact in the social studies curriculum"(Stone & Zam, 2006, p.92).

Religion in U.S. Social Studies Textbooks

Textbooks can play an important role in the teaching of religion to promote multiculturalism and the democratic ideal because they often constitute the prescribed curriculum (Ben-Avie et al., 2004; Sewall, 1992). These texts should address the educational needs of students by providing content that includes the teaching about religion from kindergarten through the twelfth grade. Textbooks serve as the curriculum in many schools across the United States (Sewall). Professional educational associations have recognized the importance of including religion in the curriculum.

Many professional education organizations support teaching of religion in public and private schools. The National School Board Association and the American Association of School Administrators have been strong advocates for the study of religion in the schools (Carper & Hunt, 1997). These two organizations have continually issued educational resources that help in the teaching of religion. The American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association have created pamphlets and brochures designed to address teaching religion in the public and private school classroom (Carper & Hunt, 1997). Phi Delta Kappa and the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD] have also produced educational materials based on various religious practices for many years. The ASCD currently publishes the *Religion and Public Education Network Newsletter* (Carper & Hunt). In regards to the social studies curriculum, the National Council for the Social Studies has developed policy statements on the teaching of religion (Carper & Hunt).

Numerous state educational organizations have recognized the importance of teaching religion to promote diversity and multiculturalism. The majority of state standards require that teaching about religion be included in the framework of the social studies. In Georgia, teaching about the six major religions of the world is included in the Georgia Performance Standards under the secondary level content area of world history. *California's History Social Science Content Standards* includes a substantial focus on the teaching of religion in the curriculum (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). National standards for the inclusion of religion in the social studies demonstrate the importance of the study of religion. *The National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, Bradley Report: Building a History Curriculum, National Standards for History, Geography for Life:* the *National Geography Standards, National Content Standards in Economics* and *the National Standards for Civics and Government* are four prominent national standards reports that advocate for the inclusion of religion in the social studies curriculum. A recent study conducted by the *Council on Islamic Education* concluded that the National Standards for History included the most references to religion followed by the *Bradley Report: Building a History Curriculum*, and *National Geography Standards* (Douglas, 2000). Haynes and Thomas (2001) suggest that religious content in the social studies texts would be greatly enhanced if textbook publishers were guided by these educational standards.

Watchdogs of Religious Content in Textbooks

The First Amendment Center, Educational Research Analyst, Textbook League, the Council on Islamic Education, and the American Textbook Council serve as watch-dogs for religious content included in textbooks. The two most prominent religious

watchdog groups are Council on Islamic Education and the Educational Research Analyst. The California-based Council on Islamic Education has censor like influence over publishers via the use of legal maneuvering and persuasion. Thus, the council is able to act as textbook arbiters and consultants to the textbook publishers. The Council on Islamic Education works to make sure that the Islamic faith is not presented in a negative manner in the texts. Because of the influence of the Council of Islamic Education, "social studies editors gloss over sensitive and troubling subjects such as jihad, holy law, slavery, and the status of women in the Muslim world" (Sewall, 1995, p. 32). The Christian organization that lobbies to control the kind of religious content included in social studies textbooks in Texas is the Education Research Analyst. The organization travels to the capital of Texas, where citizens are allowed to have a voice in the textbook adoption process. The group is instrumental in trying to maintain and implement Judeo-Christian values and beliefs into the textbooks. They fight the influx of humanism that they perceive to have been largely influencing textbooks since the turn of the century (Provenzo, 1990). The American Textbook Council, Textbook League, and the First Amendment Center monitor the religious content that is included in textbooks. These organizations publish academic and media articles in an effort to alert the public to the type of religious content that is included textbooks (Haynes, 2001; Sewall, 1995).

The pressure placed on textbook publishers by various religious and secular groups is not the only reason social studies textbooks are often secularized; however, the secularization of textbooks occurs for myriad reasons. Nord (1995) stated three reasons why "religion is increasingly irrelevant in our public, secular world" (p. 159). Public influences within the culture of the United States, such as pluralism, nationalism,

consumerism, and capitalism, have focused peoples' attention on issues other than religion. Nord, believes that another reason for the secularization of textbooks is that, "intellectuals do not take religion seriously; it doesn't fit into the categories of their respective disciplines" (p. 159).

These issues of secularization in social studies textbooks have reached U.S. federal courts. Many Christian sects, located primarily in the southern United States, have protested the manner in which religion is included in the textbooks. These protests have led to controversial court cases in which the U.S. federal courts have shown the willingness to uphold secular humanism in regard to the type of religious content that is included in social studies textbooks.

Texas, California, and Florida's Influence on Religious Content in Texts

Texas, California, and Florida have played a major role in democratic education by the type of cultural content that the states choose to include in their texts. In particular, California has been strongly criticized for the lack of multicultural focus in the textbooks (Cornbleth & Waugh, 1995). These states heavily influence the religious material included in social studies textbooks because of the size of these states and the numbers of textbooks adopted by each. Collectively, the three states control 25% of the school textbook market (Emberling & Sewall, 1998). As a result of their large adoption numbers, the American Association of Publishers has lobbyists stationed in each of the three state capitals (Emberling & Sewall). Textbook publishers often receive pressure from various religious groups to portray their religion in a certain way. There are various special interest groups from the left wing and the right wing that consistently try to sway textbook publishers to drop or include certain topics (Tyack, 2003). In the modern era of

public educational curriculum, “history books are the biggest battleground, as groups vie for changes in texts for elementary and secondary schools that cast their faiths in a better light” (Golden, 2006). Furthermore, social studies is the most controversial subject (Sewall, 2005).

The State of Texas purchases a large share of the textbooks published in the United States. As a result, Texas heavily influences the content that is included in social studies textbooks used across the United States (Martin, 2007). In 1982, Anthony Podesta, who was executive director of a liberal special interest group called People for the American Way, stated that “Texas has the buying power to influence the development of teaching materials nationwide, and a textbook edition chosen for Texas often becomes the sole edition available” (as cited in Martin, p. 2).

Texas is among 22 states in the United States that uses a “centralized method” of adopting textbooks that will be used in public schools throughout the state (Provenzo, 1990, p. 33). This centralized system of adoption uses a 15-member committee to review and evaluate each of the textbooks that will be adopted for use in the Texas public schools (Provenzo). The committee consists of at least eight classroom teachers employed in the state of Texas. Citizens of Texas are also invited to send complaints about the textbooks that are up for adoption (Provenzo). The complaints issued by the citizens are titled ‘“bills of particulars”’ (p. 33). Textbooks that are approved at the state level will be used in classroom all across Texas and the United States (Martin, 2007; Provenzo). These Texas approved textbooks are used throughout the United States because many publishers do not bother producing separate editions for individual states (Emberling & Sewall, 1998).

In 1961, a Texas couple by the name of Norm and Mel Gabler started a "crusade" against what they deemed to be inadequate and inaccurate content in their children's' textbooks (Martin, 2007). Their crusade started after they noticed that one of their child's textbooks that discussed the Gettysburg Address left out the term "under God," which was originally part of President Lincoln's speech (p. 2). The textbook was published in 1961 and entitled *American History for High School* (Provenzo, 1990). Their focus was to "rid schoolbooks of content they considered anti-family, anti-American, and anti-God" (p. 1). They believed that the textbook authors were steering away from mentioning the role that Christianity played in the early founding of the United States (Provenzo). According to Provenzo, the Gablers believed that the textbook authors were also incorporating their political views in the textbooks. In 1973, the Gablers incorporated their crusade into a right-wing conservative special interest group called the Educational Research Analyst (Martin). The focus of the Educational Research Analyst organization was to insert conservative principles into textbooks used in Texas and throughout the United States (Martin). The Gabler's organization used the Texas textbook adoption process, which enabled them to challenge the content that was included in the textbooks (Holley, 2007). They took advantage of the system that enabled citizens to write in "bills of particulars" on any textbook that they deemed to be inaccurate, biased, or inadequate (Provenzo).

In the early 1990s, the Gablers found "hundreds of errors" in 10 U.S. History textbooks that had been approved for use in the state of Texas (Holley, 2007). In 1992, the state of Texas subsequently fined the textbook publishers for the errors in what would be one of the Gabler's biggest triumphs, with fines totaling around one million dollars

(Holley). Although Texas wields massive power over the content of textbooks, California is by far the biggest consumer of textbooks in the United States. The State of California has recently faced controversy over the religious content included in textbooks adopted for use in the public schools (Watanabe, 2007). The California Board of Education was criticized from various Hindu groups over the inaccurate portrayal of Hinduism in the public school textbooks. Abhijit Kurup, a practicing Hindu now attending the University of California Riverside, stated that he "felt a sense of anger, embarrassment, and humiliation"' over the erroneous depiction of the Hindu religion in his middle school texts (Watanabe, p. 1). According to Kurup, the textbooks described the Hindu religion as a religion of elephant and monkey gods, with oppressed women and a rigid caste structure (Watanabe). Six of the state's newly adopted social studies textbooks came under fire from parents for their portrayal of the Hindu religion (Juluri, 2006). The parents were outraged at the social studies textbooks for negatively portraying the Hindu religion as a promoter of gender discrimination and the caste system. The enraged Hindu groups requested changes be made in the textbooks that would accurately portray their religion (Watanabe). Vamsee Juluri, an associate professor of media studies at the University of San Francisco, (2006) stated "the ugly misrepresentations in the textbooks are part of that old era, and have no place in the future" (p. B7). She believes that "stereotypes such as these have kept India from being better understood in the United States, and perpetuating them is not in the interest of either nation" (p. B7).

The state of California took heavy criticism in the early 1990s for the lack of multiculturalism included in the textbooks used in their public schools. Insufficient religious content was one of the issues in which critics believed the texts failed to address

multicultural concerns. In particular, questions were raised pertaining to the manner in which Judaism, Islam, and Christianity were included in the textbooks (Cornbleth & Waugh, 1995). The public outcry over the presentation of these religions caused Houghton-Mifflin to change the presentation of these religions in the texts. Houghton-Mifflin had designed their K-8 textbooks solely on the educational framework set up by the state of California. Cornbleth and Waugh state,

> Concerns raised by Jews and Muslims in terms of editorial corrections scored the best success, in terms of the editorial corrections and revisions they sought and obtained from the commission and Houghton-Mifflin—perhaps because commissioners and staff were highly concerned with how the textbooks portrayed the sensitive subject of world religions, which the new framework required for the sixth and seventh grade. (p. 64)

The textbook industry is big business. In 2004, the textbook publishing sales totaled a staggering $4 billion, which resulted in one-seventh of the total publishing sales revenues in the United States, over $250 million per subject (Archibald, 2004). Today, there are four primary publishers of history textbooks: McGraw-Hill, Pearson, Houghton-Mifflin, and Reed Elsevier (Sewall, 2005). The four textbook publishers are quick to respond to interest groups because of the aforementioned profits that are gained each year through the sale of textbooks. The textbook publishers "are creatures of the moment, willing to abide any qualitative compromise in order to sell to the market" (Emberling & Sewall, 1998). Certainly, the textbook industry would like to avoid controversy. Text-book publishers fear that disagreement over their public school textbooks could lead to lost revenue (Nord, 1995). Fear of controversy often causes textbook publishers to submit to pressures from outside special interest groups. As a result, textbook book publishers either secularize their textbooks or change the manner in which religion is presented in the texts (Nord, 1999). The four major textbook publishers have created sensitivity

guidelines (Ravitch, 2004). These guidelines seek to censor sensitive topics from the textbooks. Ravitch states,

> The guidelines prohibit controversial topics, even when they are well within the bounds of political and social discourse. They combine left-wing political correctness with right-wing religious fundamentalism, a strange stew of discordant influences. The guidelines aim to create a new society, one that will be completely inoffensive to all parties; getting there, however, involves a heavy dose of censorship. (p. 32)

Some of the biggest pressures the textbook publishers face are from religious groups that are acutely aware of the impact that textbooks can have on their respective religions (Golden, 2006). Islamic, Hindu, and Jewish groups have been very successful in changing the way their religion is portrayed in social studies textbooks (Golden). Each of the primary textbook publishers have created an individual in-house checklist that dictates textbook content as well as graphics, photos, and writing (Archibald, 2004). Houghton-Mifflin, one of big four textbook publishers in the United States, affirms that they seek the perspectives of Jewish, Hindu, Catholic, Buddhist, and Protestant organizations (Golden).

The states of Texas, California, and Florida have played a major role in type of religious content that is included in the public school textbooks. Texas and Georgia have also been influential in implementing courses in the public schools that seek to use the Judeo-Christian Bible as the primary texts. These states have sought to teach courses on literature and history through the use of the Judeo-Christian Bible.

Texas and Georgia Teaching Classes on the Bible in Public Schools

Texas and Georgia have made improvements in their curriculum by providing rich educational opportunities that enable students to learn more about Western cultures by authorizing the teaching of the Judeo-Christian Bible in public schools. Although the

addition of teaching the Bible in these states promote only Western cultures, it could pave the way for the inclusion of other religions that represent a wider array of cultures. The 1963 U.S. Supreme Court case of *School District of Abington Township v. Schempp* affirmed that the Bible could be used in public schools to teach literature and history. School districts must, however, create a curriculum that does not degrade or promote any specific religion (Sorenson, 2007).

The Georgia Board of Education recently approved two courses that will teach the Old Testament/Torah and New Testament of the Bible. Georgia Senate majority leader Tommie Williams stated that the law enabling the teaching of the Bible was enacted in order to help students understand the Bible's many cultural influences. Georgia was the first state to approve the Bible as a textbook in public schools (Goodman, 2006). The recently approved courses are titled Literature and History of the Old Testament Era and Literature and History of the New Testament Era (Gross, 2007). The courses are not organized to indoctrinate the students into Christian beliefs. The goal of each courses is to teach about the Bible without demonstrating any slant towards any denomination.

Texas offers elective Bible courses in 25 school districts throughout the state. The vast majority of materials for the courses come from the National Council on Bible Curriculum in Public Schools. Critics of the Bible courses argue that these courses are mostly taught by teachers who are not academically qualified to teach about Biblical studies. Further, these critics believe the Bible courses are used to indoctrinate students in fundamentalist Protestant beliefs (Haynes, 2006). Many groups differ in the manner in which the course should be taught in the public schools. Recent controversy in Texas has surfaced relating to whether the state should adopt curricular educational standards for

the Bible courses. Some lawmakers believe that Bible courses should adhere to state curriculum standards while others believe that individual school districts should have the autonomy to choose their curriculum (Scharrer, 2008). Much of the opposition to teaching about the Bible in public schools focuses on the fear of teachers' indoctrinating students with particular religious ideals (Estes, 2008).

Comparative Religion Courses as a Method to Teach about Religion

Opponents believe the Bible courses disregard other religions that are practiced by millions of Americans. As a result, opponents of the Bible courses argue for the teaching of comparative religions courses (Van Biema, 2007). Comparative religion courses provide a venue for the discussion of many of the religions practiced in the United States and throughout the world (Cavanagh, 2005). Hospital (2007), a professor of Comparative Religion at Queens University in Canada, believes that teaching comparative religion courses is an important part of the curriculum. He states,

> different religious visions—relativistic, in the sense that they have been developed in different cultural complexes, with different languages and concepts—do not constitute a threat but an enrichment of the sense of who we are as human beings (p. 364)

Contemporary Events Warrant the Inclusion of Religious Content

Recent conflicts throughout the world involving the clashing of religious ideologies warrant the full inclusion of the religions in the public schools so that citizens in the United States can be well informed. With recent conflicts involving Muslim extremist groups, it is alarming to discover how certain facets of the religion of Islam are ignored in social studies textbooks. These religiously centered conflicts validate the importance of students' understanding the dynamics of various cultures represented in the

United States and throughout the world so that students can recognize "the mutual interest as a factor in social control" (Dewey, 1944, p. 86).

In an extension of previous textbook discussions, the American Textbook Council reviewed social studies textbooks for their portrayal of religion. Sewall (2005), the director, believes that publishers have been heavily influenced from the Council of Islamic Education about the portrayal of Islamic content included in history textbooks. The Council of Islamic Education is one of the biggest religious organizations that influences how Islam is portrayed in history and social studies texts.

The Council of Islamic Education's reviewers have assisted in the development of numerous public school elementary and secondary world history textbooks (Douglas, 2000). Sewall (2005) stated a concern that "allowing the council to act as a textbook consultant and arbiter, social studies editors gloss over sensitive and troubling subjects such as jihad, holy war, slavery, and the status of women in the Muslim world" (p. 500). A report of world history textbooks conducted by Sewall in 2004 demonstrated how textbook publishers had "air brushed" issues dealing with militant Islamic sects (p. 500). Sewall (2003) deemed that the problem extends beyond the lack of inclusion of Islam. He believes that world history textbook publishers hold "other non-Western civilizations to different standards than those applied to the west" (p. 27). Robert Gorman, a professor of humanities and political science at Southwest Texas State University, believes that textbooks fail to include religion as a primary foundation of culture, "almost all of the books have deficient treatments of religion in general or of particular religious traditions being almost uniformity the least well developed in all of the books" (as cited in Archibald, 2004 p. 3).

As illustrated by court cases, recent polls, educational and political organizations, religious content in social studies textbooks has been a heavily debated subject in the United States. Social studies textbook analysis conducted over the last century reveal inadequacies in the type of religious content included in the texts (Nord, 1999). Many social studies educators rely on these textbooks as a resource for instruction (Gagnon, 1987; Loewen, 1995). Thus, it is important to understand how social studies educators believe that religion is and should be included in the textbooks.

Earliest textbooks used in the United States

Cultural diversity was not represented or promoted in early American textbooks. These texts advocated for the strictly teaching of Protestant Christian beliefs and ideals. The religious beliefs and practices of other faiths were rarely mentioned and often dis-regarded. The notion of the democratic ideal was reserved for the mostly Anglo-Saxon Protestant Christian community. The earliest textbook used in the United States, *The New England Primer*, was used during the colonial period. *The New England Primer* served as practically the entire elementary school curriculum during the colonial period (Nietz, 1959), and it was very influential in spreading the Protestant faith (Moore, 2000). The first primer was produced in 1690 (Shoemaker, 1936). From its inception in the late 17th century until the mid-19th century, there were as many as 6 million copies printed of *The New England Primer* (Kreilkamp, 2001). This figure is startling considering the population of the United States did not exceed 3 million until after the year 1800 (Crane, 2000). Although *The New England Primer* was primarily used as a book to help students learn their alphabet, it also helped children learn to read and write. *The New England Primer* textbook can be viewed as a social studies textbook because of the inclusion of

economic, social, moral, and religious concepts. The primer has often been referred to as "the little Bible of New England" because of its heavy emphasis on Puritan religious morals and values (Shoemaker, p. 158). The strong emphasis of New England Puritan faith can be found throughout its pages. The first lines of the *New England Primer* read, "In Adam's fall/We sinned all" (as cited in Shoemaker, p. 15). This passage was used to teach young children about the letter A. The Puritan beliefs were engrained in students by accentuating the harsh ideals that

> here was no easy road to knowledge and to salvation; but in prose as bare of beauty as the whitewash of their churches, in poetry as rough and stern as their storm-torn coast, in pictures as crude and unfinished as their own glacial-smoothed boulders, between stiff oak covers, which symbolized the contents, the children were led, until, from being unregenerate. (Ford, 1962, p. 2)

The Primer served as a tool to help indoctrinate young students into the Christian faith and upheld the morals and values shared by the religious Puritan sect. Some of the earliest social studies textbooks were written by New England ministers (Nietz, 1959) and these texts tended to include many passages devoted to promoting Protestantism while criticizing other religions. An analysis of early U.S. geography textbooks revealed the religious intolerance that existed within these textbooks (Nietz). In a geography text written by Morse in 1790, he stated that Catholicism was "the religion of the Spanish monarchy; and it is, in these countries, the most bigoted, superstitious and tyrannical character" (as cited in Nietz, p. 27). An 1818 geography text written by Adams stated that Russia's religion was inferior. In writing about Russia's religion, Adams (as cited in Nietz) proclaimed, "the established religion is the Greek Church, but little differing from Popery"' (p. 27). In 1805, Davies (as cited in Nietz) wrote a geography textbook criticizing the Catholic Church as he proclaimed Irish priest ruled with '"blind

superstition and ignorance"' (p.27). The promotion of Protestantism can be found in a geography textbook written by Parish in 1810 who refers to the Protestant Scotch in a very favorable manner. He stated "the Scotch clergy are men of learning and piety"' (as cited in Nietz, p. 27). The textbooks taught students to abstain from evil by promoting good Protestant Christian values (Crosser, 2006). Emma Willard's 1886 American history textbook instructs the students to '"sow the seeds of virtue, by showing the good in such amiable lights that the youthful heart shall kindle into desires of imitation"' (as cited in Crosser, p. 8).

From the start of the public school movement, the Christian Bible was an important text that was used to educate school children throughout the United States. The Bible was used to teach students social concepts by teaching them history, morals, and values. In the late 19th century, some very powerful educational organizations supported the use of the Christian Bible for use in the public education classroom (Moore, 2000). The educational organizations that supported the use of the Christian Bible in classroom instruction included the National Education Association and the National Teachers' Association. In 1845, Massachusetts, the state that pioneered the public education movement, strongly urged the use of scriptures in the schools (Moore). The debate for the use of Biblical scriptures within the classroom continued in the latter part of the nineteenth century into the latter part of the 20th century. The United States became more pluralistic as immigrants from a greater variety of religious groups entered the nation, the use of the Christian Bible as a source for educational instruction faded into obscurity as various religious sects "preferred to have no religion in the public schools than to have the claims of religion made relative" (p. 1599).

Known for *Webster's Dictionary*, Noah Webster was also the one of the earliest textbook authors in the United States. He was able to set the blueprint for the American School Reader by writing a series of elementary school textbooks that shaped the minds of millions of young children (Shoemaker, 1936). Webster's first book entitled, *A Grammatical Institute of the English Language*, was completed in 1783 (Warfel, 1936). Although Webster's textbook was a speller, it can be viewed as one of the first social studies textbooks in the newly formed United States as well, for it taught students to, "look for guiding impulses of history" (p. 53). The textbooks taught students social studies concepts that included the inspection of great causes and the learning of prominent names of historical figures (Warfel).

Webster was raised to value the beliefs of the Puritan religion. The Puritan beliefs of morality and values were present in his early textbooks. The mention of God can be found in a multitude of the *Blue-Backed Speller's* pages (Shoemaker, 1936). Webster's textbooks were used in New England and throughout the new settlements all across the young nation. By the time his *Blue-Backed Speller* went out of use, publishers had sold almost 100 million copies (Warfel, 1936). The popularity of the *Blue-Backed Speller* exposed millions of American youth to Protestant Christian morals and values. Webster used religion to help guide young readers in morality. In his 1829 spelling book edition, however, Webster limited religious content from about 50% to 10% (Sewell, 1995). Webster found, however, that the limited Puritan religious content reduced sales. The Puritan values, morals, and beliefs of parents and educators in the United States did not support the secularization of textbooks (Shoemaker). References to God can be found in Webster's textbooks as late as the latter part of the 19th century (Crosser, 2006). One of

Webster's readers published in 1880 proclaims "God created heaven and earth in six days" and "the devil is the great adversary to man" (as cited in Crosser, p. TG8), indicating a return to the inclusion of religious references.

Another one of the first widely read textbooks in the United States was the *McGuffey Reader*. No other textbooks have had as significant an effect on public education in the United States as the *McGuffey Readers* (Saunders, 1941). These readers circulated in mass numbers throughout many parts of the United States, and it is estimated to have sold over 120 million copies dating from 1836 to 1920 (Nietz, 1964). This 84 year span that the *McGuffey Reader* was in circulation is a testament to the popularity of the textbook.

William Holmes McGuffey, the author of the *McGuffey Reader*, held many influential educational positions in his lifetime. He was a clergyman, college professor of ancient languages and philosophy, university president, textbook compiler, and advocate of public education (Westerhoff, 1978). McGuffey was also a devout Christian. He believed wholeheartedly that his *McGuffey Reader*s should include Christian indoctrination through education that would teach young people the character, values, and ethics needed to flourish in a Protestant Christian society (Minnich, 1975). McGuffey's position about the inclusion of religion, primarily Christianity, in his texts was evident in his statement that, "in a Christian country that man is to be pitied who at this day can honestly object to imbuing the minds of the youth with the language of the spirit" (p. 38).

The *McGuffey Readers* were interspersed with a liberal variety of Biblical stories and psalms (Saunders, 1941). Ironically, many teachers who objected to the use of the

Bible as a text in the classroom supported the passages found in the *McGuffey Reader.* These teachers believed the reader's biblical scriptures enabled them to turn the Bible into a secular text that could be used in the classroom (Moore, 2000). The *McGuffey Reader* was influential in upholding religious and social values that characterized the United States in the early nineteenth century. The promotion of a nonsecular society ruled by the Judeo-Christian God laid the foundation for its aforementioned popularity among parents and teachers. Most references in the *Annotated McGuffey Reader* were devoted to God with the reference to death being the second most mentioned term in the text (Nord, 1995). In a total of, "670 stories from eleven series of basal readers there was not one in which the central motivation or major content derives from Christianity or Judaism" (p. 154). Throughout the 19th century, the *McGuffey Readers* helped shape the morality of young children by teaching the Christian principles that were at the time shared by the majority of people living in the United States (Mossier, 1965). These principles helped to reinforce the morality held by the older generation of Christian Americans (Mossier).

The readers did not, however, expand upon other world religions, relying instead on the promotion of a strong virtuous Christian society. *The McGuffey Readers* laid the foundation for a Christian society that would have a strong influence over politics and society throughout the 19th and early part of the 20th century (Mossier, 1965). The moral and religious content included throughout the *McGuffey Readers* was very much attuned to the desires of the devout Christian conservative element (Mossier).

Throughout most of the 19th century religious textbooks continued to be influenced by the Christian Bible. The Darwinian revolutions drastically influenced the history and science curricula by reducing religious content between the years of 1870 and

1920 (Sewall, 1995). The reduction of religious content during this time period is demonstrated in the popular *McGuffey Readers*. Nietz (1959) concluded, in a quantitative study, that religious content in the *McGuffey Readers* drastically decreased over the 22 year span in which the texts were published. The first edition of the third reader published in 1837 dedicated 32.7 % of its content to religion. The 1879 edition of the *McGuffey Reader* reduced its religious content to 8.7 % (Nietz). The last edition of the *McGuffey Reader*, published in 1901, had significantly decreased its religious content in the lessons to a mere 5.9 % (Nietz).

Quantitative analysis of 134 geography textbooks published in the United States prior to 1895 also found a significant decrease in religious content within the texts (Nietz, 1959). The study included 68 geography textbooks published prior to 1850 and 66 geography textbooks published after 1850 (Nietz). Sixty-eight textbooks published before 1850 were found to devote an average of 5.8% of the content to religion. The 66 textbooks published after 1850 dedicated only 1.23 % to religious content (Nietz). Religiously tolerant passages, however, were found to increase within the geography textbooks published between 1840 and 1890 (Nietz).

The Progressive Movement Continues the Removal of Christian Tenets in Texts

For many years, textbook content has been used to uphold the ideals and values held by the majority of people living within the United States. The textbook authors did not, however, account for the religious and cultural plurality of the United States or the rest of the world. Early U.S. textbooks used in classrooms throughout the country contained a large amount of moral instruction that was geared towards religious occupations and theological matters that upheld strong Protestant beliefs and values shared by

the majority of people living in the United States (Orrill & Shapiro, 2005). Protestant Christian tenets were included in almost all the textbooks which included history, science, literature, spelling, reading, and arithmetic (Crosser, 2006). The textbooks were used to indoctrinate citizens of the United States into the morals, beliefs, and values of Protestant Christianity. Prior to 1870, many of the Protestant Christian passages were included in the texts to combat Catholicism. The Catholic religion was denounced as a false religion and a danger to the country (Nord, 1995).

As education in the United States progressed throughout the latter part of the 19th century and into the 20th century, the amount of Protestant Christian religious instruction and content was reduced in textbooks (Orrill & Shapiro, 2005). This reduction is partly due to immigrants' bringing their own faiths and beliefs to the United States, which resulted in the minimization of overtly Protestant religious content in the majority of school textbooks (Crosser, 2006). The inclusion of Protestant rhetoric used to battle against Catholics declined as many U.S. Catholics became more middle class (Nord, 1995).

According to Orrill and Shapiro (2005), the Progressive Education Movement of the late 19th century heavily influenced public education. Before the Progressive Education Movement, history textbooks were used to reinforce the values of evangelical Protestantism rather than to provide pertinent historical concepts (Orrill & Shapiro, 2005). The vast majority of textbook writers during this time period were clergymen and religious leaders. The Progressive Education Movement ushered in new textbook authors.

The National Education Association in 1892 spurred progressive education with the formation of the Committee of Ten. The Committee of Ten was formed to help create

standards to be used in secondary schools. A special subcommittee within the Committee of Ten was commissioned to evaluate the teaching of social science courses. This subcommittee made recommendations to the Committee of Ten for the teaching of history and government courses in secondary public schools. A few years later in 1989, the American Historical Association formed the Committee of Seven, which made recommendations of the teaching of history in public high schools (Bohan, 2003). The Committee of Ten and the Committee of Seven along with the formation of succeeding committees, including the Committee of Eight, the Committee of Five, and the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, were influential in laying "the foundation for educational curriculum in general, and the teaching of social studies in particular that exists in most American schools today" (Bohan, p. 75).

With the Progressive Education Movement and the formation of the new order educational committees, the amount of religious content included in the texts drastically declined. Progressive social scientist replaced clergymen as the new writers of the textbooks (Nord, 1995). As a result, textbooks have "changed drastically, not just since the time of the *McGuffey Readers* but even over the past few decades" (Nord, p. 14). There have been many critiques of content in textbooks that have shown the continued attenuation of religious substance in history textbooks (Dutton, 1989). These critiques have shown that the inclusion of religion in contemporary textbooks has declined. In many cases, textbooks favor one religion over another (Frey, Gabler, & Gabler, 1999; Gagnon, 1987; Harris, 1963a; Vitz, 1985). Textbooks also fail to describe religious beliefs, values, and practices adequately (Bellito, 1996; Golden, 2006; Nord, 1999; Sewall, 1992, 1995).

According to Smith (1988), high school history textbooks, for example, did not include the information that students needed to know to understand how religious movements have affected society in the United States and throughout the world. As a result, students attending public schools in the United States have been deprived of information important to fully understand the relationship between the religions and how they affect society (Smith). Loewen (1995) believes the religions have "been one of the great inspirations and explanations of human enterprise in this country" which makes it inexcusable that they are not being sufficiently taught in history and social studies textbooks (p. 46). The lack of religious content included in the textbooks has also been revealed through textbook studies conducted in the United States.

Findings of United State Textbook Reviews

Religion plays a major role in the daily lives of many people in the United States and throughout the world. Religion is also very influential in modern political, economic, and social movements. The inclusion of religion to support multicultural education and democracy can reduce the cultural ignorance that leads to conflicts and prejudices (McMillan, 1984). Despite the important role of religion, many social studies textbooks fail to describe the impact of religion on contemporary society (Bellito, 1996, Harris, 1963b; Michigan State Board of Education, 1989; Nord, 1999; Sewall, 1992, 1995; Vitz, 1985). Furthermore, the lack of religious content included in the social studies textbooks could lead students and teachers to believe that religion is not a very influential factor in contemporary events.

Judaism and Christianity presented negatively throughout texts. In earlier textbooks used in the United States, Protestant Christianity was promoted throughout the

texts. Textbook studies conducted over the last half of the century, however, have shown that Christianity along with Judaism have been portrayed negatively. The religions of Judaism and Christianity are a major part of Western culture. Although these religions have been and continue to be a major factor in the cultures of the West, the texts often present Judaism and Christianity in a negative manner (Harris, 1963a; Gagnon, 1987; Frey et al., 1999). The United States social studies textbooks that negatively portray Judaism and Christianity are particularly troubling to many Americans. The United States was founded on Judeo-Christian beliefs and the overwhelming majority of Americans identify themselves as Christian (Al-Hibri et al., 2001).

Rare inclusion of less practiced religions.

Dewey (1944) believed that an important part of cultural education was to constantly expand the "range and accuracy of one's perception and meanings" (p. 40). Evidently, U.S. textbook publishers are failing to expand the perceptions of these meanings by not accounting for more religious diversity in the texts that are used in the public schools. Religions other than the major religions of the world are rarely included in the textbooks (Cannon, 1990; Lerner et al., 1995). Negative references were often found in the few instances in which these religions are mentioned. These negative references mostly occurred in U.S. History textbooks where Native American religions are presented as inferior to Western religions. The few textbooks that mentioned The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), also known as Mormonism, usually presented the religion as promoting polygamy, which is not condoned by the modern LDS Church. These texts also failed to identify the impact of Mormonism on past and present societies.

Unequal distribution of religion in elementary, middle, and high school texts. The K-12 school setting provides a great opportunity to emphasize the important contribution and relationship of religion to varying cultures. Dewey (1944) stated that "the intermingling in the school of youth of different races, differing religions, and unlike customs creates for all a new and broader environment" (p. 21). Thus, it is important for youth of all ages to be exposed to the various religions represented in the United States and throughout the world.

Textbooks studies have shown unequal inclusion of religion in elementary, middle, and high school social studies texts. The lack of religious content was shown mostly in elementary texts where religion was hardly mentioned. As the textbook grade levels rise, however, the inclusion of religion increases drastically. Middle school texts are found to include religion more than elementary texts and the bulk of religious content is found in high school social studies texts (Cannon, 1990; Harris, 1963a; Sewall, 1992; Vitz, 1985). Social studies textbooks give elementary and middle school children the impression that religion has very little impact on past and present events and little knowledge on which to build as they progress through grade levels.

One reason for the lack of inclusion of religion in the early grades is that religion is an abstract concept. According to Piaget, younger children have not developed enough in the early grades to grasp the abstract concept of religion (Gallagher & Reid, 1981). Piaget believed that most children would not be able to understand abstract concepts until after the age of twelve in what he called the formal stage of childhood development. Furthermore, students in the formal stage are able to think hypothetically and use logic to

solve problems (Gallagher & Reid). Thus, students who have not reached the formal stage of development would not be able to understand abstract religious concepts.

Contemporary textbooks improving religious content. Cornbleth and Waugh (1995) argue for more multicultural perspectives to be included in the textbooks. They believe that textbooks should include transformative multiculturalism. Cornbleth and Waugh state that "transformative multiculturalism serves to enhance understanding of one's own and others' experiences, of how present circumstances have come to be, and to inform social action toward equity and social justice goals" (p. 193). The notion of multicultural education and the democratic ideal has been found in contemporary high social studies textbooks. This fostering of democracy and multicultural education is due to the text's portrayal of religion in a positive way (Frey et al., 1999; Lerner et al., 1995). Textbook studies have shown that contemporary social studies textbooks devote more space to the major religions of the world's beliefs, practices, and origins as well as the impact that religion has had on historical events. The majority of increased religious content is found in high school World History texts. The added inclusion of religion to these texts helps to promote the religious plurality that is present inside and outside of the United States while also making the textbooks more accurate.

Summary of United States Textbook Studies

Overall, textbook studies conducted in the United States revealed that religion is insufficiently included in elementary, middle, and high school social studies textbooks. This inadequate inclusion of religion in these texts does not promote the democratic ideal suggested by Dewey nor does it foster multicultural education. Not promoting democratic values and multicultural education in the textbooks is troubling because these texts often

serve as the curriculum for students and teachers (Sewall, 1992). The United States should be a nation that celebrates diversity by equitably placing religion in the curriculum that embraces the myriad religions represented throughout world.

The lack of religious content in elementary and middle school textbooks is particularly disturbing. Although there is more religious content included in high school social studies texts, there is a definite need to improve the type of religious content that is included in the texts. The favoring of one religion over the other religion is clearly unfair. Consistently presenting the negative aspects of a particular religion is inaccurate and could foster religious intolerance. Many social studies textbooks have been found only to vaguely present religion in historical terms. Although the inclusion of religion in the historical context needs to be improved, it is more troubling that these texts do not include the impact of religion on contemporary society. A promising sign is that Frey et al.'s (1999) more recent review of world history textbooks revealed that the inclusion of religious content is improving at the high school level. The gatekeepers of religious content in social studies texts, the textbook publishers, need to be aware of the important role that religion has played and continues to play in societies inside and outside of the United States.

Religion in Social Studies Textbooks Used Outside of the United States

The debate over the inclusion of religion in public school social studies textbooks extends beyond the borders of the United States. Many countries throughout the world are facing pressure to change their portrayals of religion in their public school texts. With increasing religious tensions and violence taking place in the Middle-East, governmental and private organizations have taken notice of the type of religious content included in

the curriculum of southwest Asian countries. Many social studies textbooks used in southwest Asian countries include negative, inciting, and inaccurate views of religion (Groiss, 2001a). The focus of the pressures to change religious presentations in the texts is intended to make the young generation of students more religiously and culturally tolerant. These countries are beginning to understand that students cannot successfully respond to events that are taking place throughout the world without comprehending the major role of religion (McMillan, 1984).

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, Saudi Arabia faced increasing pressure to remove intolerant religious propaganda from their textbooks because 15 of the 19 terrorist attackers were Saudi Arabian citizens. In 2004, a Saudi Arabian royal study group discovered that religious studies in the curriculum "encourages violence toward others, and misguides the pupils into believing that in order to safeguard their own religion, they must violently repress and even physically eliminate the other"(Shea, 2006b, p. B01). Since publication of the findings of the Saudi Arabian royal study group, the government maintains that it revamped their public school texts. The Saudi Arabian government claims to have, "removed materials that are inciteful or intolerant towards people of other faiths" (p. 1). To substantiate their claims, the Saudi government created a 74-page curriculum review to demonstrate that the textbooks have been changed to become more modern and religiously tolerant. A study conducted by the Center for Religious Freedom of Freedom House with help from the Institute for Gulf Affairs, however, was able to demonstrate that religiously intolerant content still existed within the Saudi Arabian public school textbooks (Shea, 2006a). The study included textbooks used in the elementary, middle, and high school grade levels. The report issued by the

Center for Religious Freedom concluded that the Saudi Arabian public school textbooks continue to include the promotion of "an ideology of hatred that teaches bigotry and deplores tolerance" (p. 12). The report further concluded the textbooks portrayed the message that "Christians and Jews and other unbelievers have united in a war against Islam that will ultimately end in the complete destruction of such infidels" (p. 13).

Promotion of Islam over All Other Religions

By promoting Islam above all other faiths, students have learned to marginalize people who practice any religion but Islam. This marginalization of non-Muslims negates the possibility of a true multicultural education that values diversity. Countries including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Palestine, Syria, and Indonesia tend to promote Islam above all other religions (Ahmad, 2004; Alrabaa, 2007; Groiss, 2001b, 2003, 2004; Rosser, 2006; Shea, 2006a). The texts examined from these countries portrayed religions other than Islam as inferior. In an Egyptian text, Islam was revealed as being the only true religion while all others were false. An example can be found in an eleventh grade textbook, "God's religion is Islam" (Groiss, 2004, p. 28). This promotion of Islam above all other religions in southwest Asian and northern African texts fosters religious intolerance that often leads to tensions in the region. Tensions pertaining to differing religious and political ideologies have played a major part in the conflict East between the Israelis and Palestinians.

Portrayal of Israeli and Palestinian Conflict

In recent years, the U.S. government has taken a special interest in the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. In the mid-1990s, President Clinton hosted leaders of both nations in

an effort to help reconcile their political, cultural, and religious differences. Despite negotiations throughout the years, tensions continue to exist between the two nations.

The Israeli and Palestinian conflict was found in many of the southwest Asian countries' textbooks (Groiss, 2003, 2006). There is a distinct favoritism displayed in the texts towards the mostly Muslim population of Palestine. An example can be found in Saudi Arabian textbooks. The social studies texts in Saudi Arabia serve the purpose of propagating the Palestinian perspective. The texts often portrayed the nation of Israel as mistreating the Palestinians. A sixth grade history text stated "Palestinians suffer today under Jewish rule from various types of oppression, and those who live in the refugee camps outside Palestine suffer from much more injustice and hardship" (p. 71).

Judaism Presented in a Negative Manner

Furthermore, the religion of Judaism was a focal point of many of the textbooks used in the southwest Asian and northern Africa. Countries such as Saudi Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Turkey, Egypt, and Iran continue to portray Judaism in a negative way. A clear example can be seen in Palestinian public school textbooks. Palestinian textbooks revealed that religious toleration and respect was given to Muslims and Christians. The religion of Judaism, however, was presented in a negative manner. This negative attention given to Judaism can be seen in the text's treatment of the mostly Jewish country of Israel. Many texts fail to recognize Israel on their geography maps (Groiss, 2001a, 2006). In multiple social studies texts Israel is referred to as the occupied Palestine (Groiss, 2006).

This negative portrayal of Judaism was obvious in Syrian textbooks. Not a single passage in the textbooks supported Judaism (Groiss, 2001b). The Jews were portrayed in

the social studies textbooks as enemies of the Arabs, the prophets, and God. In a sixth grade history book entitled, *History: The Era of the Prophet and the Orthodox Caliphs,* a passage read, "the Prophet felt that the time had come for punishing the Jews for their position that was full of deception and conspiracy" (as cited in Groiss, p. 23).

Negative Presentation of Christianity

The Christian religion is presented as antagonistic towards the religion of Islam. Textbooks often highlighted the atrocities committed during the medieval crusades by the Christians towards the Muslims. The texts used the crusades to reinforce tensions between the Christians and Muslims in the contemporary world (Reiss, 2004; Groiss, 2006). Turkey and Iran continually refer to Christianity as a religion that is violent towards Islam.

Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism Presented as Inferior Religions

In some cases Christianity, Judaism, and Islam were presented favorably in the textbooks as monotheistic religions (Groiss, 2004) in contrast to the religions of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism, which were not given the same respect as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. An example can be found in Egyptian texts, *Geography of the World* and *Studies in Modern History of Egypt*, which state, "among the religions followed by the peoples of the continent are heavenly religions which are Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, and man-made religions such as Buddhism, Confucianism, and Hinduism" (p. 20).

Hinduism Promoted above All Other Religions

For many years, India fostered religious intolerance in textbooks by promoting the Hindu religion above all others. The promotion of Hinduism was mostly the result of the

Bharatiya Janata Party's influence on the country's educational system. The Bharatiya Janata Party is a fundamentalist Hindu political party that controlled the government of India from 1998 until 2003 (Thomas, 2006). As a result of the Bharatiya Janata Party's control, India's textbooks propagated Hinduism.

Examples of Hindu propagation can be seen primarily in the high school history textbooks. In these texts, "discussions of architecture during the Muslim era of 1000-1700 failed to recognize the merging of Hindu and Islamic styles to form the syncretic mode found in so many of the nation's historic structures" (p. 78). The changes in the religious content of the textbooks often created inaccurate versions of historical events. These newly reformed textbooks described the Aryans as the original inhabitants of India (Thomas, 2006). For example, in textbooks, the Aryans were "indigenous geniuses who created the Indus Valley civilization" (p. 77). Promoting a particular religion inaccurately influences a person's perception of the religion.

The Promotion of Jihad (Holy War)

The promotion of Jihad was prevalent throughout the southwest Asian texts (Groiss, 2006; Wagner, 2007). In these texts, students were encouraged to conduct jihad against infidels. Islamic holy war, jihad was upheld and glorified throughout the texts while martyrdom was repeatedly celebrated. An activity passage in a seventh grade Palestinian text stated, "let us write down the biography of some of the martyrs of Palestine, who sacrificed their lives for the sake of their homeland, and put that in the class's wall magazine" (Groiss, 2001b, p. 51). Some textbooks are biased and enhance religious conflict, whereas only a few countries foster inclusive education.

Countries That Are Improving the Portrayal of Religion in Textbooks

Although the preceding discussion highlights a bleak picture for religion's being equitably taught in school, several countries created programs that were worthy of note. These countries recently made a concerted effort to improve the religious equity of their textbooks. Israel, India, Pakistan, Russia, and Afghanistan improved the inclusion of religion in their social studies texts (Davis, 2002; Karpov & Lisovskaya, 1999; Murphy, 2005; Ottaway & Stevens, 2002; Thomas, 2006; Urschel, 2002).

In addition, the United States launched a new campaign to erase the radical Islamic passages in the biased Afghani textbooks (Ottaway & Stevens, 2002). The new campaign included $6.5 million to provide new textbooks that President Bush believes will teach '"respect for human dignity, instead of indoctrinating students with fanaticism and bigotry"' (p. A01). The new books were criticized because they promote the teaching of Islam. According to the critics, passages promoted the Koran and were "teaching students to become good Muslims" (p. A01). Some legal experts claimed that the text-books violated a Constitutional ban because they used United States tax dollars to promote religion (Ottaway & Stevens). The United States has invested substantial resources into making Afghani textbooks more tolerant. Other Middle Eastern countries allied with the United States, however, are continuing to perpetuate religious intolerance in their texts.

Religion in European Social Studies Textbooks

Although the religious content in European and North American social studies textbooks was not as biased as it was in most south and southwest Asian and north African countries, there were several areas in which religion was not presented in an

equitable manner (Antoniou & Yasemin, 2000). The democracies in Europe and North America should be willing to embrace cultural diversity. Introducing religion as a form of cultural education can "guide students towards creating a more democratic society" (Campbell, 2004, p. 40). Textbook studies have revealed, however, that many European and North American texts are failing to embrace the many cultures that are present throughout the world (Antoniou & Yasemin; Bonnivard & Lefebvre, 2006; Ihtiyar, 2003).

Inaccurate portrayal of Judaism. The examination of French texts revealed that Judaism was not accurately being included (Bonnivard & Lefebvre, 2006). Judaism was described as merely a religion of immigrants although the religion existed throughout France for many generations. However, the inclusion and treatment of the Holocaust had improved in the French textbooks. Further, the attacks of September 11, 2001, were inaccurately portrayed in the texts. The majority of the textbooks did not include that the motives of the hijackers were to install an international Islamic rule (Bonnivard & Lefebvre).

Division between the Christian West and the Islamic East. A review of history textbooks used in England's and France's public schools revealed the Christian Crusades of the Middle Ages portrayal in the texts (Antoniou & Yasemin, 2000). Passages taken from the English history textbooks that dealt with the Crusades were analyzed to reveal the nature of the content that was included in the texts. The crusades were depicted as uniting the Christian forces of Western Europe against the Muslims of the Middle East. A distinction was made in the texts between the Western European Catholics and the Eastern Orthodox Church of the Byzantine Empire. The Eastern Orthodox peoples are

portrayed as being "dissimilar" to Western Europeans. Muslims were generalized as comprising the Turks (Antoniou &Yasemin).

Researchers discovered that the contemporary French social studies textbooks presented the Crusades as a dividing force between the Muslims and Christians (Schissler & Soysal, 2005). The theme of violence was found in the social studies textbooks with regard to Muslim and Christian relations. An excerpt from a geography and history textbook published in 1997 by Stern and Hugonie declared that the "Crusades contributed to the development of a hostile image of the West among Muslim people, an image associated with violence and aggression" (p. 29). The textbook further stated that "the Crusades have dug a ditch between the West and the East" (p. 29). The Catholic Church played a major role in the Crusades (Maalouf, 1984).

Anti-Catholicism revealed in Mexico's texts. Mexico is the only country in North America, other than the United States, in which a textbook study focusing on religious content in social studies textbooks was found. Although the study is almost 50 years old, it reveals the manner in which religious content has been presented in Mexico's social studies texts. McCornack (1959) revealed that a strong emphasis was placed on the impact of Catholic missionaries to Mexico during the colonial time period. An elementary school history textbook stated that Catholic missionaries were those sainted men who "converted the majority of the Mexican tribes in a few years often at the cost of martyrdom and death, and always with the example of an admirable life by the sublime which they practiced" (p. 236). The secondary history textbooks, however, did not portray the missionaries as favorably. The missionaries in these textbooks were accused of "requiring the natives to do heavy work, especially construction of large religious

buildings in remote places, and of cruel punishments such as the wearing of crowns of thorns" (p. 236). McCornack found several criticisms of the Catholic Church in the secondary school textbooks. The Inquisition was revealed to have suppressed Protestantism and Judaism. Scientific progress was portrayed as being delayed in Mexico due to the Catholic Church blocking nearly all books printed during this time period from entering the country (McCornack). These high school textbooks focused solely on the negative aspects of the Catholic Church. Focusing only on the Catholic Church's faults is a misrepresentation of the impact that the church had on historical events. However, this represents a shift in the criticism of the primary religion present in the country.

Improved religious content in European social studies textbooks. In contrast to those in other European countries, textbooks in Russia and Germany showed improvement in the quality of religious content included in their textbooks (Schissler & Soysal, 2005). German textbooks, however, improved over the last 50 years. In contrast, textbooks published in the 1970s avoided debating gender roles in Islam (Loya, 2006; Schissler & Soysal). Some of the German textbooks encouraged the students to discuss and compare Christianity to Islam. In these textbooks, the students were asked to compare quotations from the Christian Bible to the Quran for similarities and differences. In addition, the authors of the textbooks made a concerted effort to promote toleration for Judaism. A textbook published in 2000 titled *Die Reise in die Vergangenheit* [A Journey into the Past] stated, "Don't let yourself be driven into enmity and hatred of other people, be they Russians or Americans, Jews or Turks, the alternatives or conservatives, black or white" (p. 29). These German textbooks are making noticeable strides towards fairly presenting the world religions.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia experienced sweeping changes in its educational curriculum. The formerly Communist state had not supported the inclusion of religion in the public school curriculum. The democratic nation of Russia decided to introduce new educational reforms that would include the study of religion. Various religious groups presented proposals of how religion should be included (Loya, 2006). The Orthodox Christian church leaders argued for more teaching of Orthodox values and beliefs. Mikhail Dudko, the Secretary of the Moscow Patriarchate Public Relations Department, believes that Russian Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists should be taught the primary religious beliefs that are held by the majority of the people living in the region (Loya). In June of 2005, Furensko said that "the position of the ministry is that religion, the history of religion, and the culture of religion are an inseparable part of the history of the development of the country and the history of the development of the world" (as cited in Loya, p. 64).

A study conducted by Karpov and Lisovskaya (1999) revealed that references to religion in post-Communist Russian secondary social science and literature textbooks were "no longer taboo" (p. 534). Russian nationalist symbols were presented in the same context as the Russian Orthodox Church (Karpov & Lisovskaya). The post-Communist textbook authors' religious views were often positively mentioned, which was a shift from the ideology of "atheistic humanism" that was present in the communist era texts (Karpov & Lisovskaya).

Summary of International Textbook Reviews

The majority of countries outside of the United States have failed to include religion in their social studies textbooks adequately. In most cases, the major religions of

the world were not presented in an equitable manner. This inadequate inclusion of religion is a major concern because of the rapid globalization that is transpiring throughout the world. As Thomas Friedman (2006) proclaimed, "globalization is shrinking the world from a size small to a size tiny" (p. 10). The current state of globalization demands that students across the world understand the diverse cultures of the populations that inhabit the earth. Many of the countries throughout the world either have or are transforming to democratic governments (Friedman). A more multicultural centered education can inform students of the cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity that is present throughout the world (Banks, 1997). Thus, it is necessary to provide equity in educating students about the various religions of the world so that they will better understand the myriad cultures of the world and also have the capability to uphold democratic principles.

Countries such as Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and Iran promote Islam over all other religions. Social studies textbooks used in Iran, Syria, and Palestine reveal their religious intolerance by depicting Judaism and the country of Israel in a very negative manner. In these texts, the country of Israel is often omitted from the geography textbooks while the Jewish people are consistently blamed for multiple atrocities. In Egypt, Islam, Christianity, and Judaism are given a higher status than Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism, conveying the impression that Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism are inferior (Groiss, 2004).

Although many countries in the Middle East continue to present religious intolerance in their textbooks, some countries have made a concerted effort to make their texts more religiously tolerant. Israel, India, and Saudi Arabia have made great strides in improving the religious content in their textbooks. The social studies textbooks used in

Israel have been found to be more religiously tolerant than their Palestinian counterparts (Groiss, 2000; Murphy, 2005). This religious tolerance is a result of textbook reforms that were enacted in the 1990's. The reforms focused on making the textbooks more religiously tolerant. The portrayal of Muslims as being opposed to peace is a clear indicator that reforms must continue.

Textbook reforms similar to those enacted by Israel to improve the presentation of religious content have taken place in India. The secular government elected in 2004 has made great improvements in the religious content that is presented in their texts (Thomas, 2006). The continuation of religiously tolerant content is dependent on this secular government's ability to stay in power. Similarly, pressure from Saudi Arabia's Western allies has caused the country to reevaluate the type of religious content included in the textbooks. Although Saudi Arabia has made educational reforms in their texts, it is evident that the religious content included in the texts needs to be more fairly balanced. Clearly, more Middle Eastern countries need to seek educational reforms that will improve the religious content of their social studies textbooks. The need for educational reform to improve religious content in textbooks extends far beyond the realm of the Middle East. There is a definite need to reform social studies textbooks used in Europe and North America.

Research conducted on social studies textbooks used in Europe reveal that religion is inadequately and unfairly included in the texts. For example, German textbooks portrayal of Islam evidently is biased. These textbooks present Islam as a violent and sexist religion (Ihtiyar, 2003). France's description of Judaism as merely a religion of immigrants is unfair. The improved inclusion of the Holocaust, however,

reveals that France is making efforts to improve the religious content included in the textbooks. French and English textbook's inclusion of religion in relation to the Crusades needs further improvement. Surely, the Crusades did divide the Muslims and Christians and to some extent this division still exists today. In contemporary society, however, there are additional reasons for the division between Christians and Muslims than the Crusades. These textbooks need to provide a more accurate and balanced version of Islam and Christianity so the division that exists today can be mended.

The textbook studies revealed that not all European countries described religion in a negative manner. With Communism not far removed from Russia, the country's recent inclusion of religion in textbooks is promising. Clearly, Russia's attempt at providing fair and equal treatment to all religions reveals the importance that the country has placed on including religious content in the curriculum.

The single North American textbook study conducted outside of the United States proved to be very informative. McCornack's (1959) study of Mexico's textbooks concluded that religion was insufficiently included in social studies texts. Catholicism was constantly criticized and scrutinized throughout the texts. Religious inclusion in contemporary society was almost non-existent. This lack of contemporary religious content included in textbooks is a theme that is consistently present in social studies texts used in the United States.

The purpose of this international review of social studies textbook studies was to compare and contrast how countries outside of the United States have included religious content in their texts. The use of international research can help provide a better understanding about the cultures in which "education is embedded" (Hahn, 2006, p. 142).

Hahn states that "comparative international studies have contributed to knowledge about the role of controversial issues discussions in social studies classes in different national contexts and the relationships between such discussions and student knowledge and attitudes" (p. 140). The social studies teachers who were surveyed in this study represent a variety of cultures. These teachers are also charged with teaching students from a wide array of cultural backgrounds. Thus, it is important to understand how various cultures throughout the world include religion in their textbooks.

Teacher Attitudes Towards Religion in Social Studies Textbooks

The democratic ideal which Dewey (1944) advocated consisted of exposing students to "more numerous and more varied points of shared common interest" (p. 86). The multicultural content included in the textbooks often dictates how various cultures are taught in the classroom. Many social studies teachers rely on their textbooks either as a primary or secondary resource (Loewen, 1995). These textbooks often decide the type of religious and cultural content that will be taught to the students. Because textbooks are heavily used by social studies educators, it is imperative to attain an understanding of how educators perceive religion to be included in the textbooks.

A study conducted by Stone and Zam in 2006 served as a seminal research study that gauged social studies teacher educators' attitudes toward religion in the curriculum. The nationwide study randomly examined 342 members of the National Council for the Social Studies (Stone & Zam). The participants in the study identified themselves as members of the College and University Faculty Assembly, or as teacher preparation: secondary, or elementary. The researchers "examined social studies teacher educators' awareness, attitudes, and actions regarding teaching about religion in the K-12

curriculum" (p. 92). Data from the survey were analyzed using the Rasch logistical transformation model.

Stone and Zam (2006) concluded that an overwhelming majority of the respondents viewed the teaching of religion to be favored by most Americans and also protected under the First Amendment. A large proportion of social studies educators were not satisfied with the religious content in social studies textbooks. Most of the respondents (99%) believed that "the majority of Americans favor the teaching about religion in public schools" (p. 94). Educators agree on the legality of teaching about religion as 91% of the respondents affirmed that "the Supreme Court has indicated that teaching about religion is constitutional under the First Amendment" (p. 94). Many of the participants (49%) believed that, "the study of religion is inhibited, at least marginalized, in most social studies textbooks" (p. 94). Only 3% of the participants, however, agreed with the statement that "materials describing the constitutional, legal, civic, and pedagogical arguments/constructs for the inclusions of religion in the curriculum are plentiful" (p. 94). The overwhelming majority of these educators' believed that is was legal to objectively teach about religion in the public schools. Many of the educators (93%) agreed with the statement that "most public school teachers can teach about religion in ways that are objective and accurate" (p. 96). Less than 1%, however, agreed that "public schools have a responsibility to provide religious education" (p. 96). The importance of understanding religion as component of diversity was evident as 60% of the social studies educators believed that a "knowledge of religion is necessary for understanding and living in a world of diversity" (p. 96). Only 23%, however, agreed with the statement that "multicultural education should include exposing students to

religious ways of thinking" (p. 96). These social studies educators affirmed the importance of teaching about religion in the social studies. Further, most of the educators agreed on the legality and necessity of teaching about religion. The professional social studies educators in this study provided valuable insight into teaching religion in the social studies curriculum.

Summary

How can current social studies and history textbooks become changed to include a broader understanding of the religions that shape the culture, motivations, and politics of the United States and the rest of the world? The answer is complex. Educators, elected officials, parents, editors, writers, and purchasers of textbooks need to pressure for more pertinent historical concepts to be included that will help students better understand the events of the past and present. The textbooks need to focus on promoting the democratic ideal and a multicultural education that will provide equity to the various cultures that inhabit the planet and provide more appropriate and accurate information on religion.

Teaching about religion in public school is a legal and necessary component of making social studies concepts meaningful to the students. The U.S. Supreme Court has supported the legality of teaching about the religions in the public schools on numerous occasions (Collie & Piediscalzi, 1977). Social studies textbook publishers should be aware that the full inclusion of the major world religions in public school texts has the support of the highest court in the United States.

National and state social studies standards that have been designed over the past decade have steadfastly promoted the study of the religions in the public schools (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). Numerous educational organizations have supported the inclusion of

religion in textbooks and the curriculum through the formation of their respective educational standards (Douglas, 2000). These standards should serve as a guide for textbook publishers to include a better quality of religious historical content in their texts (Haynes & Thomas).

Special interest groups and organizations that pressure textbook publishers to drop pertinent religious content must be monitored carefully to ensure that they are not allowed to misrepresent the historical events, as well as the practices and beliefs of their religions (Sewall, 1995). More citizens should get involved in the religious content included in textbooks as to guard against the secularization of social studies texts. The secularization of textbooks would lead to a distorted view of historical and contemporary events. The vast majority of Americans believe in some form of religion (Al-Hibri et al., 2001). Many of the people living in the United States (80%) believe that it is important to have religious training for their children in public school (Nash, 1999).

Textbook studies that have been conducted over the last century have concluded that the study of the major world religions is improving in social studies textbooks (Nord, 1995). Textbooks serve as a guide for educators and are used in the classroom. Yet it is an injustice to teachers and students that social studies textbooks do not adequately describe religion (Loewen, 1995). Although it has been shown that the religious content of social studies textbooks have improved, it is necessary for steps to be taken that will ensure the full inclusion of religion in the public school socials studies texts that are used in the curriculum. Further research is essential to gauge the quantity and quality of religious content in social studies textbooks that are used in public schools. It is necessary

for students to have a complete understanding of the various religious practices, beliefs, morals, and values associated with these religions.

The exposure to religious content would enable students to understand how the various religions have affected the contemporary world. Religion is a major part of the culture for myriad people living throughout the world. The current trend of globalization demands that students understand the complex relationships between religion and culture. As Thomas Friedman (2005) states, “the world is becoming flat” (p. 5). Thus, it is essential that students in the United States understand the various cultures in the United States and throughout the world.

Additional research should be conducted that examines the impact that religious and special interest groups have on the content included in the social studies textbooks. Religious groups and organizations can not be allowed to distort or mislead the religious beliefs, practices, and values of their respective religions. Special interest groups that seek to secularize social studies textbooks should not be able to diminish the value that religions have had on past and current events. Research needs to be conducted that would further gauge social studies educators’ attitudes on the extent to which they believe that the major world religions should be included in the social studies texts. Social studies educators should have input in the religious content that is included in the current social studies textbooks.

Many of the states in the southeastern United States require that the major religions of world to be taught at the K-12 level as required through their state educational standards. Because of teachers’ reliance on textbooks and requirements to teach about religion, there is a definite need to gauge social studies educators’ attitudes

toward the inclusion of religion in textbooks. An Internet survey would be the best method to attain social studies educators' attitudes towards religious content in textbooks.

The purpose of this literature review has been to provide evidence as to how social studies textbooks have included religious content in historical and contemporary time periods. Various researchers and special interest groups conducted textbook studies to examine how religion is portrayed in the social studies texts. Clearly, the studies revealed that religion is inadequately included in the texts. These studies laid the foundation for developing an understanding of how the textbooks include religion. Only one study exists that addresses how social studies educators believe that religion is presented in the textbooks. The study included a survey in which merely one question was devoted to examining how social studies educators view their textbooks inclusion of religion (Stone & Zam, 2006).

This study will further address how professional social studies educators believe that textbooks are and should be including religious content. The textbook studies presented in the literature review helped to guide the questions that will be presented to the social studies educators in a survey. These questions are used along with the research studies to help attain a better understanding of how religion is portrayed in social studies textbooks.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Hypothesis

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to attain an improved understanding of how social studies teachers believed the major religions of the world were included in the social studies curriculum. It is important to gain a better understanding of how the religions are taught to uphold a multicultural and democratic education. To address the issue of religious content in social studies textbooks, I conducted an investigation of religious content in textbooks. Very little research exists on the extent to which educators believe religion is included in their textbooks. An investigation needed to take place that would provide further understanding of social studies teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of religion in their textbooks.

One research question that emerged addressed how effectively textbook publishers currently included religion in social studies texts. Another research question focused on how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in their textbooks. Thus, the research questions were as follows:

1. How do social studies educators believe that religious content is included in the textbooks?
2. How do social studies educators believe that religious content should be included in the textbooks?

Given that there has been very little research conducted on the extent to which educators believe that religion is included in their textbooks, a survey questionnaire was the most appropriate research instrument. According to Barton and Baumann (2004), survey research provides a way in which to gather information on a large subset group of individuals and then make inferences to much larger groups. Survey research allows the researcher to collect information about behaviors, attitudes, and opinions (Babbie, 1990). The researcher is able to reach large populations by using survey research. The findings from survey research can often be used to generalize to a larger population.

Hackett (1981) stated that survey research traces its origins back to the times of ancient Egypt, and it was used as far back as the 18th century in England to gather information on various social conditions. Survey research has been used as a valid source for conducting research in the United States for many years. Barton and Bauman (2004) affirmed that survey research in the social sciences and education has been used in the United States for over 100 years. Tuckman (1999) believed that survey research has "undeniable value" as a means of collecting data and as such it is frequently used in the field of educational research. Zhang (2000) adds that survey research is not only valued in educational research but it is also a widely used research method in the areas of political science, psychology, marketing, sociology, business, and social work. Hackett concluded that survey research is the best research device available to be used in the field of the social sciences. Survey research is a beneficial scientific social research method because it enables researchers to collect information on attitudes, opinions, and behaviors from a subset of a population and generalize the findings to the larger population (Babbie, 1990; Tuckman).

Survey research has been identified as being a justifiable research device. Hackett (1981) stated that "there seems to be a special character, a logic to survey research methods that make them unique and that warrant consideration of survey methods as a distinct and legitimate approach to research" (p. 600).

Survey Methodology

Traditionally, survey questionnaires have been conducted through the use of paper surveys (Kember & Leung, 2005). Barton and Baumann (2004) believe that Internet surveys can be effective for populations that are known to use e-mail and the internet. All of the participants in my study had access to e-mail and the Internet through their schools where they teach social studies. I deemed Internet survey questionnaire to be the most appropriate research instrument to reach social studies educators in this study because of their access to the internet, computers, and e-mail. Solomon (2001) states that educational researchers and social scientist are starting to "widely use" surveys that are Internet-based. There are many benefits of using Internet-based surveys over traditional paper surveys. Dillman (2007) describes that Internet survey's virtually unlimited variety of colors and shapes allow the researcher to format a survey that would be more appealing than the traditional paper survey. Complicated skip patterns available through Internet surveys enable researchers to attain a greater depth of information from their participants. Skip patterns allow researchers to ask respondents various sets of questions based upon their answers. Internet-based surveys typically attain more complete and longer answers to open-ended questions. Web surveys are shown to be more cost efficient and to generate quicker response rates (Hadlock, Kaplowitz, & Levine, 2004). Zhang (2000) states that web surveys can reduce errors from coding and transcription. Internet

surveys allow the researcher to format questionnaires to check and reduce unacceptable answers. When a research topic is sensitive in nature, Internet surveys offer a means to reach a group that is normally difficult to identify or access. Internet surveys may increase response rates by providing a dynamic/interactive survey process. Furthermore, researchers are able to reach a larger number of participants in more geographically remote areas by using web-based surveys (Zhang).

One of the main drawbacks of using an Internet survey is that intended participants may not have access to e-mail and the Internet (Solomon, 2001; Dillman, 2007). Another drawback is that participants might not have the web-browser needed to complete the survey. Participants also might not have the appropriate software or be sufficiently computer literate to complete the survey (Solomon).

The web survey should measure how well teachers believe that religion is being included in their textbooks by asking the respondents a wide range of questions in a format that is easy to comprehend. Dillman (2007), a leading researcher in survey design, notes that Internet surveys have a more polished appearance that provides "survey capabilities far beyond those available for any other type of self-administered questionnaire" (p. 354). According to Dillman, web surveys can provide a higher level of interaction between the researcher and the respondent than paper surveys.

Dillman (2007) has several recommendations for conducting web survey research. Internet surveys offer myriad research possibilities that extend beyond the boundaries of interview questionnaires or paper surveys. Various formats of the web survey that include virtually unlimited variety of colors and shapes allow the researcher the flexibility to create a survey that will appeal to a wider range of respondents. One of the unique

aspects of the Internet survey that makes it much better than the conventional paper survey or interview questionnaire is the Internet survey's capability to include complicated skip patterns that are not easily identified by the respondent. Finally, Internet surveys that use multiple contacts which include a pre-notice, a questionnaire, a thank you/reminder, and a parallel replacement questionnaire will generate better response rates.

In a study at Michigan State University, Hadlock et al. (2004) evaluated participants' response rates to Internet survey questionnaires versus traditional mail survey questionnaires. The results revealed that surveys administered via web mail and traditional mailed paper had similar response rates when given advanced notification of the surveys. In a 1998 case study at Washington State University that compared the response rates of a paper survey and a web survey, researchers found that the web surveys and paper surveys had equal response rates. The web survey participants all had access to e-mail and the Internet. The equal response rate was achieved through the use of multiple contacts, which included a pre-notice, a questionnaire, a thank you/reminder, and a replacement questionnaire. Hayslett and Wildemuth (2004) conducted a study to gauge response rates of Internet surveys and traditional paper surveys. These researchers surveyed a random sampling of 300 academic reference librarians in North Carolina using three different research methods. The research methods included using an Internet survey announced by mail, using an Internet survey announced by e-mail, and using a paper survey. The study showed that the traditional paper surveys received a higher response rate than the Internet surveys. However, the Internet surveys were returned at a quicker rate.

Kember and Leung (2005) conducted a study to compare response rates to survey questionnaires completed via the Internet and by paper. The study focused on surveying 2,786 undergraduate students who attended the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The surveyed students were enrolled in all seven academic areas offered by the university. The researchers found that there were no differences in response rates or the type of responses received by participants completing the survey via the web and surveys that were conducted by paper. The fact that there were no differences in response rates could be related to each of the participants in the study having access to e-mail and the Internet.

Studies have concluded that response rates to web surveys can be improved by using Dillman's (2007) multiple contact approach. Hadlock et al. (2004) demonstrated that presurvey and postsurvey contacts could improve response rates. Through pairwise comparisons, the researchers concluded that there was a better response rate with groups that received presurvey postcards than the groups that did not receive prior notice. These pairwise comparisons revealed that there were no significant differences ($p < .05$) between group one and two as well as group two and three. The comparisons also reveal a statistically significant positive difference in the number of respondents who received post-survey postcards than those that did not receive the postcards. Dillman's case study affirmed that multiple contacts can improve participant responses. In this particular case study, each group received four contacts, which included a presurvey notice, questionnaire, thank you/reminder, and a replacement questionnaire. The Internet survey and the paper survey both obtained a response rate of 58%. A good response rate for online surveys is around 30% while paper surveys average around 50% (Hamilton, 2003). Thus, the 58% response rate of Dillman's survey proved to be a good response rate.

Internet surveys have been shown to attain quicker response rates. Dillman's (2007) case study revealed faster responses through the use of Internet surveys as compared to paper surveys. Furthermore, surveys completed on the Internet displayed more completed answers than paper surveys. One of the inadequacies of the paper survey is the inability to receive a high number of completed open-ended questions. Dillman found that Internet surveys were able to generate more responses to open-ended questions than the paper surveys. Respondents of the Internet surveys tended to provide longer answers to the open-ended questions than did the respondents to the paper surveys. A higher item response was also found to be more prevalent with the web surveys.

Participants

The setting for this study took place via an Internet survey. Surveying a large number of participants through the Internet enabled me to obtain results that would be potentially more generalizable to the population. Members of a professional social studies educational association located in the southeastern United States were surveyed about how well they believe religion is included in their textbooks. This professional social studies educational association included future educators who are enrolled in a social studies education program, K-12 social studies teachers, and university professors in the social studies.

The professional social studies educational association has 787 members. Each of the members was included in the survey research study. The participants in the study were located in urban, suburban, and rural areas in a state located in the southeastern United States. Participants provided information about their perceptions of and beliefs about the inclusion of religion in social studies textbooks as well as information with

respect to the grade level they taught, years they have been teaching in the social studies field, specific courses they currently teach or have taught, level of education, ethnicity, religious affiliation, and gender.

Procedures for Data Collection

Data collected for this study were obtained by distributing an Internet survey via email to all of the members of the professional social studies educational association to the e-mail listed in their membership files. The Internet survey was conducted through Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey is a Portland, OR-based, online survey company that started in 1999. More than 80% of the Fortune 100 companies use Survey Monkey to collect data. The participants in the study were asked to respond to how they believe religion is and should be included in social studies textbooks that are used in K-12 classrooms by responding to a survey that included open and close-ended questions.

To obtain a greater response rate, the Dillman (2007) tailored design method was used to gather the data. This method involves using multiple contacts with the participants in order to ensure a higher rate of response. By using this method, I made a total of four contacts with the participants. The contacts included a presurvey notice, a questionnaire, a thank you/reminder, and a replacement questionnaire.

The survey was conducted over a 10-day period that began in January. The first survey was sent out to 787 participants. A second survey questionnaire was sent out via e-mail on Monday to participants who had yet to complete the survey. A third survey was sent on Wednesday followed by a thank you and reminder announcement. A final survey questionnaire was then distributed on Thursday to participants who had not completed the survey.

The questions in the survey were designed to determine how social studies educators believed that religion is included in the social studies curriculum. These questions asked the teachers how religion was currently being included in the textbooks as well as how they believed that religion should be included in future social studies textbooks. The survey consisted of 25 questions. Twenty questions included closed (multiple response) questions while five questions were open-ended questions. Along with the closed and open-ended questions, participants were asked to list the social studies course(s) that they are currently teaching or have taught. A copy of the survey questions is included in Appendix B.

The questions included on the survey were designed to help answer the research questions. Twelve research questions were identified to help attain a better understanding of how social studies educators believe religion is and should be included in the text-books. These questions are as follows:

1. Is there a difference between males and females on satisfaction with the type of religious content that is included in textbooks?
2. Is there a difference between males and females on how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks?
3. Is there a difference between the type of positions held by social studies educators (pre-service teacher, elementary school teacher 1-4, middle school teacher 5-8, high school teacher 9-12, school administration, university professor) with respect to their satisfaction with the type of religious content included in social studies textbooks?

4. Is there a difference between the type of positions held by social studies educators (pre-service teacher, elementary school teacher 1-4, middle school teacher 5-8, high school teacher 9-12, school administration, university professor) and their beliefs on how religion should be included in textbooks?
5. What is the relationship between the number of years experience in the field of social studies and how educators are satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks?
6. What is the relationship between the number of years experience in the field of social studies and how educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks?
7. What is the relationship between levels of education and how social studies educators are satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks?
8. What is the relationship between levels of education and how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks?
9. Is there a difference between race/ethnicity (Hispanic, African American, Caucasian, Asian) with respect to how social studies educators are satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks?
10. Is there a difference between race/ethnicity (Hispanic, African American, Caucasian, Asian) with respect to how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks?

11. Is there a difference between religious beliefs (Hinduism, Islam, Christian, Judaism, Buddhism, Agnostic, Atheist) with respect to how social studies educators are satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks?
12. Is there a difference between religious beliefs (Hinduism, Islam, Christian, Judaism, Buddhism, Agnostic, Atheist) with respect to how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks?

Protection of Human Subjects

Protection of human subjects in research provides measures to minimize potential harm to the participants taking part in the research study. Permission to conduct this study was obtained through the professional social studies educational association. A cover letter explaining the participants' rights was included at the beginning of the survey. Participants were given a choice to participate in the study (see appendix A). By completing the survey and choosing the submit button, the participants chose to participate in the study. The surveys were protected through the use of Secure Sockets Layers (SSL) encryption that is offered by the web host Survey Monkey. SSL helps to ensure that private information is safely transferred across the internet. The SSL encryption is compliant with HIPPA regulations. Any data printed will be shredded after 5 years.

Data Analysis

The closed questions provide a four point Likert type scale response. Responses to the closed questions were statistically analyzed using Pearson's chi square test. According to Tuckman (1999), the chi square test allows the analysis of one or more

nominal variables. The chi square tests can show whether independent variables show significantly different distributions across more than one category. One of the best aspects of the chi square test is that it allows researchers to see if there was a relationship between two or more categorical variables (Field, 2005). Field stated that the Pearson's chi square test is a very "elegant statistic based on the simple idea of comparing the frequencies you observe in certain categories to the frequencies that you might expect to get in those categories by chance" (p. 682). The Pearson's chi square test was used to test the significance of the survey results. The *p*-value was set at .05, which "implies the likelihood that the distribution of scores obtained in the study would occur simply as a function of chance is less than 5% (Tuckman).

Providing further context, the responses to the open-ended questions were qualitatively analyzed. In-depth examinations of the participants' responses were conducted on the open-ended questions. The open-ended questions were analyzed through the use of NVivo computer software. The use of NVivo has been legitimized and adopted by an increasing interest in mixed-methods research conducted in the behavioral and social sciences (Johnston, 2004). The software enables researchers to code, manage data, and is beneficial in theory testing (Crowley, Harre, & Tagg, 2002). NVivo has shown to be incredibly useful and informative because of the powerful search tool that allows researchers to compare and contrast themes (Johnston, 2004). Using NVivo, the researcher can categorize responses to the open-ended questions based on the themes that emerge from the answered questions. The responses to these questions were used to attain a better understanding of teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of religion in social studies textbooks.

Threats to Validity

Validity is a very important part of research because it helps to ensure that the researcher's conclusions are accurate. Tuckman (1999) states that internal validity affects the observers' certainty that the research results can be accepted based on the design of the study. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) identify threats to internal validity that need to be accounted for when conducting research. These threats to internal validity included selection, history, maturation, repeated testing, experimental mortality, selection-maturation-interaction, and experimenter bias.

Selection bias occurs when participants are assigned to various treatment groups based on different criteria. To prevent the possibility of selection bias, each member of the social studies professional organization was asked to participate in the survey. History can be violated when an extraneous variable occurs between pre- and post- measurement of the dependent variable. Because there was no pre- and post- measurement in the study, history was not violated. Maturation takes place when subjects change over the course of the experiment. This change can be either a biological change or psychological, such as the fatigue factor. The short time frame in which the survey was open (less than two weeks) averted the possibility of violating maturation. Repeated testing may also lead to participant bias. Participants may remember the correct answers or may have been conditioned to the test. There was no replication of testing in the study which will secure the avoidance of the possible negative effects associated with repeated testing. Experimental mortality occurs when some participants drop out before the study is completed. This experimental mortality can be caused by participant distraction or quitting the survey before completion. This can be due to groups' receiving different

independent variables. It may be that one of the independent variables is the cause for the participants dropping out. To avoid experimental mortality. each of the participants were given the same independent and dependent variables. Selection-maturation interaction happens when the independent variable is given to two groups that are different in age. Individuals' ages were not identified or factored in the study. Experimenter bias occurs when the researcher influences the outcome of a study. The perspective of the researcher was included in the study to help identify and account for any possible biases.

Researcher Perspective

The perspective of the researcher is essential in this study relating to the inclusion of religion in social studies textbooks. As the researcher, it is important to note that I am Christian. I was raised in the beliefs, values, and ideals of the Southern Baptist Church. Having lived in a variety of states, including Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, Washington, and Maine, I have been exposed to a variety of cultures. These cultures that I have encountered encompass myriad religions that are practiced throughout the world. Teaching social studies courses that include A.P. Government, Economics, Citizenship, World History, United States History, and Geography has led me to understand the importance of including how various religions have affected past and present societies. The exposure to a variety of cultures and the responsibility of teaching social studies concepts in a pluralistic society has enabled me to understand the importance of teaching religion in social studies. It is my belief that religion has and continues to play a major role in events that transpire throughout the world. Thus, I believe it is imperative that students and teachers are given the necessary materials to learn and teach about religion in social studies.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The main purpose of this exploratory study was to investigate how social studies educators believe the major religions of the world were included in the social studies curriculum. Textbooks play an important role in the type of concepts that social studies educators teach in their courses (Gagnon, 1987). The teaching of religion is a major part of multicultural education (Nord, 1995).

The main research questions were as follows:

1. How do social studies educators believe religious content is included in the textbooks?
2. How do social studies educators believe that religious content should be included in the textbooks?

From the two main research questions, 12 secondary research questions were tested.

To conduct the statistical analysis, a target sample of members from a professional social studies educational association located in the southeastern United States were invited to participate in the study. The sample included 787 social studies educators. Surveys were sent out to the target sample via e-mail. Of the 787 e-mails that were sent out, 147 were returned as undeliverable. Ultimately, the target sample consisted of 640 social studies educators. Out of the 640 member target sample, 193 participants responded, which resulted in a 30.1% response rate. The response rate of 30.1% is deemed to be a good response rate for online surveys (Hamilton, 2003). The final study

sample's (n = 193) responses were submitted via electronic mail to Survey Monkey for the quantitative and qualitative data collection and collation. The measurements for the variables identified for this study are all nominal ordinal based on Likert-type scale responses.

This chapter describes the demographic profiles of the sample studied. For each research question, both descriptive and inferential results are offered and findings are discussed. The discussion includes the triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative measures. All tests were conducted at the .05 level of significance.

Demographic Profile of Study Participants

Responses to the survey showed that most members of the sample were female and that the highest percentage of participant's current level of education was master's degree with an overwhelming majority of participants (72%) having graduate degrees (see Table 1). The majority (65%) of the participants were middle school teachers and high school teachers, with 45.3% reporting to have been teaching or involved in the field of social studies for 10 or fewer years. In addition, the vast majority of the respondents identified the religion they identify with as Christianity. Most of the respondents described themselves as Caucasian.

From the questions asked, there were two sets of response types based on an agreements scale and a satisfaction scale. The agreement scale was used to gauge how well social studies educators agree with the inclusion of religion in textbooks. Participants had the option of choosing strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. The satisfaction scale was used to measure how respondents were satisfied with the inclusion of religion in textbooks. Table 2 presents the frequencies of responses to each

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Participants

Variable	Valid N	Percentage
Gender		
Female	119	61.7%
Male	74	38.3%
Current Level of Education		
Bachelors Degree	52	27.5%
Masters Degree	77	40.7%
Doctoral Degree	20	10.6%
Specialist Degree	40	21.2%
Current Position		
Elementary School Teacher	32	16.7%
Middle School Teacher	62	32.5%
High School Teacher	62	32.5%
Administration/Instruction	17	8.9%
University Professor	13	6.8%
Other	5	2.6%
Years in Field of Social Studies		
Less than 5 years	41	23.8%
5 to 10 years	37	21.5%
10 to 15 years	32	18.6%
15 to 20 years	23	13.4%
20 to 25 years	13	7.6%
25 to 30 years	9	5.2%
30 years or more	17	9.9%
Religious Belief Identified With		
Islam	2	1.1%
Buddhism	1	0.6%
Judaism	3	1.7%
Christian	159	87.8%
Other	16	8.8%
Race/Ethnicity		
Asian	4	2.2%
Hispanic	5	2.8%
African American	37	20.3%
Caucasian	136	74.7%

Note: Percentages based on the number of responses to the questions, excluding missing responses.

category on the agreement scale of responses showing two divisions including questions with regard to religious content of textbooks and questions regarding the aspects of teaching religion. The results reveal the overwhelming majority (75%) of social studies educators disagree that current social studies textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context for the study of religion. However, 86% agreed that future social studies textbooks should include more religious historical content and 95% agreed that it is necessary for social studies textbooks to include the study of religion in the contemporary world.

With regard to textbook publishers' limiting the religious content, most of the participants disagreed that the amount of religious content should be limited for either fear or prevention of controversy. In addition, most (77%) agreed that religious content in textbooks is limited because of special interest groups. The responses to the state performance standards questions varied with only 51% of the participants agreeing that religious content in social studies textbooks is currently guided by the state standards and 58% of the study participants agreeing that the state performance standard currently includes the study of religion.

The majority of the respondents (97%) agreed that it was necessary to teach religion in social studies. Most (98%) of the social studies educators also agreed that it was necessary to teach religion and how it relates to history. Although 64% agreed that it was possible to obtain appropriate curriculum materials for the objective teaching of religion, 89% disagreed that it was possible to teach social studies effectively without an understanding of religion and its impact on societies. In addition, the majority of

Table 2

Frequencies of Responses Based on the Agreement Scale

Study Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Social Studies Textbooks				
4. Current social studies textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context for the study of religion	43 (22.6%)	75 (39.5%)	66 (35.3%)	5 (2.6%)
5. Future social studies textbooks should include more religious historical content	2 (1.1%)	23 (12.4%)	103 (56.2%)	56 (30.3%)
7. It is necessary for social studies textbooks to include the study of religion in the contemporary world	4 (2.1%)	5 (3.2%)	84 (44.9%)	93 (49.7%)
10. Textbook publishers should limit the amount of religious content due to fear of controversy	73 (35.5%)	96 (50%)	20 (10.4%)	2 (1%)
11. Textbook publishers should limit the inclusion of religion to prevent controversy	81 (43.4%)	89 (47.1%)	13 (6.9%)	5 (2.6%)
12. Religious content in textbooks is limited due to special interest groups	10 (5.3%)	33 (17.9%)	111 (58.4%)	35 (18.4%)
13. Religious content in social studies textbooks is currently guided by state standards	15 (8%)	76 (40.4%)	92 (48.9%)	4 (2.7%)
14. State standards currently include the study of religion	15 (7.9%)	64 (33.9%)	96 (50.8%)	13 (7.4%)

(Table continues)

Study Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teaching				
1. It is necessary to teach about religion in the social studies.	3 (1.6%)	3 (1.6%)	53 (26.7%)	133 (70.2%)
2. It is necessary to teach about religion and how it relates to history.	3 (1.6%)	1 (0.5%)	45 (23.3%)	143 (74.6%)
3. It is possible to effectively teach social studies without an understanding of religion and its impact on societies.	93 (47.9%)	78 (40.2%)	13 (6.7%)	9 (5.2%)
16. It is possible to obtain appropriate curriculum materials for the objective teaching of religion.	24 (12.5%)	45 (23.4%)	99 (51.6%)	23 (12.5%)
Major Religions				
9. It is necessary to include the major religions of the world in future textbooks:				
Buddhism	2 (1%)	1 (0.5%)	93 (48.2%)	96 (50.3%)
Christianity	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)	83 (43.2%)	106 (55.7%)
Confucianism	2 (1.0%)	5 (2.6%)	95 (49.5%)	89 (46.9%)
Hinduism	2 (1.0%)	1 (0.5%)	93 (48.8%)	95 (50.0%)
Islam	1 (0.5%)	1 (0.5%)	82 (42.7%)	107 (56.3%)
Judaism	1 (0.5%)	0 (0.0%)	86 (45.5%)	101 (54.0%)

participants agreed that was necessary to include the major religions of the world in future textbooks.

Frequencies of responses to each category on the satisfaction scale of responses are shown in Table 3. The results show that 73% of the participants were dissatisfied with the social studies textbooks' inclusion of religion in the contemporary world, with only 43% satisfied with the state standards inclusion of religion. Across the sample there was general dissatisfaction with regard to the current social studies textbooks inclusion of the main religions of the world.

Findings for the descriptive results suggested that while there was general dissatisfaction with the social studies textbooks' inclusion of religion in the contemporary world, the participants acknowledged that social studies textbooks were not appropriately designed to provide a historical context for the study of religion. Respondents also agreed that it was necessary to include more religious historical content or the study of religion in the contemporary world.

Respondents reported, however, that textbook publishers should not limit religious content in textbooks because of potential controversy. The participants believed that textbooks need to include all the major religions of the world. Many educators also reported that religious content in textbooks was limited to special interest groups. Responses in regard to the state standards inclusion of religious content were inconclusive.

Table 3

Frequencies of Responses Based on the Satisfaction Scale

Study Statements:	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
6. Social studies textbooks' inclusion of religion in the contemporary world	44 (23.3%)	93 (49.2%)	46 (24.9%)	5 (2.6%)
8. Current social studies textbooks inclusion of the main religions of the world:				
Buddhism	39 (20.4%)	82 (42.9%)	60 (31.9%)	9 (4.7%)
Christianity	46 (24.2%)	69 (36.3%)	67 (35.8%)	7 (3.7%)
Confucianism	45 (23.6%)	83 (43.5%)	53 (28.3%)	9 (4.7%)
Hinduism	42 (22%)	80 (41.9%)	60 (31.9%)	8 (4.7%)
Islam	47 (24.6%)	67 (35.1%)	67 (35.1%)	10 (5.2%)
Judaism	40 (21.2%)	81 (42.9%)	62 (32.8%)	6 (3.2%)
15. State standards inclusion of religion	25 (13%)	84 (43.8%)	73 (38%)	10 (5.2%)

Analysis of the Open-Ended Questions

Qualitative data were collected from the four open-ended questions. Of the 193 participants, only 72% entered responses. For each question common themes or phrases were identified and counted. For the first question, 'In your opinion, what content information regarding religion do you think should be included in social studies textbooks across the k-12 spectrum?' the findings showed that 88% of the respondents

wanted all major religions included and 81% wanted the general history of religion included. The data also showed 67% of respondents wanted all the basic beliefs discussed, 60% believed is was necessary to understand the impact of religion in the world with regard to encouraging tolerance of different religious practices and 55% wanted to understand how religion affects behavior in different societies.

For the second question, "Discuss your thoughts regarding how religion is currently being included in social studies textbooks," 11% of the respondents reported that religion was not included in social studies textbooks, 46% reported that there was hardly any religion included, and 25% reported that inclusion of religion in current textbooks was sufficient. Only 24% wanted more information of all the major religions included in the texts. Some of the respondents (14%) wanted the major religions of the world as well as all other religions included in the textbooks. A few of the respondents (9%) reported that religion was taught by region, and (20%) believed that texts were limited because they were trying to be politically correct. Many respondents also repeated what they had submitted for the first question.

For the third question, "What religious content would you like to see included in social studies textbooks?" many of the respondents repeated their responses from the first and second questions. Results did show, however, that 12% wanted only the major religions included 51% wanted more information on all religions and 14% wanted more content on religions such as Islam and Judaism. Only 5% said that the textbooks did not need to be changed while (4%) reported that they only wanted the textbooks to include religions in the United States.

For the last open-ended question, “Discuss the aspects of religion that you believe are not adequately included in social studies textbooks,” responses varied. The results showed that 28% believed that all aspects were not adequately included, 8% believed only contemporary effects of religion were not included, 32% felt that the impact of religion and how it shaped society was not adequately included and 13% felt that basic religious beliefs were not adequately addressed. Some of the respondents (7%) believed that Christianity was inadequately represented in terms of the testaments of the Bible. Very few (3%) of the social studies educators reported that the role religion plays in the United States was not adequately included in the textbooks. Only 7% of the respondents, however, believed that social studies textbooks adequately included the study of religion.

Results for the Research Questions

The secondary research questions were tested using Pearson’s chi-square test of frequency cross-tabulations to determine any differences between the measures for the variables in the research questions. Pearson’s chi-square test was used because it allows for the analysis of one or more nominal variables. The chi-square tests were able to show whether independent variables showed significantly different distributions across more than one category (Field, 2005). This analysis technique was appropriate for the data measures, which are categorical in nature. Cross-tabulations are best used with categorical/nominal data, where the frequencies for each category are tabulated for the variables to be tested, and the best measure of the degree of the relationship between the variables is Pearson’s chi-square statistic computed primarily from differences between observed frequencies and expected (based on probabilities) frequencies.

Secondary Research Question 1

Is there a difference between male participants and female participants on satisfaction with the type of religious content that is included in textbooks? The measures for types of religious content are operationalized from question 8 from the questionnaire. This question was operationalized with regards to the gender of the participants and their satisfaction with the current social studies textbooks inclusion of the main religions of the world. The results of the Pearson's chi-square test showed that gender had no statistically significant association with levels of satisfaction with the current social studies textbooks' inclusion of the main religions of the world (see Table 4).

Tests were also conducted on measures operationalized by questions 6 and 15 and gender. The results show no statistically significant associations between gender and satisfaction levels with social studies textbooks' inclusion of religion ($\chi^2 = 4.84$, $df=3$, $p = .1867$; $\chi^2 = 4.356$, $df = 3$, $p = .2255$, respectively).

Secondary Research Question 2

Is there a difference between males and females on how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks? The measures for educator's belief that religion should be included in textbooks are operationalized by questions one through to five, seven, and nine through to fourteen, and gender. Results show that gender did not have a statistically significant association with how social studies educators believed that religion should be included in textbooks (see Table 5).

Table 4

Association Between Gender and Satisfaction with Presentation of Current Main Religions

Variables: Major Religions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
8.1 Buddhism	5.597	3	.1329
8.2 Christianity	4.958	3	.1749
8.3 Confucianism	4.507	3	.2117
8.4 Hinduism	4.059	3	.2552
8.5 Islam	5.117	3	.1634
8.6 Judaism	7.237	3	.0647

Secondary Research Question 3

Is there a difference between the type of positions held by social studies educators (preservice teacher, elementary school teacher
1-4, middle school teacher 5-8, high school teacher 9-12, school administration, university professor) in relation to their satisfaction with the type of religious content included in social studies textbooks? Similar tests were conducted as with the first research question on measures operationalized by questions 6, 8, and 15 with regards to satisfaction with the current social studies textbooks inclusion of the main religions of the world and current position.

Results showed that current teaching position is significantly associated with level of satisfactions with types of religious content included in social studies textbooks (see Table 6). In particular, the data revealed a statistically significant association with middle and high school educators and dissatisfaction with social studies textbooks' inclusion of

Table 5

Association Between Gender and How Educators Believe That Religion Should Be Included in Textbooks

Variables: Questions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
1. Teach religion in social studies	2.288	3	.5147
2. How it relates to history	3.665	3	.2999
3. Without understanding its impact on societies	1.771	3	.6212
4. Textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context	2.499	3	.4754
5. Should include more historical content	4.690	3	.1960
7. Include religion in the contemporary world	.353	3	.9498
9.1 Buddhism	1.738	3	.6286
9.2 Christianity	2.215	3	.5290
9.3 Confucianism	1.413	3	.7024
9.4 Hinduism	1.875	3	.5987
9.5 Islam	2.468	3	.4810
9.6 Judaism	.668	3	.7161
10. Limit religious content due to fear of controversy	5.678	3	.1284
11. Limit religious content to prevent controversy	.811	3	.8469
12. Religious content limited to special interest groups	7.312	3	.0626
13. Religious content currently guided by state standards	7.547	3	.0563
14. State standards currently include the study of religion	1.876	3	.5986

Table 6

Association Between Current Position and Satisfaction with Types of Religion Content

Variables: Major Religions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
6. Religion in the contemporary world	39.65	18	.0023
15. GPS inclusion of religion	60.69	18	.0000
8.1 Buddhism	49.75	18	.0001
8.2 Christianity	39.41	18	.0025
8.3 Confucianism	42.60	18	.0009
8.4 Hinduism	50.27	18	.0001
8.5 Islam	42.58	18	.0009
8.6 Judaism	46.33	18	.0003

religion in the contemporary world, the state standards inclusion of religion and the inclusion of the major religions of the world.

Secondary Research Question 4

Is there a difference between the type of positions held by social studies educators (preservice teacher, elementary school teacher 1-4, middle school teacher 5-8, high school teacher 9-12, school administration, university professor) and their beliefs on how religion should be included in textbooks? The measures for educator's belief that religion should be included in textbooks are operationalized by questions 1-5, 7, and 9-14 and by current position. The results showed statistically significant associations that middle and high school educators disagreed that current social studies textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context for the study of religion and that future social

studies textbooks should include more religious historical content (see Table 7). Results also show statistically significant associations with middle and high school educators and agreement that it is necessary to include Buddhism, Confucianism and Hinduism in the social studies texts. Results revealed a statistically significant association with high school educators and agreement that religious content in social studies textbooks is currently guided by state standards, and a statistically significant association of high school educators with strong agreement that state standards currently include the study of religion.

Secondary Research Question 5

What is the relationship between the number of years experience in the field of social studies and how educators are satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks? Tests were conducted on measures operationalized by questions 6, 8, and 15 with regards to satisfaction with the current social studies textbooks inclusion of the main religions of the world. The numbers of years experience in the field of social studies were categorized into intervals (see Table 1). Results showed that the number of years in the field of social studies was not associated in a statistically significant manner with levels of satisfaction with the type of religious content included in textbooks (see Table 8).

Secondary Research Question 6

What is the relationship between the number of years experience in the field of social studies and how educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks? The measures for educator's belief that religion should be included in textbooks were operationalized by questions 1-5, 7, 9-14 and by number of years experience in the field

Table 7

Association Between Current Position and How Educators Believe That Religion Should Be Included in Textbooks

Variables: Questions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
1. Teach religion in social studies	17.02	18	.5220
2. How it relates to history	17.62	18	.4807
3. Without understanding its impact on societies	8.866	18	.9628
4. Textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context	30.13	18	.0362
5. Should include more historical content	30.91	18	.0295
7. Include religion in the contemporary world	22.33	18	.2175
9.1 Buddhism	29.54	18	.0422
9.2 Christianity	20.02	18	.3316
9.3 Confucianism	29.61	18	.0415
9.4 Hinduism	29.81	18	.0393
9.5 Islam	24.46	18	.1406
9.6 Judaism	19.95	18	.0681
10. Limit religious content due to fear of controversy	15.33	18	.6392
11. Limit religious content to prevent controversy	15.13	18	.6533
12. Religious content limited to special interest groups	26.45	18	.0899
13. Religious content currently guided by GPS	47.50	18	.0002
14. GPS currently includes the study of religion	56.24	18	.0000

Table 8

Association Between Experience and Satisfaction with Types of Religion Content

Variables: Major Religions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
6. Religion in the contemporary world	24.66	18	.1346
15. GPS inclusion of religion	27.70	18	.2024
8.1 Buddhism	17.71	18	.4712
8.2 Christianity	20.74	18	.2926
8.3 Confucianism	26.70	18	.0849
8.4 Hinduism	20.50	18	.3052
8.5 Islam	26.44	18	.0902
8.6 Judaism	21.31	18	.2642

of social studies. Results showed that there was no statistically significant association with years of experience and how educators believe that religion should be included in the textbooks (see Table 9).

Secondary Research Question 7

What is the relationship between levels of education and how social studies educators are satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks? Tests were conducted on measures operationalized by questions 6, 8, and 15 and by current levels of education. Results showed that there was a statistically significant association of participants with master's degrees being somewhat dissatisfied, as well as satisfied, with the state standards inclusion of religion and the current social studies textbooks inclusion of Buddhism (see Table 10). Responses also showed a statistically significant association

Table 9

Association Between Years of Experience and How Educators Believe That Religion Should Be Included in Textbooks

Variables: Questions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
1. Teach religion in social studies	27.53	18	.0697
2. How it relates to history	13.00	18	.7915
3. Without understanding its impact on societies	19.91	18	.3312
4. Textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context	18.68	18	.4120
5. Should include more historical content	17.26	18	.5056
7. Include religion in the contemporary world	11.62	18	.8660
9.1 Buddhism	17.35	18	.4993
9.2 Christianity	16.28	18	.5727
9.3 Confucianism	19.04	18	.3891
9.4 Hinduism	19.66	18	.3524
9.5 Islam	16.66	18	.5469
9.6 Judaism	12.50	18	.4061
10. Limit religious content due to fear of controversy	17.52	18	.4874
11. Limit religious content to prevent controversy	25.82	18	.1039
12. Religious content limited to special interest groups	14.09	18	.7231
13. Religious content currently guided by GPS	17.83	18	.4668
14. GPS currently includes the study of religion	21.70	18	.2455

Table 10

Association Between Levels of Education and Satisfaction with Types of Religion Content

Variables: Major Religions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
6. Religion in the contemporary world	9.53	9	.3897
15. State standards inclusion of religion	16.97	9	.0492**
8.1 Buddhism	20.49	9	.0151**
8.2 Christianity	10.08	9	.3442
8.3 Confucianism	17.34	9	.0436**
8.4 Hinduism	15.27	9	.0837
8.5 Islam	14.34	9	.1109
8.6 Judaism	11.59	9	.2373

of participants with master's degrees being very dissatisfied with the presentation of Confucianism in textbooks.

Secondary Research Question 8

What is the relationship between levels of education and how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks? The measures for educator's belief that religion should be included in textbooks are operationalized by questions 1-5, 7, and 9-14 and by current levels of education. Results showed that the levels of education, in particular those participants with master's degrees, were only statistically significant when associated with strong agreement that it is necessary to include Confucianism in future textbooks and statistically significant when associated with disagreeing that the state standards currently include the study of religion (see

Table 11). All other associations of levels of education and how educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks were not statistically significant.

Secondary Research Question 9

Is there a difference between race/ethnicity (Hispanic, African American, Caucasian, Asian) and how social studies educators are satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks? Tests were conducted on measures operationalized by questions 6, 8, and 15 and by race. Results show that race was statistically significant when associated with how social studies educators were satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks (see Table 12). The chi square analysis revealed there were statistically significant associations for both African American participants and Caucasian participants and strong dissatisfaction with the current social studies textbooks inclusion of the main religions of the world and only somewhat dissatisfied with the inclusion of Buddhism. There was a statistically significant association with African American participants and Caucasian participants regarding social studies textbooks' inclusion of religion in the contemporary world. The association between race and satisfaction with the state standards inclusion of religion was not significant.

Secondary Research Question 10

Is there a difference between race/ethnicity (Hispanic, African American, Caucasian, Asian) on how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks? The measures for educators' belief that religion should be included in textbooks are operationalized by questions 1-5, 7, 9-14 and by race. Results show there was a statistically significant association for African American participants and Caucasian participants with strong agreement with both that it was necessary for

Table 11

Association Between Levels of Education and How Educators Believe That Religion Should Be Included in Textbooks

Variables: Questions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
1. Teach religion in social studies	6.870	9	.6506
2. How it relates to history	6.978	9	.6395
3. Without understanding its impact on societies	10.86	9	.2851
4. Textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context	9.45	9	.3967
5. Should include more historical content	13.03	9	.1613
7. Include religion in the contemporary world	6.73	9	.6652
9.1 Buddhism	9.63	9	.3811
9.2 Christianity	7.70	9	.5647
9.3 Confucianism	17.75	9	.0382
9.4 Hinduism	9.10	9	.4278
9.5 Islam	7.72	9	.5626
9.6 Judaism	4.04	9	.6706
10. Limit religious content due to fear of controversy	6.63	9	.6753
11. Limit religious content to prevent controversy	6.28	9	.7120
12. Religious content limited to special interest groups	7.06	9	.6305
13. Religious content currently guided by state standards	12.54	9	.1847
14. State standards currently include the study of religion	27.50	9	.0012

Table 12

Association Between Race and Satisfaction with Types of Religious Content

Variables: Major Religions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
6. Religion in the contemporary world	19.19	9	.0237
15. State standards inclusion of religion	13.34	9	.1478
8.1 Buddhism	23.01	9	.0062
8.2 Christianity	16.10	9	.0648
8.3 Confucianism	20.59	9	.0146
8.4 Hinduism	25.73	9	.0023
8.5 Islam	29.69	9	.0005
8.6 Judaism	20.89	9	.0132

social studies textbooks to include the study of religion in the contemporary world. There were statistically significant associations with African American participants and Caucasian participants showing strong agreement that it was necessary to include all the major religions of the world in future textbooks (see Table 13). Statistically significant associations revealed that African American participants and Caucasian participants agreed that religious content in social studies textbooks was currently guided by state standards. There was also statistically significant association with African American participants and Caucasian participants showing disagreement that state standards currently include the study of religion.

Secondary Research Questions 11 and 12

For research question 11, “Is there a difference between religious beliefs (Hinduism, Islam, Christian, Judaism, Buddhism, Agnostic, Atheist) on how social

Table 13

Association Between Race and How Educators Believe That Religion Should Be Included in Textbooks

Variables: Questions	Chi-Square Statistic	*df*	*p*-value
1. Teach religion in social studies	13.89	9	.1263
2. How it relates to history	5.31	9	.8063
3. Without understanding its impact on societies	7.28	9	.6079
4. Textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context	15.15	9	.0869
5. Should include more historical content	14.59	9	.1030
7. Include religion in the contemporary world	18.89	9	.0261
9.1 Buddhism	22.86	9	.0065
9.2 Christianity	41.05	9	.0000
9.3 Confucianism	23.72	9	.0048
9.4 Hinduism	25.07	9	.0087
9.5 Islam	41.56	9	.0000
9.6 Judaism	40.19	9	.0000
10. Limit religious content due to fear of controversy	5.38	9	.8001
11. Limit religious content to prevent controversy	4.94	9	.8398
12. Religious content limited to special interest groups	6.55	9	.6839
13. Religious content currently guided by GPS	24.04	9	.0043
14. GPS currently includes the study of religion	24.47	9	.0036

studies educators are satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks?" and research question 12, "Is there a difference between religious beliefs (Hinduism, Islam, Christian, Judaism, Buddhism, Agnostic, Atheist) on how social studies educators believe that religion should be included in textbooks?" the results were statistically inconclusive. The tests conducted showed no statistically significant associations because of the large percentage (87.8%) of participants who identified with Christianity. In my sample, the high representation of a single religious group made comparison to members of other groups not meaningful.

Summary of Results for Research Questions

The quantitative analysis revealed several important findings with regard to how religion is and should be included in the social studies curriculum. The vast majority of social studies educators in the study (97%) believed that religion should be included in the social studies curriculum. The study also revealed that the majority of educators (86.4%) believed that future social studies textbooks should include more historical religious content while (95.2%) believed that it was necessary to include the study of religion in the contemporary world. Most educators (89%) disagreed that it was possible to teach social studies effectively without an understanding of religion and its impact on societies. The analysis revealed that social studies educators with master's degrees were very dissatisfied with the inclusion of Buddhism in the textbooks. Participants of all races strongly agreed that it was necessary to include the study of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity in the textbooks. African American participants and Caucasian participants disagreed that current state standards included the study of religion. Furthermore, middle

and high school educators showed a statistically significant association with dissatisfaction of the textbooks current inclusion of religion in the contemporary world.

Qualitative Analysis

This section presents the qualitative results from the open-ended questions of the survey. The methodology used to categorize and count the responses of the 193 participants was a three-step procedure. Step 1 involved assessing the response from each question and assigning a categorical number to each theme within that question. Step 2 included reading each participant's answer to the questions and assigning the number to which the response fit. Finally, in step 3, I counted the responses for each theme (each number) and created a frequency table for each question. The number zero was assigned to all participants who said "no comment" or left that question blank. This section will present the responses to each of the four questions with brief explanations of each category, or theme group, along with quotations from the participants as examples for each category. The section is organized by question and each question will be analyzed with respect to the main research questions which are: How do social studies educators believe religious content is included in the textbooks? How do social studies educators believe that religious content should be included in the textbooks?

Question 1: In Your Opinion, What Content Information Regarding Religion Do You Think Should Be Included in Social Studies Textbooks across the K-12 Spectrum?

Three themes emerged from the responses to this question. These were (a) more discussion about religion to be included in the textbooks, (b) the need for more discussion about the effects religions have on human behavior or actions, and (c) more discussion about religion in the historical context, historical facts, or contemporary religion.

More discussion about religion should be included in the textbooks. The social studies educators in the study suggested that more religious content should be included in the textbooks. These educators viewed religion as a necessary component of social studies. The theme was defined by those respondents who stated that they felt more discussion about the specific religions and associated beliefs, and customs should be included in the textbooks. One respondent noted, “I think that all religions should be discussed. Also, it should not be limited to only the accepted religions. Other polytheistic religions should be included especially when dealing with ancient history.”

Other responses emerged from this theme with a strong emphasis on teaching the interaction between religion and culture. Participants suggested that texts should include “basic knowledge for understanding how it [religion] affects cultures: major religions, their predominance in a region, founders and basic principles and teaching.” A respondent believed that religion should be included in the text that addresses “the historical understandings and cultural practices.” Another educator stated “I would like to see more connection between religion and people's way of thinking and doing, and how we can move beyond the surface to better help students understand other religions and get to know more about the people with different religion. In fact, people with different religions have many things in common.” Furthermore, a participant explained religious content should focus on “How they [religions] developed, cultural customs attached to the religion and the way religion has interacted with government.” These suggestions would lead to a more multicultural focus in the textbooks and support the theory of the democratic ideal promoted by John Dewey.

Some of the participants suggested that more religious content should be included in the texts that pertain to Christian, Jewish, and Muslim relations. A participant believed that the texts should include “more discussion on Christian, Jewish, and Muslim relations.” Another respondent agreed by stating that text should contain “more emphasis on the creation of Islam as well as the impact of its sects toward the world.” Lastly, a participant explained the need for “Christianity's influence on the world as well as the various sects within Christianity” to be included in the texts. These educators all agreed that social studies textbooks should include more discussion of religion.

More discussion about the effects religions have on human behavior or actions.

Social studies educators in the study believed that more religious content should be included in the text that discusses the relationship between religion and human behaviors and actions. One social studies educator expressed the need that “more religious discussion should be included that explains how religion has caused and currently causes people to behave in a certain way” while another educator stated more content should focus on “how religion affects our daily lives.”

Participants in the study suggested that texts should include more discussions of religious tradition in relation to human behaviors and actions. A participant explained that “more religious content should focus on why we celebrate religious holidays.” This statement was further corroborated by another social studies educator, who stated “I'd like to have more information about religious beliefs and traditions. I think students would be very interested in this and it would help them make the connection between beliefs and the political positions of countries today.” In general, the participants in this theme wanted to know why religion causes people to behave in certain ways.

More discussion about religion in the historical context, historical facts, or contemporary religion. Many social studies educators believed that there should be more discussion about religion in the textbooks relating to the historical and contemporary time periods. An educator noted the need to include more religious content relating history by stating that the texts should include the "formation of early religions and what role it played in history." An educator elaborated by stating "history of religion and its effect on those who practice it is necessary for understanding the history of the world" should be included in the texts. The effect that religion has on history was mention by a respondent who stated "history or religion and its effects on the time period/society being studied is essential for understanding many civilizations and eras." The importance of religion in relation to history and culture was expressed by on of the participants who stated that it was necessary to include "the historical understandings and cultural practices." Lastly, a respondent suggested that it was necessary to include "more information about other religions that pre-date Christianity. More information about Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome—as well as other Ancient civilizations around the world (Sumeria, the Aztecs, the Inca, the Indus Valley, Norse Paganism, etc.)." Clearly, these educators believed that religion has played a major role in historical events.

In contrast, the need for more contemporary religious content in textbooks was a focus for several of the participants. Evidence of the call for more contemporary religious content in texts can be seen in the following statement: "I think we need to show students how religion plays a major role in understanding the conflicts in the world today." Another participant stated that "I would like to see more content included that discusses religion in the contemporary time period." A respondent also noted that content in

textbooks should focus on "how religion is causing the events that are happening in the world today." Participants believed that religion is important in contemporary society and needs to be included in future textbooks.

The distributions of the four categories are shown in Table 14. Clearly, from the distribution above, the two areas in which participants felt that textbooks should include content concentrated on including a basic discussion of various religions as well as religion's impact on history or current events. Social studies teachers' beliefs regarding including religion in textbooks appear, from this question, to be such that religion should be included and that more importantly, religious history should be included in the textbooks.

Question 2: Discuss Your Thoughts Regarding How Religion Is Currently Being Included in Social Studies Textbooks

Four themes emerged from the responses to this question. These were (a) religion is not included or not sufficiently included, (b) the presentation of religion is unsatisfactory, (c) there is unfair treatment of religions, and (d) religion is presented fairly and sufficiently in the textbooks.

Religion not sufficiently included in textbooks. The insufficient inclusion of religion in social studies textbooks was evident in several of the educators' open-ended responses. In particular, some participants believed that elementary texts were not sufficiently including religious content. One respondent stated that "In the elementary textbooks, religion is not included. We rarely discuss anything pertaining to religion." Another educator reiterated this statement by suggesting that religion is "not being included hardly at all in elementary texts." Furthermore, a participant concluded that "in

Table 14

Distribution of Responses for Question 1

Theme	Number	% of Responses
More discussion of religion should be included in the texts	63	49%
More discussion about the effects of religions on human behavior or actions	14	11%
More discussion about religion in historical context, historical facts, or contemporary religion	51	40%
No response	65	__

the elementary text, I can only recall the mentioning of different religion groups and a very brief description. It would help students understand the origin and what each religion stands for if a more precise description of each is relevantly included as its involvement with history is explained."

Other responses pointed to the general lack of inclusion of religion in the texts. An educator believed that "there is some discussion on religion in the textbooks but I feel that this inclusion is insufficient." Some of the responses, however, focused on the insufficient inclusion of religion in the textbooks due to the controversial nature of the subject. A participant stated that "it is virtually omitted due to the risk of controversy at adoption time." Finally, a respondent believed that religion was "too often ignored for fear of controversy." The responses suggest that there is a lack of religious content included in the textbooks. This is especially apparent with regards to elementary text-books.

The presentation of religion is unsatisfactory. Participants were shown to believe that religious content was included but was too scattered when it was included or not

fully explained. This category was defined by those respondents who stated that they felt that when religious content was present, it was better than "not sufficient" but lacked presentation or depth of explanation. A respondent revealed that "religion is not included very well in the social studies texts." Another educator believed that when religion was mentioned, "it is brief and within the context of culture which is better than nothing." A respondent noted that religion was included in the texts but explanations about religion were not discussed. The respondent stated that "religion is being addressed according to whoever started the idea, but does not explain what the religion entails." Similar concern for the lack of religious content in regard to global conflicts was also prevalent as an educator noted that "it is taught individually, with little information that integrates religion with world conflicts."

Unfair treatment of religion in the textbooks. Social studies educators believed that textbooks' presentation of religious content was only there for some religions. Other religions were overlooked. They believed the textbooks failed to provide equitable treatment of all religions. Although educators often agreed that there was unequal treatment of religion in the texts, they tended to disagree on the particular religion that was treated unfairly. One participant stated that "religion is very Christian focused" while another respondent disagreed by stating that "I feel to a certain extent particularly in World History that the Judeo-Christian religion is glossed over compared to other major religions (but I may be wrong due to a bias), but when the Crusades and Protestant movement are reached it is explained better." A lack of inclusion of Eastern religions was also expressed. This lack of the texts' inclusion of Eastern religions was exemplified in

the following statement: “I do sense that the eastern religions (whose believers comprise a large percentage of the world's population) are shortchanged in many textbooks.”

Some of the participants also believed the textbooks favored Islam over all other religions. The perceived bias towards Islam was revealed by the following statements: “Many texts seem to overemphasize the positive aspects of Islam and ignore the negative aspects (African slavery, military expansion, genocide of Hindus, etc.). Conversely, texts seem to emphasize the negative aspects of Christianity and deemphasize its positive influences (abolition of slavery, individual rights, protestant work ethic).” Lastly, a respondent declared, “I personally think that too much emphasis is given to Islam.”

Religion is presented fairly and sufficiently in the textbooks. Although most of the respondents believed that the textbooks were unfairly or insufficiently including religion, some respondents stated that the textbooks did a fair and sufficient job of presenting religious material. Educators noted that “the history and beliefs seem to be fairly well documented in most cases”; “Good information”; and “I believe it is fine.” Further evidence of the sufficient inclusion of religious content in the social studies texts was shown in the following statements: “The current textbook does well with the formations and beliefs”; “I think that religion is included very appropriately because it is presented in a historical context which addresses our state standards.” Some educators believe that textbooks provide a solid foundation for the discussion of religion in relation to social studies concepts.

The distribution of responses for the themes for Question 2 is shown in Table 15. From the distribution, it is clear that the main response to the question of how religion is currently being presented in textbooks was that religion did not receive sufficient

Table 15

Distribution of Responses for Question 2

Theme	Number	% of Responses
Religion not sufficiently covered in textbooks	69	58%
Religious content no very well included in the texts	16	13%
Unfair treatment of religion in textbooks	14	12%
Religion is presented fairly and sufficiently in the textbooks	21	18%
No response	73	—

coverage. Over 50% of respondents fell into that category. With respect to this question, the majority of social studies teachers from this sample indicated that the treatment of religion in textbooks is not sufficient.

Question 3: What Religious Content Would You Like To See Included in Social Studies Textbooks?

More discussion of religions other than Christianity should be included in texts. Social studies educators believed more discussion of religions other than Christianity should be included in the texts. Respondents often stated that they would like to see more attention given to these religions in social studies textbooks. In particular, participants suggested that the textbooks include more content on Eastern Religions. A respondent stated that "I think more should be included about Eastern religions because they are so prevalent in our modern world. I think most teachers and students do not have an adequate understanding of these religions, and that hurts us." Another educator in the study concurred by stating the need for "a better explanation of Eastern religions."

There were also suggestions for comprehensive study of religion outside of Christianity. An educator noted that textbooks need to include more "religions that are not usually discussed very much including Mormonism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism."

More discussions of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity should be included in the textbooks. The responses revealed a desire for more discussions of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity to be included in the social studies textbooks. Some of the educators in this sample focused specifically on the needed inclusion of more Christianity and Islam. As one respondent iterated texts to include "more depth especially in Islam and Christianity." An educator believed that it was important to include "more information about Christianity and Islam."

Responses also focused solely on the need to include more Christianity, such as "fundamental beliefs of Christianity." An educator believed that "Christianity's influence on the world as well as the various sects within Christianity" should be included in the textbooks. Finally, a respondent wanted more "emphasis on the creation of Islam as well as the impact of its sects toward the world."

Suggestions were made to include more discussion in the texts in relation to anti-Semitism. As one educator noted, "both my students and I would like to know WHY Jewish people are persecuted. We study how and the effects but nowhere is it stated why??? I have no answer for them because I don't know myself." Participants elaborated on the inclusion of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity by stating that they would like to have "more discussion on Christian, Jewish, and Muslim relations." Another educator stated the necessity to include "more of Judaism, Islam and Christianity."

More religious content, in general, regarding all of the religions included in textbooks. A large portion of respondents stated they would like to see more religious content in general regarding all religions. Evidently, these educators wanted a more comprehensive inclusion of the world religions included in the texts. Participants stated that they wanted "more inclusion of the major religions of the world" and "world religions" in the textbooks.

Respondents wanted more content relating to the religious beliefs of the world included in the texts. The suggestion for more background on religious beliefs is very transparent in the following statement: "I would like to see more detail about the basic beliefs of the major religious groups." Furthermore, an educator stated, "I think textbooks should offer a basic understanding of the beliefs of major world religions and their interconnectedness (Hinduism to Buddhism, Judaism to Christianity and Islam), and a deeper understanding of how religion plays a part in society." The need for a more comprehensive inclusion of religion was expressed by many of the educators in the study.

More religious content linked to human action or world events. Several participants suggested textbooks should link religious content to human action or world events. An educator proclaimed to want the textbooks to include "more religious content that shows the impact that religion has had on past and present societies." Another wanted to know "how religion is causing the events that are happening in the world today." Some recommended the inclusion of conflicts that relate to the various religious beliefs of world. A participant suggested they would like to have the textbooks include "more information on the role of religion in world conflicts."

Religious content in the texts is sufficiently included. The vast majority of social studies educators wanted more discussion of religious content included in the textbooks. However, some of the participants believed that the current inclusion of religious content in the texts was fine. These participants stated that they would not like to see any more religious content, or that the content was adequately included. The general content in the inclusion of religious content in the text is shown in the following statements: “I am satisfied with the current amount”; “All major religions are included”; “It is being handled well”; and “I'm satisfied.”

The distribution of themes for Question 3 are shown in Table 16. From the distribution, one may infer that the main response to the question of what religious content teachers would like to see was more content linked to human action or world events. A large proportion (47%) of respondents wanted religious content linked to world action. Some of the social studies educators stated that they felt simply more discussion of religions in the texts would suffice. Only 8% of the respondents believed that religion was sufficiently included in the texts. With respect to this question, social studies teachers’ beliefs regarding how religion is being presented in textbooks is that there should be more content linking religion to world events or human action.

Question 4: What Religious Content Would You Like To See Included in Social Studies Textbooks?

Inclusion of religions other than Christianity is lacking in the texts. The inclusion of religions other than Christianity was shown to be insufficiently included in the texts. One educator believed that “non Christian religions are given little attention.” Another stated that “I do sense that the eastern religions (whose believers comprise a large

Table 16

Distribution of Responses for Question 3

Theme	Number	% of Responses
More discussion of religions other than Christianity	9	9%
More discussion of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity	13	13%
More religious content in general	25	24%
Inclusion of religion pertaining to human action and world events	49	47%
Religions content in texts is sufficiently included	8	8%
No response	89	—

percentage of the world's population) are shortchanged in many textbooks." These statements are further corroborated by one respondent who stated that a need for more content in the textbooks pertaining to "alternative religions and their customs other than Christianity, Judaism and Islam."

There was a general concern from this sample of educators for the lack of ancient religions included in the textbooks. As one respondent noted, "It seems that the 'Pagan' religions of Pre-Christian and Pre-Islamic areas of the world are not addressed in detail. For example, the ancient Celts of Europe, the Zoroastrians of Persia, etc. Also, the difference between the Roman Catholic faith and the East Orthodox Christian faith is not clearly explained—it is glossed over." The social studies educators in the study provided insight into the manner in which religion is not sufficiently included in the textbooks.

Judeo Christian Religion not sufficiently included in texts. Many social studies educators from this study believed the inclusion of Judeo Christian religion is lacking in current social studies textbooks. Participants generally believed that the inclusion of

Christianity was not given sufficient attention. A social studies educator noted the texts insufficient inclusion of the "fundamental beliefs of Christianity." Furthermore, one participant explained that "Christianity has played a major role in the United States. It is not discussed at all in any of the texts that I currently use." Other educators believed that Christianity coupled with Judaism and Islam was not adequately included in the social studies textbooks. The following statement elucidates the insufficient treatment of Islam and Christianity: "Islam and Christianity are not discussed enough in depth for the purpose of explaining their affects in creating the culture in history." Finally, a respondent suggested there was insufficient inclusion of "Christianity, Islam, and Judaism." From these responses, it is evident that many educators perceive that there is a lack of content pertaining to Judaism and Christianity in the texts.

Textbooks are not sufficiently including any religions in the texts. According to a few of the respondents, there are some social studies textbooks that are not including any religious content in the textbooks. Some educators noted that their textbooks did not include any religious content. One respondent stated that "there is no religion included in my social studies texts so I would have to say that all religion is not adequately included in the texts." Another participant stated "my textbook does not cover any basic information about the aforementioned religions for 6th grade. I would be satisfied if it covered foundations, tenets, symbols, sacred text, house of worship . . . basic." An elementary educator suggested that "religion is not included at all in any of the elementary social studies textbooks." One participant believed that basic tenets of the religions were missing as expressed by the following statement: "There is not enough information about the tenets of various religions. They also downplay the role of Christianity in the

formation and early history of the U.S." Lastly, one respondent suggested the insufficient inclusion of religion was due to the controversial nature of the subject. This educator stated that "I think that they are just touched on because of fear of controversy."

In depth discussion of religion not included in the texts. Social studies educators from this sample stated that they thought textbooks lacked depth in the discussions of religion. Several responses alluded to the notion that more in depth discussion of religion was necessary in the textbooks. An educator stated, "I believe that many sections on religion are too basic and over generalize. They tend to give students the impression that all members of a religious group believe exactly the same thing." Another respondent further iterated the need for a more comprehensive inclusion of religion by stating that "there needs to be more inclusion of the religious beliefs and practices of all of the major religions. Students need to understand the true beliefs and practices of these religions . . . not a glossed over version."

An educator declared that textbooks needed to include "a deeper understanding" of religion. Another participant suggested the need to include "anything more than who started it, where it began, very basic tenets, wars associated with it, and some current statistics." Certainly, these statements show that meaningful discussions of religion are not included in the social studies textbooks.

Religion not adequately included that describes contemporary or historical events. Numerous respondents discussed the textbook's lack of inclusion of religion to describe historical or contemporary events. Some educators believed that textbooks were not sufficiently including historical events. The textbooks insufficient inclusion of "historical development; relation to historical currents and change; change in religious

practice and belief over time; religious practice in daily life" was iterated by one respondent. A participant expanded on the inadequate inclusion of religion in the text-books by stating "primarily, the influence religion, or the lack thereof, can make or break a society and its people. History proves the point, but if students are not made aware of the good and the bad brought about by the fanatical practice of religion, or the decay of morality due to the lack of religion, they will have no concept of why we need to preserve this nation under God." An educator expressed dissatisfaction with the texts inclusion of Islam and Christianity by stating "Islam and Christianity are not discussed enough in depth for the purpose of explaining their affects in creating the culture in history."

Several educators were also concerned with the lack of religious content regarding the description of current events. One participant stated that "I don't see enough concerning modern conflicts over religion. Also, how the major religions have evolved and changed over time is a weak area." An educator wanted the texts to discuss "how religion causes wars, movement of people, and displacement of people." Further, a respondent wanted the texts to emphasize the "importance of religion on modern life."

While some educators specified either the lack of religion to describe historical or current events, others believed that both past and present events were not adequately explained in the textbooks. A participant suggested that "historical and contemporary seems to be missing a great deal." Lastly, a respondent suggested that the texts need to include "more inclusion on historical and current events."

Religion is adequately included in the texts. Conversely, there were respondents who believed that religion was adequately included in the textbooks. These respondents felt that no religious content was lacking or that religion was adequately presented in the

textbooks. A participant stated “the textbooks that I have used over the years included considerable content on the history of world religions.” A respondent further corroborated by stating “considering all that has to be covered, say, in a world history text, the ones that I've used such as McKay, Hill, and Buckler's *A History of World Societies*, have done an excellent job of presenting the history of world religions.” The sufficient inclusion of religion was also noted by a respondent who proclaimed, “I think the important aspects of religion are adequately included in textbooks.” A participant stated that “it [religious content] is being adequately presented.” One respondent believed that all aspects of religion were included in the texts. The participant noted “I feel that all aspects of religion are covered in the texts.”

The distribution of themes for Question 4 is shown in Table 17. From the distribution, one can note that the main response to the question of what religious content was lacking or not adequately covered was religion in terms of world events or history. In addition, 93% of social studies educators who believed religious content was lacking to some degree and 36% of respondents stated they felt their textbooks lacked religious content with respect to world events or history. Some of the respondents (25%) stated that their textbooks lacked depth in the discussions of religion while 15% of respondents stated that their textbooks lacked any discussion or description of religion. Only 17% of respondents felt specifically that religions other than Judeo Christianity were lacking. With respect to this question, social studies teachers’ beliefs regarding how religion is presented in textbooks is that the textbooks lack content mostly in regards to current world or historical events and that the religious content included in textbooks lacks depth.

Table 17

Distribution of Responses for Question 4

Theme	Number	% of Responses
Inclusion of religions other than Christianity lacking	7	7%
Judeo-Christian religion not sufficiently included	10	10%
Textbooks not sufficiently including any religions in the text	15	15%
In-depth discussion of religion not included in texts	25	25%
Inadequate inclusion of religion to describe historical or contemporary events	36	36%
Religion adequately included in the texts	7	7%
No response	93	—

Summary of Qualitative findings

Clearly, the vast majority of respondents believed that religion was not sufficiently included in the social studies textbooks. This large majority of respondents also suggested the need for more religious content to be included in future texts. When asked about what content should be included, or what content was lacking, the majority of responses noted that religion in context of world events, history, or with respect to human action should be included. Most troubling were the educators who stated that there was no religious content included in the textbooks. These responses were typically from educators in the lower and elementary grades. A few educators, however, believed the textbooks were sufficiently including the religions.

The data gathered from the open-ended responses helped to explain specific areas in which educators believed that religion is and should be included in the textbooks.

Many of the educators wanted more religious content included in their textbooks. Specifically, these participants wanted expanded in-depth discussion of religious content. The participants in the study wanted the major world religions as well as a variety of other religions included in the texts.

The suggestions for the inclusion of religion to explain why religion causes people to behave in certain ways were very compelling. In particular, respondents wanted the texts to expand on how religion causes people to behave in the world today. Educators advocated more historical text that showed the impact of religion on human actions.

Participants indicated that the inclusion of religion was an important component of multicultural education. They suggested a need for religious content that pertains to the various cultures represented in the United States and throughout the world. This idea of religion used to support multicultural education supports John Dewey's (1944) democratic ideal. Textbook authors as well as local and state textbook adoption agencies should understand that it is important to include "not only more numerous and more varied points of shared common interest, but greater reliance upon the recognition of mutual interest as a factor in social control" (Dewey, p. 86).

Respondents wanted to know why religion is often a catalyst for contemporary conflicts in the world. The participants believed that the textbooks should provide a more in-depth discussion of the role of religion in current world events. Educators believed that explanations of religion consisting of more discussions of the various beliefs and practices would help to improve the textbooks.

There was significant emphasis placed on the unfair treatment of religion in the textbooks. Although many social studies educators stated that religion was unfairly

included in their textbooks, they disagreed over which religions were given unfair treatment. Many social studies educators claimed that Christianity was presented unfairly in the textbooks.

Several of the educators wanted a variety of religious content included in the texts that extended beyond the realm of Christianity. These educators often wanted the inclusion of more Eastern religions such as Islam, Buddhism, and Confucianism. In many cases, participants believed that these Eastern religions were portrayed unfairly in current social studies textbooks. Thus, they felt that many of the Eastern religions were insufficiently included in the texts.

Lastly, respondents made suggestions as to why religion was insufficiently included in the texts. These educators believed that religion was often excluded because of the controversial nature of the subject. Nord (1995) confirmed the notion that textbooks often limit their religious content due to fear of controversy.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the demographic profile of the participants, the results of tests of associations between the demographic variables, and how social studies educators are or are not satisfied with the type of religious content included in textbooks. Participant responses with respect to how they believed that religion should be included in textbooks were outlined throughout the chapter. This study included quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data. In most cases, the qualitative data corroborated the findings from the quantitative data.

Citizens in a democratic society should understand the important role that religion plays in the United States and also throughout the world (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). The

vast majority of social studies educators in this study (97%) believed that religion should be included in the social studies curriculum. These educators understand the importance of teaching religion to support a multicultural democratic society. Many of these educators suggested that textbooks should include more religious content that pertains to historical and contemporary events. This would further substantiate McMillan's (1984) claim that the exclusion of religious content could lead students into believing that religion is not an important factor in past and present events.

Most educators disagreed that it was possible to teach social studies effectively without an understanding of religion and its impact on societies. A statistically significant association was revealed with social studies educators with master's degrees and dissatisfaction with the inclusion of Buddhism in the textbooks. African American participants and Caucasian participants showed statistically significant associations with strongly agreeing that it was necessary to include the study of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity in the textbooks. A statistically significant association was also shown with African American participants and Caucasian respondents and disagreement that current state standards included the study of religion.

Middle and high school teachers showed a greater dissatisfaction with how religion is included in social studies textbooks than did elementary teachers. Furthermore, middle and high school educators demonstrated a stronger dissatisfaction as compared to elementary school teachers in regards to the textbooks' current inclusion of religion in the contemporary world. Participants responding to the open-ended questions noted that some of the elementary school social studies textbooks did not include any religious content. Previous textbook studies have also shown that lack of religious content in

elementary social studies texts (Cannon; 1990; Harris, 1963b; Sewall, 1992; Vitz, 1985). The qualitative and quantitative data revealed that most of the social studies educators from this sample believed that religion is insufficiently included in the textbooks. Responses from the closed and open-ended survey questions helped to provide greater insight into the manner that religion is and should be included in the social studies texts.

Clearly, the vast majority of respondents believed that religion was not sufficiently included in the social studies textbooks. The perceived lack of religious inclusion is especially troubling since textbooks often serve as the "de facto curriculum" (Ben-Avie et al., 2004, p. 44). This large majority of respondents also suggested the need for more religious content to be included in future texts. When asked about what content should be included or what content was lacking, the majority of responses noted that religion in context of world events, history, or with respect to human action should be included. Educators stated that there were not any religious content included in the textbooks. These responses were typically from educators in the lower and elementary grades. A few educators, however, believed that the textbooks sufficiently included religious content.

The data gathered from the open-ended responses helped to explain specific areas in which educators believed that religion is and should be included in the textbooks. Many of the educators wanted more discussions of religion included in their textbooks. Specifically, these participants wanted expanded in-depth discussion of religious content. The participants in the study wanted the major world religions as well as a variety of other religions included in the texts.

The inclusion of religion as a component of multicultural education was specified by many of the participants. They suggested a need for religious content that pertains to the various cultures represented in the United States and throughout the world. Respondents also wanted the texts to expand on how religion causes people to behave in the world today.

The participants believed that the textbooks should provide a more in depth discussion of religious beliefs and their role in current world events. In particular, respondents wanted to know how religions cause current conflicts in the world today. There was a lot of emphasis placed on the unfair treatment of religion in the textbooks with many educators disagreeing over which religions were given unfair treatment. Not surprisingly, a number of educators believed that Christianity was presented in an unfair manner. Many of the educators wanted a variety of religious content included in the texts that extended beyond the realm of Christianity. These educators often wanted the inclusion of more Eastern religions such as Islam, Buddhism, and Confucianism. These educators believed that religion was often excluded because of the controversial nature of the subject. The inclusion of religion as component of multicultural education was specified by many of the participants. They suggested a need for religious content that pertains to the various cultures represented in the United States and throughout the world.

The quantitative and qualitative data described in Chapter 4 provided insight into social studies educators' perceptions of and beliefs about the inclusion of religion in textbooks. The vast majority of the educators in the study believed that religion was not sufficiently included in the textbooks. A large majority of these educators also believed that more religious content should be included in the texts. Only a few of the respondents

stated that they were satisfied with the textbooks inclusion of religion. The resulting findings and implications from the data analysis are outlined in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Religion is an important component of providing multicultural education in public schools. Educators can use cross-cultural perspectives to "guide students towards creating a more democratic society" (Campbell, 2004, p. 40). Banks (1992a) believes "to fully participate in our democratic society all students need the skills a multicultural education can give them to understand others and to thrive in a rapidly changing, diverse world." Dewey (1944) advocated for a democratic ideal that would emphasis "greater reliance upon the recognition of mutual interest as a factor in social control" (p. 86).

An important part of culturally relevant teaching is "nurturing and supporting competence in both home and school cultures" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 2). Textbooks play a significant role in promoting multiculturalism in schools. In many cases the text-books serve as the curriculum for the inclusion of religion to uphold multicultural education (Ben-Avie et al., 2004). Textbooks often influence the concepts teachers choose to teach in their courses (Gagnon, 1987). Much of the research shows teachers heavily rely on textbooks and highlights the educational benefits from the inclusion of religion in the social studies curriculum (Loewen, 1995; Sewall, 1992), but very few studies have addressed how social studies educators perceive that religion is and should be included in textbooks. The one prominent study conducted by Stone and Zam in 2006 to gauge teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of religion in the curriculum failed to

address teachers' views about the inclusion of the major religions of the world in textbooks or how these teachers believe that religion should be included in the texts.

The purpose of this study was to investigate social studies educators' perceptions of and beliefs about the inclusion of religion in textbooks. Participants in the study were 193 social studies educators who identified themselves as one of the following: a pre-service teacher, elementary teacher 1-4, middle school teacher 5-8, high school teacher 9-12, school administration, or university professor. The primary mode of data collection occurred through a survey posted on Survey Monkey. A survey questionnaire pertaining to social studies educators' beliefs and attitudes towards the inclusion of religion in the social studies was sent out via e-mail through Survey Monkey.

The study was triangulated through the use of quantitative and qualitative analysis. The quantitative analysis included both descriptive and inferential statistics. Quantitative research questions were tested using Pearson's Chi-square test of frequency cross-tabulations to determine any differences between the measures for the variables in the research questions. Pearson's Chi-square test was used to determine if there was any statistical significance between teacher perceptions and beliefs. Descriptive statistics were used to provide a basic summary of the findings. The four open ended questions of the survey were qualitatively analyzed through the use of NVivo software program.

Discussion of Findings

Dewey's (1944) democratic ideal was represented in the findings of this study. One of the central principles of the democratic ideal is the ability to recognize how mutual interest can affect society. Dewey believed that culture consisted of the "capacity for constantly expanding the range and accuracy of ones perceptions of meanings"

(p. 123). The social studies educators in this study advocated for more religious content to be included in the textbooks. This added inclusion of religious content could help to expand the array and accurateness of students' understandings of culture.

Social Studies Educators Beliefs on How Religion Is Included in the Textbooks

The first research question related to how social studies educators believed that religious content is included in textbooks. The question was as follows: "How do social studies educators' believe religious content is included in the textbooks?" The respondents' answers to the open-ended questions helped to provide a rich understanding of social studies educators' beliefs about the current state of religion in the texts.

Religion not being sufficiently included in textbooks. Gay (2004) noted that textbooks only sporadically and superficially implement multicultural content. Evidently, religion is an area of multicultural education that is sporadically included in the texts. Generally, social studies educators in this study believed that religion was not sufficiently included in social studies textbooks. Some of the educators' thought that religious content was too scattered or not completely explained. These educators stated that when religious content was present, it was better than "not sufficient"; however. it lacked presentation or depth of explanation. Furthermore, the vast majority (89%) disagreed that it was possible to teach social studies effectively without an understanding of religion and its impact on societies. These educators' reitera-ted the views of McMillan (1984), who proclaimed that students would not be able to react to the events that are transpiring in the world today without an understanding of the important role that religion plays in society.

Textbook studies showed that contemporary social studies texts devote more space to the major religions of the world's beliefs, practices, and origins as well as the

impact that religion has had on historical events. The majority of the increased religious inclusion is found in high school world history texts. The added inclusion of religion to these texts helps to promote the religious plurality that is present inside and outside of the United States (Frey et al., 1999; Lerner et al., 1995). Although textbook studies revealed that contemporary textbooks devoted more space to the world religions, many social studies educators were still not satisfied with the current inclusion of the main religions of the world. Most of the social studies educators (62.5%) in this study stated that they were dissatisfied with the text's inclusion of religion in the historical context. A large portion (63%) of the participants was also dissatisfied with the inclusion of religion in the contemporary time periods. Further, there was a statistically significant association with middle and high school social studies educators' in this study and dissatisfaction with the ways that Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism are currently included in social studies texts.

Religious content limited due to special interest groups. The pressure put on textbook publishers by left-wing and right-wing special interest groups often hinders the multicultural content that is included in the texts (Ravitch, 2004). The majority of social studies educators in this study believed that religious content was limited in the textbooks because of special interest groups. Participants also reported that textbook publishers should not limit content because of potential controversy that may arise. Most of these respondents, however, affirmed the importance of including all of the religions in the textbooks.

These findings corroborate the literature which suggested that textbook publishers limit the amount of religious content in the textbooks. The First Amendment Center,

Educational Research Analyst, Textbook League, the Council on Islamic Education, and the American Textbook Council serve as watchdogs and gatekeepers for the religious content included in textbooks. The two most influential gatekeepers are the Council on Islamic Education and the Educational Research Analyst. Not surprisingly, these organizations are located in Texas and California, which are the largest textbook adoption states in the country. The majority of textbook content adopted in these two states is filtered through textbooks used throughout the United States (Emberling & Sewall, 1998). The California based Council on Islamic Education has censor like influence over publishers via the use of legal maneuvering and persuasion (Sewall, 1995). On the other hand, the Texas based Educational Research Analyst, which is a conservative Christian group, fights to maintain and implement Judeo-Christian values and beliefs into the textbooks. They fight the influx of humanism that they perceive to have been included in textbooks since the turn of the century (Provenzo, 1990). Thus, the inclusion of religion is controversial and is often hindered by textbook publishers' avoiding such controversy and trying to maximize profits. Similarly, many educators in the study also recognized that the type of religious content included in the textbooks is often limited because of the controversial nature of the subject. Participants noted in their open-ended responses that religion is "virtually omitted due to the risk of controversy at adoption time" and "too often ignored for fear of controversy."

Unfair treatment of religion in the textbooks. Banks (1997) states one of the goals of multicultural education is to "develop and foster a democratic society where all groups experience cultural democracy and empowerment" (p. 38). The United States is a pluralistic society that encompasses people with myriad religious beliefs and values that

include all of the religions of the world. Including religious content in a fair and balanced way is imperative to developing students who are able to function in a democratic society. Further, it is the ethical duty of educators to provide students with the knowledge they need to navigate successfully in a democratic nation. Social studies educators in this study indicated that religious content was provided in the textbooks for some religions but not others. These respondents deemed the inclusion of religion in the social studies textbooks to be unfair. Yet there was disagreement over which religions were treated unfairly in the texts. Many of the respondents were unsatisfied with the inclusion of Christianity in the textbooks. These respondents wanted more discussions of Christianity included in the texts. In particular, some educators wanted the textbooks to discuss the connection between the Christian religion and the founding of the United States. In contrast, few respondents noted that the inclusion of religion in the textbooks had a strong Christian focus.

The respondents also suggested that the presentation of Eastern religions in the textbooks was unfair. These participants believed that religions such as Islam, Confucianism, and Buddhism were not sufficiently discussed in the textbooks. Other educators, however, believed that textbook authors favored religions other than Christianity. The educators' perceived unfair treatment of religion in the texts is particularly troubling. This unfair treatment of religion could give teachers and students a distorted view of religion as well as culture.

Elementary, middle, and high school educators' perception of the inclusion of religion. The K-12 classroom is an ideal place for the discussion of multicultural issues that involve the major religions of the world (Rose, 2002). Previous textbook studies

cited in this study, however, showed an unequal distribution of religion across elementary, middle, and high school social studies texts. The least amount of religious content was found in elementary texts where religion is barely mentioned. As the textbook grade levels rise, the inclusion of religion drastically increases. Middle school texts were shown to include religion more than elementary texts and the bulk of religious content was revealed in high school social studies texts (Cannon, 1990; Harris, 1963a; Sewall, 1992; Vitz, 1985).

In this study, social studies educators' responses to the open-ended question showed that they believed that religion was not sufficiently included in the elementary text. Respondents noted that religion in the elementary textbook was "not being included hardly at all in elementary texts" and "I can only recall the mentioning of different religious groups and a very brief description." Thus, the findings in this study help to confirm previous textbook studies that suggest religion is not sufficiently included in elementary social studies textbooks. The study also showed a statistically significant association with middle and high school educators' and dissatisfaction with the textbooks current inclusion of the world religions. This study also revealed a statistically significant association with middle and high school educators and dissatisfaction with the textbooks presentation of religion in the contemporary world.

The lack of inclusion of religion in the early grades could be that religion is an abstract concept. Piaget believed that younger children have not developed enough in the early grades to grasp the abstract concepts. He suggested that most children would not be able to understand abstract concepts until after the age of 12 in what he called the formal stage of childhood development. According to Piaget, the formal stage takes place when

children learn to think abstractly, formally, and logically. Students in the formal stage are able to think hypothetically and use logic to solve problems (Gallagher & Reid, 1981). Although learning about religion is an abstract concept, students at the elementary level should have the opportunity to learn about basic religious beliefs and practices. A basic foundation of religion in the elementary grades could help students better understand the more abstract multicultural religious concepts that are learned at the higher grade levels

Educators at the K-12 level should be prepared to teach multicultural concepts (Ward, 2002). Textbooks are a valuable resource used by educators to teach a wide array of concepts. The quantitative analysis yielded some significant findings in relation to how social studies educators at the K-12 level perceived that religion is currently included in social studies texts. The statistically significant results revealed that the position held by social studies educators was associated with the level of satisfaction with the types of religious content included in social studies textbooks. There was a statistically significant association with middle and high school social studies educators and dissatisfaction with the current textbooks inclusion of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Confucianism, Judaism and Christianity. In addition, there was a statistically significant association with high school teachers and strong agreement that state standards currently include the study of religion.

Certainly, the statistically significant association with middle and high school educators and dissatisfaction with the current social studies textbooks inclusion of religion could be because of their heavy reliance on the textbooks. Social studies teachers have been found to heavily rely upon their textbooks (Loewen, 1995; Shaver, 1967).

Furthermore, middle and high school educators often solely teach social studies while elementary teachers spend only a fraction of the day teaching social studies.

The analysis of data also showed a statistically significant association in how social studies educators perceived that religion was currently included in the state standards. In particular, the data showed statistically significant association with middle and high school educators and dissatisfaction with social studies texts inclusion of religion in the contemporary world, the state standards, and the major religions. A statistical significant association, however, with high school teachers was shown with the agreement that current social studies textbooks are guided by the state standards. In addition, a statistically significant association was revealed in relation to high school teachers and agreement that the study of religion was also shown.

The educators' dissatisfaction with the state standards inclusion of religion is not surprising. In the state where this study took place, there is little mention of religion in the social studies standards. Religion is not mentioned at all in the elementary standards and only mentioned a few times in the middle grades standards. The largest portion of the state standards inclusion of the study of religion is at the high school level with a primary emphasis that it be taught in World History.

The influence of level of education on how religion is portrayed in the texts. Results showed that there is a statistically significant association of participants with master's degrees being somewhat dissatisfied, as well as satisfied, with the state standards inclusion of religion and the inclusion of Confucianism in the textbooks. A statistically significant association was also shown with social studies educators holding masters degrees and dissatisfaction with the current inclusion of Buddhism in the

textbooks. The statistically significant correlation between teachers holding master's degrees with beliefs about how religion is and should be included in the textbooks is somewhat misleading. Although it appears that higher levels of education show stronger statistical significance, there were no correlations found with educators holding specialist or doctoral degrees.

Race as factor for perception of how religion is included in the texts. Multi-cultural education includes the learning about people from various races, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds. Teachers can influence their students' cross-cultural perspectives by helping to direct students to create a more democratic society (Campbell, 2004). The various races and ethnicities of the teachers in the public schools is representative of the democratic society in the United States. In this study, 74.4% of participants identified themselves as Caucasian, 20.3% identified themselves as African American, 2.8% identified themselves as Hispanic, 2.2% identified themselves as Asian, and 8.8% identified themselves as other. Statistically significant relationships could not be measured on respondents from other races because of the small number of participants from races or ethnicities other than African American and Caucasian. A statistically significant association was shown, however, with African American participants and Caucasian participants pertaining to dissatisfaction of the texts current inclusion of Buddhism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism.

Religion is sufficiently included in textbooks. Some of the respondents perceived that there was adequate inclusion of religion in the current social studies textbooks. This relationship emerged in one of the themes from the qualitative analysis. The theme showed that educators perceived that textbooks were not lacking anything with respect to

the treatment of religion. As one respondent noted, “I think the important aspects of religion are adequately included in textbooks.”

Educators’ Beliefs on How Religion Should Be Included in the Texts. The second research question sought to answer how social studies teachers believe religion should be included in the texts. The question was as follows: “How do social studies educators believe that religious content should be included in the textbooks?” Through qualitative analysis, this study revealed several areas in which participants believed that textbooks should include more discussions of religious content. Most researchers and scholars agree that to implement multicultural education successfully, institutional changes must be made with the teaching materials and curriculum (Banks, 2004). Social studies educators in this study gave valuable insight into how they believed the textbooks should be changed to include a more comprehensive study of religion. Teachers’ beliefs regarding the inclusion of religion in textbooks suggested that religion should be included and that more importantly religion’s impact on past and present events should be included. Respondents wanted the texts to provide more insight into how religion affects culture by causing people to act in certain ways. Many of the educators desired more discussions of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity to be included in the texts. Some of the participants expressed the importance of the expanded discussions of religions other than Christianity.

The need for more discussion of religion’s role in culture. McMillan (1984) suggests that religion is a major factor of culture. Many of the educators in this study wanted more inclusion of religious content that would help to provide a better understanding of the multicultural nature of society. Social studies educators desired more inclusion of the various religions, religious beliefs, and customs included in the

textbooks. In particular, respondents wanted more religious content pertaining to historical understandings and cultural practices. One respondent stated that social studies textbooks should include a "basic knowledge for understanding how it affects cultures: major religions, their predominance in a region, founders, and basic principles and teachings."

This study also showed that 88.6% of social studies educators disagreed that it is possible to teach social studies effectively without an understanding of religion and its impact on societies. Similarity, the majority of social studies educators (63%) in Stone and Zam's (2006) study believed knowledge of religion was necessary for helping to develop an understanding of how to live in a world of diversity. In contrast, only (23%) agreed that multicultural education should include exposing students to religious ways of thinking.

The need for more discussion of religion in the textbooks. The vast percentage of the U.S. population claims a belief in some form of religion (al-Hibri et al., 2001). The United States has moved past its beginnings as a Christian nation and moved towards a more religiously pluralistic society (Haynes & Thomas, 2001). This pluralistic society demands a multicultural education that would enable students to participate successfully in a democratic society. Stone and Zam's (2006) In their study of social studies educators' attitudes towards religion in the curriculum, Stone and Zam (2006) concluded that an overwhelming majority of the respondents viewed the teaching about religion to be favored by most Americans.

The attacks of September 11, 2001, revealed the importance of implementing multicultural education that would include teaching students the various religions of the

world (Ladson-Billings, 2004). Many of the social studies educators in this study recognized the need to include the various religions of the world. This recognition by the educators helps to confirm their understanding of the need to educate students in pluralistic society. Educators often noted that they wanted more content regarding "world religions" included in texts.

Educators identified specific areas in which they believed that religion is and should be included in the textbooks. Many of the educators wanted more discussions of religion included in their textbooks. Specifically, these participants wanted expanded and in-depth discussion of religious content. The participants in the study wanted the major world religions as well as a variety of other religions included in the texts. These participants wanted "more inclusion of the major religions of the world" and "world religions" in the textbooks.

Multicultural education "strives to teach students to accept, understand, and appreciate culture, race, social class, religious and gender differences" (Hoosain & Salili, 2001, p. 26). Participants recognized the importance of including religious content in the social studies textbooks. Many of respondents believed various beliefs of the world religions should be given greater attention in the texts. As one educator noted, "I think textbooks should offer a basic understanding of the beliefs of major world religions and their interconnectedness (Hinduism to Buddhism, Judaism to Christianity and Islam), and a deeper understanding of how religion plays a part in society." There is a desire for social studies textbooks to include more in-depth discussions of the major religions of the world.

Stone and Zam (2006) concluded that 99% of social studies educators' agreed that the majority of Americans favored the teaching about religion in public school. My results revealed that the overwhelming majority of social studies educator's (97%) favored the teaching of religion in the social studies curriculum. Of these respondents, (70%) strongly agreed that it was necessary to teach about religion in the social studies. Certainly, there is ample support from U.S. citizens and professional social studies educators to teach about religion in the schools. This support from social studies educators and citizens for teaching about religion in the public schools could be the result of the large majority of Americans' claiming a belief in God. Thus, social studies educators in this study and Stone and Zam's study serve as a microcosm of United States.

More discussion of religion that pertains to past and present events. A major component of culture is the capacity to learn new meanings by expanding one's perceptions (Dewey, 1944). Learning how religion has affected past and present societies helps students to expand their knowledge and gain a better perspective how and why events transpire. The inclusion of religion in textbooks is a concern for social studies educators. Stone and Zam (2006) reported that 49% of the respondents perceived the study of religion was inhibited or at least marginalized in most of the social studies textbooks. In contrast, this study revealed the majority of social studies educator's (62.5%) disagreed that social studies textbooks were appropriately designed to provide a historical context for the study of religion while 63% of the participants stated they were dissatisfied with social studies textbooks inclusion of religion in the contemporary world. Furthermore, most of the social studies educators in this study believed that future textbooks should include more religious content. Most of the educators (86.4%) stated that they believed

that future social studies texts should include more historical content and 95.2% felt that it was necessary for textbooks to include the study of religion in the contemporary world.

Many of the respondents further discussed the need for textbooks to include religion to describe historical events. Multicultural concepts should be introduced when teaching historical concepts (Banks, 2004). An educator expressed the need for the inclusion of more "historical development; relation to historical currents, and change; change in religious practice and belief over time; religious practice in daily life." Another respondent remarked that "Islam and Christianity are not discussed enough in depth for the purpose of explaining their [effects] in creating the culture in history." Clearly, this respondent understood the important role that religion plays in culture.

A large portion of educators were also concerned with the insufficient inclusion of religion that pertained to contemporary events. One participant stated that "I don't see enough concerning modern conflicts over religion. Also, how the major religions have evolved and changed over time is a weak area." Another respondent reiterated the need for religion to be included in the contemporary world to describe events and cultures. The participant stated more content should focus on the "importance of religion on modern life [and] importance to different cultures and societies."

More discussion of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity should be included in the texts. The textbooks are failing to provide sufficient inclusion of religion to effectively promote multicultural education. This inadequate inclusion of religion is particularly troubling as textbooks often decide the concepts that will be taught in the classroom (Sewall, 1992). Religion is an important part of culture (McMillan, 1984). Thus, the insufficient inclusion of religion in the texts could give students an inaccurate view of

culture and would not lead to the promotion multicultural education that is important element of a democratic education.

Most of the social studies educators (64.4%) in this study stated that they were dissatisfied with current social studies textbooks inclusion of Judaism and 60.8% stated they were dissatisfied with the texts' inclusion of Christianity. The vast majority of social studies educators believed that it was necessary to include Judaism (99.4%) and Christianity (99%) in social studies textbooks. In addition, the textbook studies reviewed in this study revealed many inadequacies pertaining to the inclusion of religion in social studies textbooks. Although the religions of Judaism and Christianity are a major part of Western culture, the texts often presented these religions in a negative manner (Harris, 1963a; Gagnon, 1987; Frey et al., 1999).

Respondents stated in the open-ended questions that they perceived that Judaism and Christianity were not sufficiently included in their textbooks. In regards to the texts' inclusion of Christianity, one respondent noted that the Christian religion "is not discussed at all in any of the texts that I currently use" while another participant stated that "Both my students and I would like to know WHY Jewish people are persecuted." Furthermore, this study revealed statistically significant associations with middle and high school social studies and dissatisfaction with the current inclusion of Judaism and Christianity. Statistically significant associations were also shown with African American and Caucasian participants and dissatisfaction with the way that Judaism and Christianity are currently included in the textbooks.

The impact on type of position held and social studies educators' beliefs on how religion should be included in the textbook. Many of social studies teachers have been

shown to rely heavily on their textbooks (Loewen, 1995; Shaver, 196). Middle and high school teachers often solely teach social studies as opposed to elementary teachers who tend to teach social studies as a single part of their overall curriculum. As a result, middle and high school educators will often exclusively use their social studies texts as opposed to elementary teachers that tend to use textbooks from a variety of subjects. Thus, it is particular disturbing that middle and high school social studies teachers were to be unhappy with the current inclusion of religion as these teachers. Furthermore, these middle and high school social studies educators also believed that future textbooks should include more religious content.

Analysis of the quantitative data between type of social studies position held and how religion should be included in the texts revealed significant associations. The results showed a statistically significant association with middle and high school teachers and the perception that future social studies texts should include more historical content. Results also demonstrated statistically significant associations with middle and high school educators and strong agreement that it is necessary to include Buddhism, Confucianism, and Hinduism in future social studies textbooks.

Level of education and how social studies educators believe religion should be included. The large majority of educators in this study held masters degrees. This large majority of educators with masters degrees believed more content relating to Confucianism should be include in the textbooks. These participants were also unhappy with the state standard's current inclusion of religion. Statistically significant associations were shown with participants holding master's degrees and strong agreement that it is necessary to include Confucianism in future textbooks. These educators with master's

degrees were also unhappy with the current state standards inclusion of religion. There were, however, statistically significant associations with social studies educators with masters and disagreement that the current state standards should include the study of religion. As previously discussed, there were no correlations revealed with educators holding specialist or doctoral degrees, so the appearance that higher levels of education show stronger statistical significance can be deceptive.

Race as a factor for how religion should be included in textbooks. Social studies educators encompass myriad races, ethnicities, and religions. The diverse nature of social studies educators is representative of the multicultural democratic society of the United States. Multicultural education can reduce the cultural misunderstandings that lead to prejudices (McMillan, 1984). These educators can provide a rich insight into the manner in which religious content is included in textbooks that could help students succeed in a democratic society. In this study, statistical significant associations were shown with African Americans participants and Caucasian participants and strong agreement that it was necessary for social studies textbooks to include the study of religion in the contemporary world. There were statistically significant associations shown with African American participants and Caucasian participants and strong agreement that it was necessary for social studies textbooks to include the study of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. A statistical significant association was revealed with African American participants and Caucasian participants and agreement that it was necessary to include Buddhism, Confucianism, and Hinduism in the texts. Furthermore, a significant relationship was revealed to exist between African American participants and Caucasian participants and agreement that religious content in social studies textbooks is currently

guided by the state standards. In contrast, there were statistically significant associations with African American participants and Caucasian participants and disagreement that state standard's currently included the study of religion. Statistically significant associations in the study could only be shown with African American educators and Caucasian educators. The statistically significant associations with members of races or ethnicities other than African American and Caucasian could not be gauged because of the low percentage of participation of educators from these races or ethnicities.

Areas in which no statistical significances were revealed. There were several areas in which the study showed that there was no statistical significant association. Statistical significance associations were not shown in regards to gender and how social studies educators perceived that religion should be included in the texts. The number of years that educators had been involved in the field of social studies and educators perception of religion in the textbooks yielded no statistically significant associations. Lastly, because of the large number of participants that identified themselves as Christian (87.8%), no statistically significance associations were shown in relation to educators' identifying themselves as Christians and beliefs on how religion is and should be included in the textbooks.

Similar to research question one, there were also areas in research question two in relation to how religion should be included in texts that were shown to be statistically insignificant. There were no statistically significant associations shown in relation to found in relation to gender, number of years in the field of social studies education, and participants' religious beliefs in regard to how religion should be included in the texts.

Limitations of the Study

There were four main areas in which this study was limited. First, the study was limited in that only 16.7% of the respondents identified themselves as elementary school teachers while 32.5% identified themselves as middle school teachers and 32.5% of the educators identified themselves as high school teachers. This small representation limited the voice of elementary school social studies educators in regards to the inclusion of religious content in textbooks. A more balanced study would have included a larger representation of elementary school teachers. This limited participation of elementary school teachers could be because elementary teachers are charged with teaching a variety of subjects while middle and high school teachers usually concentrate in one subject area. Thus, middle and high school teachers most often consider themselves "social studies teachers" as opposed to being generally considered an elementary, middle, or high school teacher. Furthermore, "social studies educators" have been shown to heavily rely on their textbooks (Loewen, 1995; Shaver, 1967).

The second limitation to the study pertains to the scope of the study. This study was limited because it was conducted only in the southeastern part of the United States. The multicultural focus of the research is limited because only a select number of individuals in the United States were chosen to participate in the study. The cultural make up of the people living in the southeastern United States is inherently different from individuals living in other parts of the United States. Thus, the views of the participants in the study would not necessarily be generalizable to the larger population of the United States.

This study was also limited in that I was unable to gauge how educators' religious beliefs affect their perceptions and attitudes about the inclusion of religion in the texts. This study attempted to gauge social studies educators' attitudes towards the inclusion of religion. The vast majority of the respondents (87.8%) in the study identified themselves as Christians. This large proportion of participants stating that they were Christians made it impossible to measure social studies religious beliefs in regards to how they viewed the inclusion of religion in the texts.

Finally, this study was limited in that I did not gauge the extent to which the social studies teachers relied upon their textbooks. Social studies teachers often rely heavily on their textbooks for classroom instruction (Loewen, 1995). Understanding the extent to which the educators in this study used their textbooks would have helped to identify social studies teachers' reliance upon the texts.

Implications

Campbell (2004) believes that cross cultural perspectives can help "guide students towards creating a more multicultural society" (p. 40). Textbooks play an important role in teaching students a variety of multicultural perspectives (Gagnon, 1987). This study revealed several implications that could help improve the textbook's inclusion of religion. The improved understanding of religion could help students attain a better understanding of the myriad cultures in the United States and throughout the world.

As a result of this study, seven implications have been identified. Textbook publishers should include teacher input pertaining to the manner in which religious content is included in the textbooks. A goal of multicultural education is to teach students to appreciate, accept, and understand religious differences (Hoosain & Salili, 2001).

Social studies educators rely greatly on their textbooks for classroom instruction (Karpov & Lisovska, 1999; Loewen, 1995; Sewall, 1992). In addition, this study showed social studies educators have beliefs about how they would like to see religion included in the textbooks and ultimately the curriculum. Thus, social studies educators should have a voice in the manner in which religion is portrayed in the textbooks. The use of textbooks extends beyond the teachers. Students also rely heavily on their textbooks. These students often take the content included in their textbooks to be factual (Gagnon, 1987; Ward, 2006). Many of the teachers in this study perceived religion to be insufficiently included in the texts. The students' and teachers' reliance on the texts make it necessary for the sufficient inclusion of religion. Religion is an essential part of culture (McMillan, 1984). The added inclusion of religion could help ensure a comprehensive multicultural education.

Curriculum directors should offer more supplementary materials to offset the current inadequate inclusion of religion in the textbooks. Many of the social studies educators in this study perceived that religious content was not sufficiently presented in the texts. To offset the lack of religious inclusion in the texts, school systems and curriculum directors need to supply social studies educators with the materials needed to provide students with an understanding of how religion has affected past and present events.

This study revealed the need for state educational policy makers in the southeastern United States to improve the inclusion of religious content. The improved religious content in the textbooks would undoubtedly provide students with a better understanding of the various cultures represented in the United States and throughout the world.

Understanding these various cultures could help students successfully navigate and participate in the democratic society of the United States. Furthermore, my results suggest there is a need to revamp the current state standards to include more religious content that pertains to past and current events. Social studies educators in this survey indicated that they were not satisfied with the state performance standard's current inclusion of religion. State policy makers need to make the necessary changes to the curriculum to include more religious content that would help promote multicultural education.

Multicultural education plays an important role in "preparing all youths for democratic citizenship in a pluralistic society" (Gay, 2003, p. 31). Social studies educators in this survey corroborated previous research that suggests that religion is insufficiently included in elementary textbooks. The insufficient and in some cases non-existent religious content included in social studies textbooks at the elementary level demands that state educational policy makers call for the added inclusion of religion in these texts. Public school students of all grade levels should have the opportunity to learn religious content that supports and promotes multicultural education.

The cultural democracy inherent in multicultural education is consistent with the democratic ideals of the United States (Banks, 2004). The majority of Americans believe that it is important to include the study of religion for their children (Nash, 1999). Social studies educators showed in this study that they believe that it is important to include the study of all of the major religions of the world in the curriculum. Because of the need for the inclusion of religion in the social studies, special interest groups and organizations that pressure textbook publishers to drop pertinent religious substance need to be

monitored carefully to ensure that they are not allowed to misrepresent religious content in the texts. Groups such as the Educational Research Analyst and the Council for Islamic Education have been shown to have too much control over the type of religious content that gets included in the textbooks (Sewall, 1995). The majority of social studies educators in this study believe that religious content was limited due to special interest groups. Federal and state educational organizations need to develop measures that would help to limit the negative impact that special interest groups have on the inclusion of religious content in the textbooks.

Social studies educators need to have more input on the type of religious content that is included in the textbooks. Multicultural education should include the study of the various religions that have impacted past and present societies (Nord, 1995). The added inclusion of religion in textbooks would help students develop the national, cultural, and global identify that is needed to thrive in the current state of globalization (Banks, 1997). State educational policy makers should make concerted efforts to gain the insight of the social studies educators on how religion should be included in the textbooks.

My results further suggest that comparative religion courses should be offered to supplement the insufficient inclusion of religion in the social studies curriculum. Comparative religion courses can provide students with a better understanding of the complex cultures that are in the United States and throughout the world (Hospital, 2007). These courses could help students to understand the impact that religion has had on past and present events. Thus, helping students understand the various historical and contemporary events that are often discussed in their social studies classes.

Recommendations for Future Study

Multicultural education can help foster a democratic society (Banks, 1997). An essential part of multicultural education is teaching students about the various religions of the world (Hoosain & Salili, 2001). Future studies should be expanded to include other categories that would help to further gauge social studies educators' views about the inclusion of religion in the textbooks. These categories should include more detail about the manner in which religion is included in the social studies textbooks used at the elementary, middle, and high school level. These categories should be expanded to address the specific textbooks that educators are using in their classrooms.

Universities play an important role in the education of future teachers. Regardless of the fact that "most teacher education programs report that they have now incorporated multicultural perspectives and content into the curriculum, external examinations often prove the contrary" (Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004, p. 931). Studies should be conducted that would help to identify the manner in which these teachers are getting trained to teach about important sensitive multicultural issues such as religion. Teachers need to be aware of the legality of teaching religion social studies in order for them to provide their students with a well rounded multicultural education.

Textbooks studies conducted over the last 50 years have shown that religion is often inadequately or in some cases not included at all in elementary texts (Cannon, 1990; Sewall, 1992). Clearly, this study demonstrated that many social studies educators believe that religion in elementary school social studies textbooks is inadequately included. Future studies should be conducted in order to attain a better representation of elementary school teachers. This better representation of elementary school social studies

teachers could provide valuable insight into the manner in which these educators believe religion is and should be included in the texts. A study that focuses only on elementary social studies educators could help to provide valuable insight into the manner in which religion is or should be included in the early grade level texts.

This study focused solely on social studies educators located in the southeastern United States. A future study should be conducted that would address all or a different region of the United States. A nationwide study could help gain a better understanding of social studies teachers' attitudes and perceptions of religion in the textbooks.

The vast majority of educators in the study described themselves as Christian. Thus, sufficient data was unable to be gathered regarding how social studies educators from various faiths believed that religion is and should be included in the textbook. Further research needs to address how teachers from religiously diverse backgrounds perceive that religion should be included in the social studies texts.

Teachers rely on their textbooks to help teach social studies concepts (Loewen, 1995). Educators in this study indicated several areas in which their textbooks did not sufficiently include religious content that pertained to historical or contemporary events. These educators also provided input in to the manner in which religion should be portrayed in future social studies textbooks. Thus, future studies should be conducted to gauge the extent to which social studies educators rely on their textbooks.

Many educators in this study indicated that religion was not sufficiently included in their social studies textbooks, suggesting the inclusion of religious content is lacking in these texts. Future studies should be conducted that would help these educators understand what to do if their textbooks are insufficiently including religion.

Finally, there needs to be further research conducted on the quantity and quality of religious content in social studies textbooks that are used in public schools. There have been very few textbook studies conducted in the United States that address the inclusion of religion (Nord, 1995). This research could be conducted through intensive textbook studies that quantitatively and qualitatively analyze the inclusion of religion in the texts. These comprehensive textbook studies and insight from professional social studies educators would help to gauge further the strengths and weaknesses of religious content included in the textbooks.

Concluding Statement

The major premises of multicultural education are that it is compatible with the principles of democracy and that it "is consistent with some long-standing principles, values, and precedents in U.S. education" (Gay, 2004, p. 30). Dewey (1944) advocated for multicultural education in what he termed the "democratic ideal" (p. 86). He believed that it was important for students to understand the multicultural nature of a democratic society. Furthermore, Dewey believed that a democratically constituted society should emphasize learning new meanings of culture through "meeting the new situations produced by varied intercourse" (p. 86). Textbooks offer students and teachers a vehicle in which to introduce the various concepts that are essential in promoting multicultural education. One of the essential components of culture is religion (McMillan, 1984). Thus, the enhanced inclusion of religion in the textbooks could help students develop a better understanding of the various cultures represented in the world today.

This study provides a promising outlook towards the inclusion of religion in future social studies textbooks. The added inclusion of religion in the social studies

textbooks could enhance and promote multicultural education. Today, religion is inadequately included in social studies textbooks used at the elementary, middle, and high school level. Social studies educators play a large role in teaching religious content that promotes multicultural education. Clearly, social studies educators have shown the potential to identify the various strengths and weaknesses of current religious content included in the textbooks.

This study offers new insights into the relationship between educators' attitudes and beliefs regarding the inclusion of religion in the social studies curriculum. The deficiencies of religious content expressed by social studies educators demands that policy makers and textbook publishers improve the manner in which religion is presented in the texts. Furthermore, the input provided by the social studies educators could help to improve the type of religious content that is included in the texts.

Finally, educational policy makers and curriculum directors must start listening to social studies educators' views on how best to included religion in the textbooks. These professional educators offer valuable insights into the inclusion of religious content that could ultimately help to foster multicultural education. The experiences that social studies educators have in teaching a wide array of multicultural educational topics could greatly help textbook publishers explore the many ways in which religion can be meaningfully incorporated into the textbooks. Furthermore, these teachers are often in classrooms teaching students from a variety of religious backgrounds. The experience that these teachers have in dealing with religious diversity in the classroom could help them aid policy makers and curriculum directors in providing for a well-balanced and comprehensive inclusion of religion into the textbooks. In a world that is "becoming multicul-

tural and multireligious, the positive role that world religions can play would have a determinative impact on human relations" (Hoosain & Salili, 2001, p. 11). The more the students know and understand about the various religions of the world, the better they are going to be able to function in multicultural democratic society.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

Georgia State University
Department of Middle-Secondary Education and Instructional Technology
Informed Consent

Dear Respondent,

I am inviting you to participate in a research project to study about how the major world religions are being included within the social studies curriculum. Along with this letter is a short questionnaire that asks a variety of questions about the inclusion of religion in the social studies textbooks. I am asking you to look over the questionnaire and, if you choose to do so, complete it and send it back to me via the internet. It should take you about five minutes to complete. The participants in this survey include members of a social studies organization located in the Southeastern part of the United States.

The results of this project will be used for a dissertation. Through your participation I hope to understand how the primary world religions are being included within the social studies curriculum. I hope that the results of the survey will be useful for furthering the teaching of the religions within the social studies curriculum.

There are no more risks than in a normal day of life to you if you decide to participate in this survey and I guarantee that your responses will not be identified with you personally. I promise not to share any information that identifies you with anyone outside my research group. My research group consists of me and Dr. Chara Bohan, who is a professor in social studies education at Georgia State University. Dr. Bohan will be the primary investigator while I will be the student primary investigator.

The survey should take you about five minutes to complete. I hope you will take the time to complete this questionnaire and return it. Your participation is voluntary. Regardless of whether you choose to participate, please let me know if you would like a summary of my findings. To receive a summary, you may contact me by e-mail at kmccrory@jackson.k12.ga.us or you may call me at (706) 540-4260.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about being in this study, you may contact Dr. Bohan via e-mail at cbohan@gsu.edu or by phone at 404-413-8402. You may also contact me via e-mail at kmccrory@jackson.k12.ga.us or by phone at (706) 540-4260. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a

participant in this research study, you may also contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity by phone at 404-413-3513 or via e-mail at svogtner1@gsu.edu. We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep. If you wish to participate in this research, please continue with the survey.

APPENDIX B

RELIGION IN SOCIAL STUDIES TEXTBOOKS SURVEY

1. Do you agree or disagree that it is necessary to teach about religion in the social studies?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

2. Do you agree or disagree that it is necessary to teach about religion and how it relates to history?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

3. Do you agree or disagree that it is possible to effectively teach social studies without an understanding of religion and its impact on societies.

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

4. Do you agree or disagree that current social studies textbooks are appropriately designed to provide a historical context for the study of religion.

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

5. Do you agree or disagree that future social studies textbooks should include more religious historical content.

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

6. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with social studies textbooks inclusion of religion in the contemporary world?

❍ Very dissatisfied ❍ Dissatisfied ❍ Satisfied ❍ Very satisfied

7. Do you agree or disagree that it is necessary for social studies textbooks to include the study of religion in the contemporary world?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

8. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the current social studies textbooks inclusion of the main religions of the world?

	Very dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Buddhism	❍	❍	❍	❍
Christianity	❍	❍	❍	❍
Confucianism	❍	❍	❍	❍
Hinduism	❍	❍	❍	❍
Islam	❍	❍	❍	❍
Judaism	❍	❍	❍	❍

9. Do you agree or disagree that is it necessary to include the major religions of the world in future social studies textbooks?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Buddhism	❍	❍	❍	❍
Christianity	❍	❍	❍	❍
Confucianism	❍	❍	❍	❍
Hinduism	❍	❍	❍	❍
Islam	❍	❍	❍	❍
Judaism	❍	❍	❍	❍

10. Do you agree or disagree that textbook publishers should limit the amount of religious content due to fear of controversy?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

11. Do you agree or disagree that textbook publishers should limit the inclusion of religion to prevent controversy?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

12. Do you agree or disagree that religious content included in textbooks is limited due to special interest groups?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

13. Do you agree or disagree that religious content in social studies textbooks is currently guided by the Georgia Performance Standards?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

14. Do you agree or disagree that Georgia Performance Standards currently include the study of religion?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

15. Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with Georgia Performance Standards inclusion of religion?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

16. Do you agree or disagree that it is possible to obtain appropriate curriculum materials for the objective teaching of religion?

❍ Strongly disagree ❍ Disagree ❍ Agree ❍ Strongly agree

17. In your opinion, what content information regarding religion do you think should be included in social studies textbooks across the K-12 spectrum?

(open-ended)

18. Discuss your thoughts regarding how religion is currently being included in social studies textbooks?

(open-ended)

19. What religious content would you like to see in social studies textbooks?

(open-ended)

20. Discuss the aspects of religion that you believe are not adequately included in social studies textbooks?

(open-ended)

21. How long have you been teaching or been involved in the field of social studies?

(open-ended)

22. What is your current position in the field of social studies?

❍ Pre-service teacher

❍ Elementary School Teacher 1-5

❍ Middle School Teacher 6-8

❍ High School Teacher 9-12

❍ School Administration

❍ University Professor

❍ Other (please specify): _____

23. How would you identify your religious beliefs? (Optional)

❍ Hinduism

❍ Islam

❍ Christian

❍ Judaism

❍ Buddhism

❍ Agnostic

❍ Atheist

❍ Other (please specify): _____

24. What is your current level of education?

❍ Bachelor's degree ❍ Master's degree ❍ Specialist degree ❍ Doctoral degree

❍ Other (please specify) _____

25. What is your gender?

❍ Male ❍ Female

26. What is your race/ethnicity? (Optional)

❍ Hispanic ❍ African American ❍ Caucasian ❍ Asian

❍ Other (please specify) _____