What’s the Big Deal? Gendered Children’s Bibles and the Construction of Gender within Evangelical Christianity

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Introduction

Recent scholarship has established that gender is performative: it is something that we do, not something that we are. Judith Butler’s 1990 work Gender Trouble has shaped much of modern secular thought surrounding gender: Butler argues that gender is a social construct that “has no ontological status apart from the various acts which constitute its reality” (136). For Butler, “not even the sexed body grounds gender” (Toh 2016,
Bentley 2

337); instead, societies impose ideas of acceptable gender upon people, a process which begins at birth (or, as evidenced by the increasing popularity of “gender reveal parties,” can begin even before birth). Toh summarizes Butler’s idea of this process well, saying, “According to Butler, [saying] ‘it’s a girl!’ decodes the material reality of the body as a sign of femaleness and it kicks off the lifelong process of being ‘girled’: of being enculturated, disciplined, and habituated into dominant understandings and practices of what it means to be a girl” (2016, 337). The same idea applies to boys as well, who can be said to undergo the lifelong process of being “boyed,” or taught what is culturally acceptable for boys to say, do, wear, etc. Just as any symbol is impossible to interpret without sufficient cultural context, “we never encounter the body unmediated by the meanings that cultures give to it” (Rubin 1984, 276-77).

If gender is a performance rather than an inherent quality, how then do we learn to perform it? This process will necessarily vary by culture, but religious beliefs seem to have an especially strong influence on the construction of gender, with more traditional religious beliefs correlating with more traditional ideas of both gender and gender roles. This influence is especially evident in evangelical Christianity, perhaps due to the fact that more contemporary forms of the movement arose
during the feminist movement and were thus “shaped by an anti-feminist sentiment” (Eliason et al. 2017, 3). Yet little research has been done on how gender is constructed and enforced within evangelical Christianity (Eliason et al. 2017, 3), perhaps because the process seems self-evident to many: it is assumed that conservative evangelical Christians will believe in a gender binary, in which each gender is expected to conform to traditional ideas and fill traditional gender roles.

One essential way that children within evangelical Christianity are taught about gender and gender roles is, unsurprisingly, through the Bible. There is a plethora of gendered children’s Bibles that offer extra-scriptural materials designed specifically for boys or girls, promising to make the Bible relatable to their lives in very gender-specific ways. These additional materials often consist of boxes inserted into a page of scripture that aim to clarify a passage, connect it to the reader’s life, or provoke further thought. The aim of this project is to examine the language in the extra-scriptural materials included in one boys’ Bible and one girls’ Bible in order to further understand how gender and gender roles are constructed within the context of US evangelical Christianity. I was particularly interested in seeing how these additional materials differed in the context of the same scriptural passages: though the scriptures
are the same, they are being taught to boys and girls in radically different ways. While evangelical Christians do tend to view gender as an inherent, God-given quality that corresponds to biological sex, there are many subtle nudges in these materials that indirectly teach children very specific expectations for how each gender is expected to act in order to be accepted by both God and the church.

**Literature Review**

While no study to date has examined the materials within gendered children’s Bibles, one 1999 study examined men’s and women’s devotional Bibles and found linguistic framings that strongly support “pro-family” politics and traditional gender roles, “relegat[ing] gender roles to separate spheres, each prescribing appropriate gender-specific behaviors” (Dexter and Lagrander, 103). Overall, it seems that Christian women believe in submission to their husbands, the idea that men should be the head of the household, and the idea that a woman’s primary duty is to be a helpmate to her husband and to bear him children (Ali et al., 2008). The few studies that have been done within evangelical Christian populations tend to focus specifically on
female participants’ experiences, as well as male participants’ levels of sexism regarding women (Eliason 2016, 11). Even Hottenstein’s 2014 study, which examined both male and female evangelical participants, focused on whether evangelical women experience more shame compared to men, and whether men and women with a “more feminine orientation” experience higher levels of shame (1). Given that female is a marked category within Christianity, it comes as no surprise that most research in this area focuses on women’s experiences.

It is worth noting that many of the gendered expectations created within evangelical Christianity align with those created by Western culture—in both, women are socialized to be “feminine (i.e., expressive, other-oriented, emotionally connected, submissive, and nurturing) and to embrace traditional female gender roles (i.e., aligning attitudes and behaviors to cultural prescriptions for women’s social roles)” (Hottenstein 2014, 1). The key difference is that while secular culture threatens to ostracize those who do not comply with “acceptable” gender norms and roles (Bucholtz and Hall 2004, 373), evangelical Christian culture teaches that those who do not comply will not only be ostracized, but also risk eternal damnation. The former says, “you should do this because society says so”; the latter says, “you *must* do this because God says so.”
I examined two Bibles for this project. Both were found by searching “girls bible” and “boys bible” on Amazon and selecting the top results that were a. designed for children within the age range 8-12; b. from the same publisher (Zondervan); and c. of the same translation (New International Version, or NIV). These restrictions were an attempt to control for any external factors—for example, since both Bibles are NIV, the scriptural text will be exactly the same and only the additional materials will vary. In addition, I thought it would be interesting to see which materials the editors thought were appropriate to discuss with boys and girls within this age range, e.g., will the materials aimed at girls be more infantilizing, while those for boys emphasize leadership despite their youth? I chose Bibles from the same publisher because it would make sense that materials from the same company would endorse the same level of complementarianism. Zondervan is a founding member of the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA), and as such it cannot produce any content that conflicts with the ECPA’s Statement of Faith (“About ECPA”). This will necessarily lead to materials that are tailored to those in
evangelical belief systems, which is ideal for the purposes of this project.

Noticeable Gender-Oriented Differences

Artistic Design

The cover of the NIV Faithgirlz! Bible is pink and bedecked with flowers and curly script, while the boys’ is bound in a subtle brown leather binding with a neutral orange stripe. This first glimpse is an accurate foreshadowing of the designs that continue throughout each book: the script of the girls’ Bible is entirely purple and pink, while that of the boys’ is black and orange; the girls’ has flowers on every single page, while the boys’ has pictures of skateboards and biceps curling weights scattered throughout. It goes without saying that there is nothing inherently wrong with girls who enjoy pink and flowers or boys who enjoy skateboards—the key here is that the only Bibles available for girls are aggressively feminine, and the only ones available for boys are aggressively masculine. Already, within the design, expectations of socially and biblically acceptable gender roles are being constructed for young boys and girls: girls
must be soft and like “pretty” things, while boys must be tough and like imagery related to things like sports. It would be unthinkable within evangelicalism for a boys’ Bible to be pink or have flowers, a fact that shows just how deeply ingrained these gendered expectations are within the subculture of evangelicalism.

Throughout the Bibles, the inescapable design details reinforce the linguistic framings that also enforce traditional Western stereotypes regarding gender: in order to be a “good, normal” boy, one must like sports and “gross” things; in order to fit neatly into the box of a “good, normal” girl, one must like flowers, sparkles, the color pink, etc. The design, coupled with the placement and content of the features, implicitly instructs young readers about what is considered to be acceptable with regard to gender within their belief system.

**Major Features**

Each Bible contains a summary of the extra-scriptural materials, which are broken down into titled features. The girls’ Bible contains seven features that appear throughout the scriptures, while the boys’ Bible contains five. The full text of
these summaries can be found in Appendix 1 (girls’ Bible) and Appendix 2 (boys’ Bible).

Even the punctuation in these summaries is revealing: for example, the girls’ Bible has three features with exclamation points (perhaps to go along with the title, “Faithgirlz!”). By contrast, the boys’ Bible has only one feature with an exclamation point in the title: “Gross!” This discrepancy may be reflective of both Western and Christian standards by which girls, even as young as 8-12, are expected to always present as happy, cheerful, and excited, while boys are encouraged to be more restrained in both their behavior and punctuation.

Overall, while the Bibles contain some similar features, even these display differences that show how the editors view young boys and girls within evangelicalism and are attempting to shape their views of both acceptable gender and gender roles. For instance, both Bibles feature introductions to each Biblical book: while the girls’ Bible simply says these will “[h]ighlight[] the main topics of each book of the Bible and [appl]y them to your life,” the boys’ Bible says they will introduce “the basic facts: who wrote it, where it took place, when it was written, why it was written. The introduction will also give you a list of favorite Bible stories and teachings you can find in that book.” Noticeably, the girls’ Bible contains a shorter description of this
feature and emphasizes the need to connect biblical stories to girls’ own lives.

The boys’ Bible is more factual and straightforward, eschewing a mention of applying the Bible to boys’ personal lives and instead focusing on further study and teaching. Again, this may be due to the heavy emphasis on male leadership within evangelical traditions. Also similar between the two Bibles are the “Oh, I Get It!” and “Get a Load of This” features, from the girls’ and boys’ Bibles, respectively. Both provide additional information on interesting or difficult-to-understand passages, but the small differences in the titles are significant: while “oh, I get it!” is usually said after a person struggles to understand something and finally comprehends it, saying “get a load of this” doesn’t imply any such struggle. Giving the girls’ feature such a title projects a cutesy inanity onto young evangelical girls, while lending an air of infallibility to boys. These qualities fit nicely into the traditional evangelical framework of gender and gender roles.

Lastly, while the girls’ Bible contains a feature encouraging readers to exercise their imagination—perhaps to imagine what it would have been like to “see baby Jesus snuggly sleeping in a hay-filled manger”—the closest equivalent in the boys’ Bible is the main feature, which “highlight[s] people and
stories and verses from scripture that show these qualities and encourage you to grow in each area.” Of course, imagination and growth are both good qualities that should be sought after; the key is that they exist in complementary distribution in these Bibles: imagination and emotion are for little girls, and growth and leadership are for little boys.

Perhaps the starkest contrast between these features is exhibited by the girls’ personality quizzes and the boys’ “Gross!” sections. Boys are (apparently) entertained by facts such as how the Israelites tracked down Amorites and killed them by hanging them from trees (Osborne 2002, 283) or how Jezebel’s body was eaten by dogs (Osborne 2002, 480). On the other hand, girls are encouraged to look inward and find similarities between themselves and biblical characters, such as Solomon, who was granted wisdom after God told him that he could have anything he asked for. The feature inserted into this passage reads, “What if God asked you ‘what can I give you?’ You might say ‘Hello! Shopping spree at the mall! But think about how huge it would be to always know the difference between right and wrong” (Rue 2011, 391). Inspiring girls to find parallels between themselves and biblical role models is admirable—but inserting irrelevant stereotypes into such discussions is not. Assuming that girls would be more likely to wish for material things such as a
shopping spree constitutes a subtle form of sexism that contributes to girls’ understandings of what they should like—of what is acceptable for girls to like.

I was interested to see what the extra-scriptural materials in each Bible would have to say with regard to specific scriptures that are often used to validate traditional, complementarian views of gender and gender roles. Given that the CBMW is one of the most influential sources on the topic within Evangelical circles, I looked up the scriptures mentioned in the previously-referenced Danvers statement in each Bible (Genesis 2:18, 1 Corinthians 11:7-9, and 1 Timothy 2:12-14) and compared the extra-scriptural materials—or lack thereof. At times, the lack of additional materials in one Bible or the other was just as telling as their inclusion.

Genesis 2:18, a part of the Creation story, reads, “The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him’” (Rue 2011; Osborne 2002). The girls’ Bible has an, “oh, I get it!” feature focusing on this passage that explains why God chose to make Eve from Adam’s rib:

If Eve had been made from dust like Adam, she would have been a totally separate person. But, crafted from a piece of him, she was actually a part of him. They were
as much like one person as they could be. How romantic, too. Adam’s rib was the closest bone to his heart, taken from his side to form Eve. That’s the way God wants married people to be—side by side, close to each other’s hearts, a perfect match (Rue, 2011, p. 5).

The boys’ Bible, by contrast, has a “252 Track” feature, titled “What Cool Is All About.” While this material also focuses on Genesis 2 and the creation of woman, it takes a much different tone:

Some guys think the way to be cool is to be on their own, utterly independent, doing their own thing. Well, would you really like to live alone in a tree fort in the middle of a swamp for ten years? God wasn’t just saying that Adam needed a wife. Adam also needed a family and friends . . . . But don’t forget that every relationship is a two-way street: Other people love us and care for us, and we need to love and look out for them. Bottom line: Being cooler doesn’t mean being a one-man show, it means living in relationship with others (Osborne 2002, 4).
Notably, the girls’ feature places a heavy emphasis on marriage and romance and implies that women ontologically depend upon men because of the creation order. Feminist writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has asked the question, “Now marriage can be a source of joy and love and mutual support, but why do we teach girls to aspire to marriage and we don’t teach boys the same?” (2015). Marriage is another example of a construct that is emphasized for women in both secular and Christian cultures, but more strongly in the latter. Perhaps the answer to Adichie’s question—at least in the context of Christian cultures—is that evangelicals teach girls to aspire to marriage because it is seen as their purpose, their destiny. Though the Faithgirlz! Bible is designed for 8 to 12-year-old girls, the editors thought it was appropriate to include a feature mentioning marriage, assuming that girls will aspire to it one day—if they haven’t begun to aspire already.

The boys’ feature makes only a passing mention of marriage and mainly serves to remind boys that independence is only sustainable to a certain point and that people are made to live in relationships. While this reminder is commendable, it seems to assume that independence is implicit in all boys. In addition, the brief mention of marriage (“God wasn’t just saying that Adam needed a wife”) appears to downplay the importance
of marriage, removing it from central focus—the opposite of what the girls’ feature accomplishes.

Overall, these two features seem to strongly reinforce traditional, essentialist views of both gender and gender roles. Girls are assumed to be interested in heterosexual romantic relationships, even at early ages, and are encouraged to maintain this interest. By contrast, the boys’ feature addresses the desire for independence that they assume burns in the heart of all boys, and encourages them to rely on friends and family, decentralizing the importance of the marriage relationship.

Another scripture cited in the Nashville Statement is II Samuel 11:1-12:15. This passage tells the story of David and Bathsheba, in which David, who was the King of Israel, saw Bathsheba bathing, then sent for her and impregnated her. Many scholars now read this story with the understanding that Bathsheba had no opportunity to refuse David’s proposition, given the power imbalance between them, and yet the boys’ bible inserts a “What’s the Big Deal?” feature that begs to differ:

Bathsheba found herself in a sticky situation. King David thought she was beautiful, so he invited her to visit the palace. Big mistake. She was married to Uriah, one of King David’s soldiers away at war. They
betrayed Uriah, and Bathsheba got pregnant . . . . Yet God still had a plan for Bathsheba’s life. She married David and next gave birth to Solomon, one of the wisest kings in history . . . . God loved Bathsheba and forgave her sins, just like he forgives ours when we ask (Osborne 2002, emphasis mine).

The wording in this feature paints the situation as one in which both parties were equally culpable. Rev. Deacon Erin Moniz, in a piece written for Christians for Biblical Equality (CBE), disagrees: she says unequivocally that David raped Bathsheba, and that “[b]oth secular and Christian culture normalize behaviors from manipulation to sexual assault. When it comes to dating and sex, concerns over extramarital sex often overshadow all else, setting the stage for abusive patterns to develop” (2019). This passage could have been used to teach boys an important lesson about the corrupting influence of power, but instead the inserted materials cast equal blame upon a woman who most likely had no choice in the situation and was instead a victim of abuse. Even worse, she ends up marrying David and bearing him a son, and the boys’ bible implies that this was her destiny—“God’s plan” for her life.
The girls’ bible has no extra-scriptural materials on this passage or surrounding passages, a silence which speaks volumes.

I Corinthians 11:7-9 is the second passage cited by the CBMW to support the idea that men and women have innate differences that result in different roles. These verses give instructions with regard to proper conduct for men and women, saying women should cover their heads during church worship services. Verse 9, which is most likely the crux of the CBMW’s argument, reads, “neither was man created for woman, but woman for man” (Rue 2011; Osborne 2002).

Neither Bible has a feature specifically regarding these three verses, but each does contain one on the surrounding verses that give instructions on how men and women should conduct themselves when the church holds services. The girls’ Bible has a section titled “Is there a little spiritual life in you?” (see Appendix 1, #6 for a description of this type of feature—in essence, it encourages young girls to identify biblical traits that they see in themselves). While this portion of scripture mentions spiritual gifts such as praying and prophesying—which are typically carried out by men in evangelical churches—the feature directs girls’ attention elsewhere:
Don’t speak in tongues? But can you:
- Explain a Bible story to a little kid?
- Make the new girl feel like she isn’t a space alien?
- Stop the boys from making gross noises in church?

We all have at least one spiritual gift, not to make us special, but to serve the community of believers (Rue 2011, 1325).

Although the editors chose not to directly address the verses cited by the CBMW, they sent a similar message with the heavily gendered content in this feature. In a very small amount of text, they have made clear that it is a girl’s place to provide emotional labor and care after others. The first point implies that even the young girls reading this Bible should begin to develop their nurturing skills by teaching children younger than them. This—teaching children—is quite often the only area in which evangelical women are offered leadership positions within the church, such as “children’s minister.” Thus it comes as no surprise that this Bible’s readers are encouraged to cultivate this ability from an early age.

The second point encourages girls to reach out to others—in this case, a girl who is perhaps new to the church and has not yet made any friends there—and form emotional bonds
in order to welcome them into a social group. This constitutes emotional labor, a burden which tends to fall disproportionately upon women, both in churches and in secular society. Because women are viewed as the more naturally nurturing sex, it is often left up to us to manage and fulfill the emotional needs of others. Evangelical churches emphasize the need for women to provide emotional labor in the form of services like welcoming visitors, corralling children, and writing encouraging pieces for church bulletins.

The third point also emphasizes the need for girls to provide emotional labor, as well as making another point about the different levels of maturity that are expected from boys and girls. While there is an underlying assumption that boys will misbehave and be noisy during church services, the editors also apparently believe that it should be up to their female peers to chastise them. This supposition demands maturity from young girls while at the same time suggesting a “boys will be boys” attitude. Though the need for maturity is rarely emphasized in the materials in the girls’ Bible, it makes an appearance here only in the context of motherliness. Lastly, the concluding line of the feature clarifies that the purpose of spiritual gifts bestowed upon girls is not to make them special, but to give them the opportunity to serve others.
The boys’ Bible has a lengthy feature called “Checking Yourself Out” on a later portion of I Corinthians 11 that gives instructions on how to properly partake in the Lord’s Supper, also known as communion. The verses state that Christians should examine themselves before partaking in communion, to make sure they are doing so respectfully. Part of the feature reads:

Examining yourself doesn’t mean condemning yourself for your problems, then refusing to take communion. It means reflecting on your relationship with God. Is your relationship growing? Are you receiving his grace, love, and power? (Osborne 2002, 1499).

I think it is very interesting that the editors chose not to address the portion of scripture about spiritual gifts, as the editors of the girls’ Bible did. Perhaps this is because boys, at least in complementarian churches, are assumed to have inherent spiritual leadership gifts due to their gender, while girls’ presumed gifts are less visible. It seems the editors of the girls’ Bible foresee the possibility of girls feeling secondary due to this discrepancy, and are seeking to ensure them that their gifts, while different, are still important.
What the boys’ feature does address is one of the Christian sacraments, communion, and ways in which boys should reflect on it in order to grow closer to God. This is in line with the apparent overall theme of the two Bibles: while boys are encouraged to grow and mature in their spiritual walks, girls are reminded of their duty to serve other believers.

I Timothy 2:12-14 contains instructions for the conducting of worship services and is one of the most commonly cited verses in support of the complementarian view. It reads, in part, “11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet.” The logical result of a literal interpretation of this text—one that does not take into account the vast cultural differences between the current-day world and biblical times—is seen in many evangelical churches today, in which men can be found carrying out all the preaching, teaching, praying, scripture reading, song leading, and other functions of church services. While neither Bible contains a feature specifically related to these verses, the girls’ Bible has one for verses 9 and 10, which instruct women not to adorn themselves with elaborate hairstyles, which in biblical times and cultures were a marker of wealth and prestige. The “Oh, I get it!” feature explains that “Today, it’s not braids that do that, but
clothes that are designed to show off girls’ bodies and make people stare. The Bible says that instead of dressing this way, women who love God should clothe themselves with good deeds and acts of kindness. Now that’s a fashion statement!”

Although this Bible is intended for girls ages 8-12, the language used here puts the burden on them to “clothe themselves” appropriately so that people don’t stare. This is an interesting exception to the overall tone of the girls’ Bible, which places little emphasis on the need for maturity. Here, the material emphasizes what seems to be an inappropriate level of maturity for girls in this age range, who are in no way responsible for any thoughts that grown adults have about their bodies. In addition, it’s interesting to note that the prescribed gender-specific command—to avoid wearing certain hairstyles—is dismissed because it’s viewed as specific to the historical context of the Bible, yet many evangelicals refuse to dismiss other gender-specific commands (such as the one found in I Timothy 2:11-12, which prohibits women from teaching men) for the same reason.

This pivot is perhaps one of the most revealing that I came across in this entire project. For these two verses, girls are told that the biblical text must be understood in the context of biblical times and cultures; for the two verses that immediately
follow, the lack of additional materials implies that the biblical mandate is one that transcends times and cultures. While it would hardly be reasonable for a children’s bible to delve deeply into complicated exegesis, one of the purposes of these inserted materials is to clarify, at an age-appropriate level, potentially confusing passages—therefore, the lack of clarification with regard to these two passages is telling and seems to impart conflicting messages about the Bible’s ability to transcend times and cultures.

Meanwhile, the boys’ Bible has a “Make it stick” feature on verse 2 of the same chapter, which gives instructions on how to pray. The feature explains the difference between praying for others and praying for things in your own life and encourages boys to jot down a prayer or two of their own. This feature subtly emphasizes leadership qualities for boys, who need to learn how to publicly pray, as most will be expected to do so in their own congregations. Noticeably, the editors didn’t think it was necessary to include a feature on the modesty verses. Much like women in secular society are taught that it is their responsibility to avoid being sexually assaulted, girls and women in Christian cultures are taught that it is their responsibility to prevent men from lusting after them. Boys, on the other hand, are rarely instructed not to lust after girls, as this Bible demonstrates.
Conclusions

Some modern Christian theology acknowledges that gender is at least in part culturally constructed, due to the fact that much Christian teaching with regard to gender “invokes the need to be counter-cultural” (du Toit 2016, 161). Despite this partial recognition, most Christians still hold to the complementarian view of gender, claiming that men and women are born with divinely given differences that should be recognized and developed by the church. These differences are addressed explicitly through many religious study materials, including gendered Bibles for children. What I found in these Bibles was a strict division between the emotional, passive, and soft; and the rational, active, and strong. Unsurprisingly, the former are emphasized in the materials for young girls, while the latter are emphasized for young boys.

Though the scripture, the “word of God,” is the same in Bibles designed for both boys and girls, well-meaning people—who of course are shaped by their own cultures, histories, and experiences—have imposed their understandings of those scriptures onto readers through the many additional materials inserted into their pages. The result is that young readers are guided into constructing very traditional, complementarian
views of both gender and gender roles. Many of the additional materials, through attempts to connect the Bible to readers’ modern lives, seem to present some potentially harmful ideas that do not necessarily stem from the Biblical text itself.

Future studies of gendered children’s Bibles could deepen the analysis I have presented here by incorporating the elements of nationalism, capitalism, and (anti-) Orientalism, all of which have explicit ties to current evangelicalism in the United States. There are undeniable ties between evangelical Christianity and nationalism: many Christians—the “religious Right”—are committed to bringing the US back to its alleged Christian roots and insist that there is no political agenda when they lobby against things like equal marriage rights or access to abortion. Many also view capitalism as a God-ordained system, and these gendered Bibles are an interesting example of that: Dexter and Lagrander’s study of adult gendered Bibles found that “[b]ookstores, even on college campuses, report huge sales” (103). Are the numerous iterations of Bibles like these motivated by the desire to reach more people, or by the desire to line the pockets of those who write them? Lastly, the US has a history of devaluing non-Western epistemologies, and the evangelical church in the US is no exception. Lila Abu-Lughod’s analysis of Edward Said’s essay “Orientalism” describes its main focus as
“the way in which the Orient itself has been represented in Europe through an imaginary geography that divides East and West, confirming Western superiority and enabling, if not actually constituting, European domination of those negatively portrayed regions known as ‘East’” (2001). This concept is relevant to the present discussion due to the consistent devaluing of Eastern Christian emphasis on the Holy Spirit, the member of the Holy Trinity who in much of Eastern tradition is considered to be feminine. This femininity has been almost completely erased in Western Christianity. In addition, the Holy Spirit is said to live within Christians and be a sort of guiding inner voice, and the Western masculine emphasis on suppressing emotion means that this more “feminine” way of knowing has also been devalued, if not erased. All of these lenses could be incorporated in future research to deepen understandings of the ways in which children raised in evangelical Christian traditions learn to construct gender.
APPENDIX 1

1. Dream Girl: What would it have been like to live on Noah’s ark? Or to see baby Jesus snuggly sleeping in a hay-filled manger? Or how about seeing God create the world? This feature will help you imagine yourself in some of the most familiar and amazing Bible stories.

2. Bring It On! To really get to know yourself, take some quizzes! Do you like to help others? Is it difficult for you to be patient? How do you obey God? This feature will point to Bible verses that encourage you.

3. Oh, I Get It! The Bible is more than just stories—it also has tons of information. How did God create the world? Who is a direct descendent of Ruth? What kind of freaky stuff happened to Ezekiel? Find answers to these questions and more.

4. Book Introductions: Highlights the main topics of each book of the Bible and applies them to your life.

5. Treasure This! Verses to help you keep God’s Word in your heart—you may want to memorize them!

6. Is There a Little _______ (Moses, Deborah, Good Samaritan) in You? Have you ever believed that God was there for you, even when it didn’t seem like it? Then there’s a little Moses in you. Have you ever helped a friend be brave? Then there’s a little Deborah in you. Have you ever helped somebody when no one else wanted to help? Then there’s a little
Good Samaritan in you. See for yourself what Bible character traits you have!

7. In Your Own Words: Create a list of events to tell a Bible story in your own words.

(Rue, 2011)

APPENDIX 2

1. 252 Track: This is the main feature. Hundreds of readings will take you through the Bible and show you how to become a 252 man—smarter, stronger, deeper, and cooler. Each reading will follow one of these tracks throughout the Bible, highlighting people and stories and verses from scripture that show these qualities and encourage you to grow in each area. Check out what God’s word has to say to you today. To follow a specific track all the way through the Bible, turn to page 1670 for an index.

2. Get a Load of This: Check it out. Interesting and sometimes funny facts about the Bible, Bible times and Bible characters.

3. Make It Stick: Here’s a place for you to apply what you read to your own life. It’s a place to write answers to questions, doodle some sketches, or write your own thoughts.

4. Gross! Need we say more? Check out the gross and gory stuff you never knew was in the Bible!
5. Book Introductions: At the beginning of each book of the Bible, you’ll find the basic facts: who wrote it, where it took place, when it was written, why it was written. The introduction will also give you a list of favorite Bible stories and teachings you can find in that book (2:52 Boys’ Bible, 2002).

WORKS CITED


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Within Christianity there are a variety of views on the issues of gender identity and transgender people. The many Christian denominations vary in their position, ranging from condemning transgender acts as sinful, to remaining divided on the issue, to seeing it as morally acceptable. Christianity and gender identity. Most Christian denominations do not recognize gender transition. A 2000 document from the Catholic Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith concludes that sex reassignment procedures do not change a person’s gender in the eyes of the Church. "THE Gender Recognition ACT 2004 AND THE CHURCH “What the Law says: A Note from the Church of England’s Mission and Public Affairs and Legal Divisions". As a scholar of gender and evangelical Christianity who grew up Southern Baptist, I watched how complementarianism became central to evangelical belief, starting in the late 1970s, in response to the feminist influence within Christianity. The start of the doctrine. In the 1970s, the women’s movement began to make inroads into a number of arenas in the U.S., including work, education and politics. Many Christians, including evangelicals, came to embrace egalitarianism and to champion women’s equality in the home, church and society. In response, in 1977 evangelical biblical studies professor G women and little children”9 who are drawn in by magic and sorcery. Celsus argues that the Christians routinely challenge the authority of the household, but this is not for him the salutary raising of women’s status, but rather a fundamental threat to social order and well-being. In her recent book, Early Christian Women and Pagan Opinion: The Power of the Hysterical Woman, New Testament scholar Margaret Y. MacDonald undertakes a project of historical reconstruction of women's history from the rhetoric of non-Christians' observations about Christian women.10 In the proces General Articles on Gender-Neutral Bibles. The Gender-Neutral Language Controversy. By Michael D. Marlowe. What's Wrong with Gender-Neutral Bible Translations? By Wayne Grudem, at the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood. The Inclusive Language Debate: How Should The Bible Be Translated Today? A shocking example of political correctness in the so-called "evangelical” publishing industry. Even goes so far as to advise the use of the gender-neutral NRSV in biblical quotations. Translators and The Gender Gap. By Herbert G. Grether (Theology Today - Vol 47, No. 3 - October 1990). Grether was a member of the translation team that prepared the Old Testament portion of the Good News Bible. Evangelical Christian Women offers a look at conservative women who challenge gender norms within their religious traditions, the fallout they experience as part of the ensuing conflict, and the significance of the conflict over gender for the development and character of culture. In the face of a growing number of scholarly studies of conservative religious women that argue that submission is somehow “really” empowerment, this book seeks to get at the other side of the story; to document and explore the experiences of the women caught in the middle of the conservative Christian cult.