The Relationship of United States' Nationalism and Textbook Coverage of Latin America

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF UNITED STATES' NATIONALISM AND TEXTBOOK COVERAGE OF LATIN AMERICA

by

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Dedication

To Dennis Dwilis. In life you inspired me.

In death you taught me. I'll always remember.
Abstract

It was the purpose of this project to determine whether the interests of United States' nationalism had influenced the textbook coverage devoted to Latin America. The review of related literature supported the value of curriculum with a global orientation and the importance of an objective understanding of the Latin American-United States relationship. This study reviewed eight (8) world history textbooks. Seven (7) of the books were on the latest state adopted textbook list for Florida. One (1) text was currently in use in advanced World History classes in Duval County (Florida). The eight books were reviewed using a textbook evaluation form devised for this project. The findings indicated that the world history textbooks followed a traditional western civilization approach. The degree of coverage devoted to Latin America varied from a few pages to more than 100 pages. The shared events with the United States that were described in the texts, were generally non-controversial topics. Textbooks had an encyclopedic approach rather than a generalization orientation. This author concluded that Latin American coverage lacks negative stereotyping. The coverage also lacks topical coverage of current events. Specific recommendations included the inclusion of historical and current events to aid students in critically evaluating the topics while developing their own
interpretations of the United States-Latin American relationship. While United States nationalism does not seem to be a factor in negative stereotyping, it may have lead to the avoidance of presenting controversial topics in the Latin American-United States relationship.
THE RELATIONSHIP OF UNITED STATES' NATIONALISM AND TEXTBOOK COVERAGE OF LATIN AMERICA

The social studies textbook is a tool used, in our schools, for the development of "good" citizenship. The social studies textbook is typically intended as a principal vehicle by which our students learn of their global neighbors. Often the accuracy of the textbook impacts significantly upon student perception of the world. If the learner is encouraged by the textbook to view the world through a biased eye, he/she may form an erroneous view of the world.

With the above in mind, the question might be asked, "What factors may lead to biased presentations in social studies textbooks?" The following discussion focuses, in particular, upon the impact of nationalism in textbook development.

"Nationalism is a state of mind, in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due the nation state. A deep attachment to one's native soil [is expected]" (Kohn, 1971, p. 9). However, while nationalistic writings can foster pride, unbridled fervor may also distort reality.

Nationalism is a strong force which has had the effect of fostering immense changes within various societies. Nationalism has allowed whole nations to mobilize in support of the "fatherland." At the same time, it has provided the catalytic force to mobilize a people to establish a nation of their own.
Intense nationalism can be seen to permeate many aspects of a nation's life. When Bismarck unified Germany, he saw to it that the fires of nationalism were stoked. Napoleon also recognized the importance of this mobilizing force. Among other reforms, Bismarck and Napoleon implemented an educational curriculum centered on nationalism in order to rally the people around the flag.

Similar emphasis on education was found in Hitler's Germany. "The Nazi system, from kindergarten to university, was suffused with Hitler's idea of blood and soil, follow-the-leader principle, obedience, discipline and respect for order" (Snyder, 1964, p. 169).

Writing in the 19th century, Guizot (1860) stated that French national strength depended on the study of French history. Snyder (1964) reinforces this theme when he points out that French schools stressed loyalty to the Republic and to principles of the French Revolution following the disastrous Franco-Prussian War. Snyder intimates that Napoleon III's surrender at Sedan in 1870 was due to more than just military strategy. He credits the nationalistic Prussian educational system with the victory when he says, "The Prussian school master won at Sedan" (p. 120).

Our image of others comes to us through our history lessons (Ferro, 1984). In Education, State and Crisis: A Marxist Perspective, Sarup (1982) contends that the educational system has been transformed, at various times, due to the emergence of
new forces such as Marxism, feminism, and the awareness of ethnic pride. These forces have influenced perhaps not the content of the curriculum, but the context used to present historical development.

While it may not be difficult to identify bias in the educational curricula of other nations at critical points in time, it is less easy to analyze such bias in our own curricula. However, such analysis is important if a balanced classroom presentation is a desired educational goal.

It is the purpose of this project to determine whether the interests of United States' nationalism have influenced the various accounts of global conflicts and changes reflected in world history textbooks commonly used in secondary schools. In an effort to emphasize nationalism, we might ask whether our textbooks have lost the ability to be analytical and critical of national policy.

Specifically, this project will analyze the content of world history textbooks used in, or recommended for use in, secondary schools in the state of Florida. In particular, the text coverage devoted to Latin America will be evaluated. Since most, if not all, secondary students are enrolled in at least one world history course, review of these textbooks will provide a clearer picture of the content to which most of our students are exposed in the classroom. Latin America will be
the case study region since it is perceived as a close and volatile neighbor of the United States.

Factors to be scrutinized can be grouped into two categories: (1) those factors reflective of nationalistic concerns; and (2) those factors reflective of sound educational principles. Specific factors include: (1) relevance and timeliness of content; amount of regional Latin America coverage in comparison to other regions of the world presented in the same texts; presentation of shared events with the United States' depth of presentation on controversial topics; and (2) appropriate graphics and narrative (i.e. avoiding stereotypes); trends and generalizations presented in addition to encyclopedic knowledge; use of graphic material to support the content; the inclusion of a useful bibliography; material requires higher level thinking skills (e.g., analysis, evaluation); readability level.
DEFINITION OF TERMS

content analysis - methodology by which thematic information of various documents is interpreted.
global perspective of education - concept of a global village in which emphasis is placed upon the similarities and interrelationships of international events and trends.
Latin America - the culture region extending from the Rio Grande, south to the southern tip of South America; the area which encompasses Mexico, Central America, Caribbean Islands, and the South American continent.
nationalism - intense feeling of loyalty and pride for one's nation.
readability - a concept which addresses the reading grade level of a textbook.
secondary education - that level of schooling which encompasses the learning sequence in the seventh through twelfth grades.
stereotyping - categorizing a group of people according to shared characteristics, while individual differences are ignored.
textbook - the major source of bound reading material for a student in schools.
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This review of related literature will examine the following topics:

1. a rationale for the global perspective of education;
2. the relationship of nationalism to education;
3. a review of Latin America's relevance to the United States;
4. an overview of factors used in evaluating textbooks.

The focus of this review will be to determine if:

1. a global orientation in curriculum will provide the secondary student with useful and accurate knowledge of world events;
2. nationalism, while a factor in maintaining pride in one's country, can hinder the development of a balanced curriculum;
3. the proximity of Latin America to the United States requires a clear and bias-free understanding of the area;
4. textbook publication is subject to external forces that influence the type of content found in the text.

The Global Perspective in Education

Prior to determining the types of textbooks to be used in the secondary social studies classroom, it is generally accepted that one should first identify what the student needs to understand. That is, it is legitimate to question whether the student should be
educated as a "national" or whether the student should be prepared to be a citizen of the world. A review of the literature indicates an overwhelming emphasis upon the latter.

Cogan and Nakayama (1985) point out that, although national and international professional groups choose global themes at annual meetings, there is a general lack of knowledge of world-wide events and world-wide cultural diversity even by those in attendance. Such knowledge is essential for the understanding of global affairs.

This indicates that a comprehension of world issues is not simply a classroom exercise but, rather, is becoming more and more vital for competence in daily intercourse. The goal of the classroom is to prepare the individual for community citizenship. Evidence is suggesting that "community" may need to be defined in its broadest sense, i.e., a "global community."

Anderson and Anderson (1982) provide a view which maintains that the world may be seen from one of two perspectives:

1. "societies in isolation" - this paradigm sees the world's social structure consisting of "only marginally related societies";

2. "world systems" - the world social structure is one complex system according to this paradigm (p. 395).

In another article (1982), Anderson's choice of perspectives is obvious:

To ask why education should be globalized implies choice,
a freedom to do it or not to do it depending on how we feel. But any real choice we may have once had in this matter is eroding, and the task of globalizing American education is rapidly entering into the kingdom of necessity, where the only real choices center on how well and how rapidly the task gets executed (p. 155).

In other words, globalizing education is a matter of survival. There is no longer a choice.

In their article, "Effects of Instruction on Teachers' Global Mindedness and Patriotism," Barnes and Curlette (1985) discuss four ways in which to view the world:

1. "nationcentric view" - this viewpoint sees all issues evaluated by one major value, i.e. what is for the good of one's own country. The world is seen as a grouping of individual states without any interrelatedness between the states.

2. "global view" - the emphasis here is upon the world community. All decisions are based upon the good of all.

3. "world order view" - the need for individual governments is obsolete. One world government is needed for control.

4. "patriotic view" - this angle is similar to the nationcentric view, but "it lacks exclusivity and rejection of others." One can love one's country but not have to be suspicious of other nations (p. 43).
Using the above paradigms, Barnes and Curlette taught a graduate course entitled "Social Studies for Global Understanding." The researchers pre-tested and post-tested the students to ascertain the student level of global understanding/toleration. The results indicated that as the graduate students became more aware of world problems and issues, they also became more supportive of decisions based upon the benefit of humankind rather than national interests (p. 48). Interestingly enough, this increased sensitivity for the global perspective did not precipitate a decrease in patriotism for the students' nation.

When addressing the question of what students should learn, King (1984-1985) listed the following categories: (1) that people of the world have a shared heritage; (2) that the world is dynamic rather than static; (3) that society is not a collection of isolated events; and (4) that critical thinking skills are necessary for analysis of situations.

In the absence of a curriculum designed to meet the above goals, our current generation of graduates will be unable to confront issues. We become, as King (1984-1985) indicates, a "nation at risk" of not being able to "grapple with [topical and worldly] issues" (p. 65). In order to avoid this "nation at risk," Kobus (1983) calls for our classrooms to integrate an awareness of global concepts such as "change, conflict, community and interdependence" into the classroom (p. 21).
Nationalism

Nationalism may be broadly defined as an intense feeling of patriotism to one's country. Loyalty, devotion, attachment, and pride are nouns that can be associated with a person possessing nationalistic tendencies.

That education has been a handmaiden to nationalism in the United States is evident to any person cognizant of his/her formal education. From the earliest years of formal education, the child is taught to recite a pledge of loyalty to a flag at the front of the classroom. Historically, the student is told of our forefathers' principles and dignity as they broke with an oppressive government and founded a nation based upon enlightened ideas. The United States is presented, in many textbooks, as the protector of democracy and the nation that holds to the principle of self-determination. The learner is taught the value that patriotism can have for a great nation.

Although this project does not question the value of love for one's country, a review of the literature raises some interesting points. For instance, Kobus (1983) said that research indicates patriotism is linked with ethnocentrism, or a feeling of superiority to other groups (p. 24). Gluck (1984) found mediocrity in the education of those nations where political philosophy dictated curriculum content. In her study of Islamic Art, she found that the blinders of nationalism limited curriculum.
That is, when a nation's number one educational goal was to propagandize the national heritage to the exclusion of most all other educational material (emphasis supplied) the students became insulated from other "visions" of the world. The rhetorical question could then follow, "Will our educational system insulate our students from a global 'vision' of the world?"

In a study of eleven nations, Murray (1983) described the phenomenon of politicalization of education. Three questions were reviewed for each country: (1) who receives what type and what quality of education?; (2) what is taught in school, what methods are used, and how is evaluation conducted?; (3) what degree of social and political freedom do staff and students enjoy? He found that government became more directly involved in education when its major concern was equality of opportunities. He also discovered that when the educational system was perceived to be contrary to the majority views -- as he saw in Malaysia -- discrimination in the system takes effect in favor of the politically dominant.

Historical examples offer some insight into the relationship of education and nationalism. Snyder (1964) indicates that in 1905 a Russian historian, Duchinsky, was given permission to publish the "official" account of the Crimean War. When compared with a British account of the same contest, there is a marked difference in the narrative. Snyder intimates that the difference
in accounts is due to bias resulting from the dynamics of nationalism (p. 215).

Likewise, historical events can stimulate national pride. For instance, the area of eastern France-western Germany has been an historical theatre for the nationalistic play. Alsace and Lorraine have long been geographic prizes in various confrontations between the Germans and the French. Each time one group lost the territory to the other, the loss became a rallying cry. Scott (1916) referred to the "gapping wound" of Alsace-Lorraine following the close of the Franco-Prussian War. The loss of the land by the French led to renewed nationalism in the classroom. French schools began to stress loyalty anew to the Republic and to the principles of the French Revolution.

The Nazi regime of Germany provides another example of the marriage of education to nationalism. Snyder (1964), in a translated excerpt from Breslau's *A Primer for German Youth*, shows the attempt to engrain, from the earliest days of school, the love for the Fuehrer:

> When the Fuehrer has a birthday, that is also a special day for us . . . When school begins, we all stand up before the picture. We sing a song to the Fuehrer . . . Then we greet the Fuehrer with a sieg-heil (hail-victory) . . . Dear Fuehrer, remain always healthy . . . (Breslau, 1940, p. 74).
One might argue that nationalism is not inherently evil. Developing pride in one's country does not have to connotate false propaganda. Likewise, a global orientation to education does not necessitate a denial of country. As mentioned above, Barnes and Curlette (1985) found that after a group of graduates completed the course, "Social Studies for Global Understanding" they not only became more aware of world problems and more supportive of world government, they continued to value their national identity.

**Latin America**

Latin America, our neighbor to the south, has been undergoing vast revolutionary changes — socially, politically, economically, and psychologically — "and it is seeking to devise new institutional arrangements to manage the complex transformations currently underway" (Wiarda & Kline, 1979, p. 2). In spite of the proximity of this culture region to the United States, there seem to be many misconceptions of the area and the people.

Most North Americans have a picture, based on the headlines and New Yorker cartoons, of a Latin America governed by comical, mustachioed men on horseback who gallop in and out of the presidential palace with monotonous regularity. Our other image is of poor but happy peasants with big sombreros either taking siestas under the palm trees or dancing gaily in the streets. Neither of these images conforms to the
realities of the area (Wiarda and Kline, 1979, p. 2).

According to Skidmore and Smith (1984) "such ignorance can be dangerous" (p. 4). Latin America is a major trading partner of the United States. The United States invests heavily in Latin America. The area also has critical natural resources, for example, oil. Its political upheavals have ramifications for the United States' foreign policy. This can be seen in events such as the United States military involvement in Nicaragua, the United States invasion of Grenada, and the economic ties between the United States and the South American continent.

Closer to home, sections of our country's urban areas have Hispanic influence. "Bilingualism has become a political issue forcing us to rethink the meaning of Spanish-speaking America, both within our borders and beyond" (Skidmore and Smith, 1984, p. 3). Cities such as Miami, San Antonio and New York have long had sizable populations of Hispanics. Among other considerations, this sub-cultural urban segment of the population has come to have influence in American urban politics.

In other words, "... there is a growing unacknowledged reality to the oneness of [the] America[s] ..." (Black, 1984, p. 16). With Latin American indebtedness mushrooming, and the United States' policy in Central America and the Caribbean basin claiming more of the United States' budget (Black, 1984), the United States citizen needs to look past the stereotypes and
accurately evaluate the Latin American region and its relationship to his/her life. We must examine the manner in which the region is presented and what type of information is important if an unbiased viewpoint is to be developed regarding this volatile neighbor.

Evaluating Textbooks

A general review of evaluation procedures for textbooks consistently points towards the fact that textbook publishing is big business. The publishers are very vulnerable to market influences. Text adoption occurs on the average every five years. The publishers produce texts that attempt to serve everyone (Holbrook, 1985). Due to external forces such as committees, school boards, parents, legislators and the like, publishers seek "safe material." Due to space limitations, it becomes difficult to develop a comprehensive story line (King, 1984-1985). King also points out that due to lag time from research to publication, material is quickly outdated.

The quest for safe material, coupled with the back-to-basics movement has resulted in, as Holbrook (1985) labels it, a "dumbing down" of texts. Kline (1984) maintains that publishers, in an attempt to become their own censors, have come to question not whether issues are true or false, but rather whether they will be offensive to a particular group. The message to the publisher is clear—compromise is lucrative. Kline boldly states that this can lead to a rejection of the truth.
Nevertheless, it is vital that school districts and teachers develop and use effective criteria to evaluate textbooks. Some of the more common factors scrutinized during textbook evaluation are: inclusion of appropriate illustrations, readability of material, presence of regional biases, presence of generational biases (Kline, 1984); appropriate amount of background information, use of topic sentences, use of topic transitions (Holbrook, 1985); targeted grade/ability level the book is aimed at, presence of scholarship, accuracy, organization, clarity, unity (Percy & Suarez, 1985); whether the purpose of the material is clearly stated, whether skills that are taught are applied to the content (Muther, 1984-1985). Awareness of such criteria and their use in evaluating textbooks can encourage educators to make wise decisions regarding appropriate materials for teaching.

Summary

The review of the related literature can support several conclusions: (1) a curriculum of global orientation will yield wider acceptance and toleration of world neighbors and events; (2) unbridled nationalism can bias an educational approach to content area; (3) an accurate stereotype-free picture of Latin America is essential if the United States is to understand and negotiate policy with this neighbor effectively; (4) the textbook, as a classroom tool, needs to be closely evaluated and scrutinized according to a number of factors in order to insure an accurate view of the world.
PROCEDURES

The review of related literature supported the following conclusions: (1) a global perspective in education is needed to foster toleration of other peoples; (2) a global approach to education is not contrary to patriotism and pride for one's country; (3) the popular view of the Latin American culture region is replete with negative stereotypes that hinder understanding of an international neighbor of the United States; (4) the secondary school world history textbook should be closely scrutinized to assure that an accurate account of this world neighbor is presented.

Recognizing the implications of the above findings, this chapter will establish procedures to evaluate secondary school world history textbooks used in classrooms in the state of Florida. The purpose of the evaluation will be to ascertain the degree of bias, if any, towards the Latin American culture. The factors that will be used in the evaluation procedure have been culled from previous studies (See "Review of Related Literature").

Sample and Setting

All Florida students are required by state mandate to enroll in World History at the senior high school level. In many cases, this will be the only exposure to world cultures for the secondary student. Consequently, the reading material used at this level
takes on vital importance. For this reason, world history textbooks will be evaluated.

The textbooks reviewed by this project will be those on the 1985 state adopted textbook list for Florida. Specifically, the state adopted textbooks on hand in the Duval County School Board Social Studies library will be reviewed.

**Instrument**

A textbook evaluation form devised for this project will be used when reviewing the textbooks. The factors included have been culled from other studies, as referenced in the previous chapter. The factors addressed appear to be those most relevant to the overall scope of the project, i.e., accuracy of Latin American representation in United States textbooks. (See Appendix A for the evaluation form.) The form used has been adapted from a similar form developed by the National Council for Geographic Education at their annual conference (1983). The following is a brief description of the factors to be evaluated and how they will be used in the evaluation.

**Content Analysis**

The textbook evaluation process will involve a content analysis of secondary school world history textbooks, included on the State-adopted textbook list for Florida. Content analysis is the methodology by which thematic information of various documents is interpreted.
"Documents are an important source of data in many areas of investigation, and the methods of analysis are similar to those used by historians. The analysis is concerned with the explanation of the status of some phenomenon at a particular time or its development over a period of time" (Best, 1981, p. 107). In other words, the researcher must be mindful that the printed word may not always be trustworthy.

For the purposes of this project, the "documents" will be the textbooks mentioned above. Specifically, the content properties to be reviewed include: (1) scope of content - is the information present of sufficient quantity to provide the student with enough knowledge to make a realistic appraisal of the culture region (e.g., regarding social structure, history, twentieth century revolutions)?; (2) shared events - is information present that depicts the interrelatedness of the United States and Latin America?; (3) narrative/graphic illustrations - to what degree, if any, is there stereotyping?; (4) trends and generalizations - are the students provided with broad categories with which to relate events, or are the students provided with encyclopedic facts with little, if any, correlation provided?; (5) comparative coverage - is the Latin American portion of the textbook of comparable breadth to the coverage provided other culture regions of the world?
Readability

While the above characteristics are most important, readability is a crucial factor needing review. "If teachers wish to put the right book in the right hands at the right time there are many things that need to be considered . . . One of the most important of the criteria is the readability level of the material" (NCGE, 1983, p. 1). Since reading is an integral aspect of the educational process, successful reading can foster a successful educational experience.

Various reading formulas have been developed to aid teachers and school districts in selecting appropriate materials for classroom use. The formulas provide rough estimates of textbook difficulty level and a basis for the comparison of the "relative difficulty of several books" (NCGE, 1983, p. 1).

The 'Fry Readability Formula' will be used in this study. Though the National Council for Geographic Education (1983) has determined that this formula may be less precise than other formulas, it can be easily employed by the classroom teacher. The Fry method uses the number of syllables and the number of sentences in a 100 word passage as predictors of reading level. In this study three 100 word passages will be taken from each textbook section on Latin America. The average number of syllables and sentences will be plotted on the Fry Graph. (See Appendix B for the Fry Graph.)
Other Factors

In addition to the factors described above, instructional properties of the textbooks will be reviewed. While precise content is necessary in order to form an accurate image of Latin America, mere presentation of factual content is not sufficient. As Naisbitt (1982) maintains in Megatrends, our society is becoming inundated with vast quantities of facts. Society is drowning in information. "Uncontrolled and unorganized information is no longer a resource in an information society. Instead it becomes the enemy . . . ." (p. 24). Consequently, students should be exposed to a level of thinking beyond memory and recall. They should be given the opportunity to practice higher level cognitive skills, e.g., analysis and evaluation. These skills can, hopefully, lead to the ability to formulate and apply generalizations. This ability becomes more useful than the acquisition of disjointed facts.

Included in this section of the evaluation will be the following areas: (1) degree of higher level thinking required; (2) presentation of a useful bibliography; and (3) the chance provided to apply skills to the content, e.g., the ability to apply generalizations to events.
FINDINGS

Focus of the Study

It has been the purpose of this project to determine whether the interests of United States' Nationalism have influenced the content of world history textbooks used in, or recommended for use in, secondary schools in the state of Florida. In particular, text coverage devoted to Latin America was evaluated. Latin America was chosen as the case study region since it is perceived as a close and volatile neighbor of the United States.

Review of Related Literature

The review of related literature yielded the following:
(1) a curriculum of global orientation can prepare students for wider acceptance and toleration of world neighbors and events;
(2) unbridled nationalism can bias an educational approach to content area; (3) an accurate, stereotype-free picture of Latin America is essential if the United States is to understand and negotiate policy with this neighbor effectively; (4) the textbook, as a classroom tool, needs to be closely evaluated and scrutinized according to a number of factors in order to insure an accurate view of the world.

Implementation

Eight world history textbooks were used in this study. Seven of the texts were listed on the most recent state adopted textbook list for Florida. One text is currently used by Duval County in its
advanced World History courses. The books in the samples were:

1. *Achievement Through the Ages*, John A. Meers and Joachim R. Schneider, Laidlaw Brothers.

The evaluative instrument, found in Appendix A, was used to gather data for this study.

**Findings**

A review of the above listed world history textbooks yielded the following findings:

1. Approach - Overall, the textbooks followed a "traditional" western civilization approach to world history. Coverage typically began with Mesopotamia, moved to Greece, then to Rome and so on.
2. Coverage - All of the textbooks reviewed contained at least some Latin American content. The degree of coverage ranged from a couple of pages to more than one-hundred pages. The books with only minimal coverage usually touched upon the independence movement, Monroe Doctrine and developments in key countries (e.g. Cuba, Argentina, Nicaragua, and, occasionally, Chile).

- One book (Welty) contained extensive coverage (more than one-hundred pages). Content included topical issues such as social structure, political development and the struggles for self-determination in Central America.

- Three books (Perry; Farah; Beers) contained at least one chapter devoted solely to Latin America. Additionally, sections of other chapters provided coverage for individual countries, and current United States foreign policy in Latin America.

- One book (Mazour) did not contain a continuous chapter devoted to Latin America. There were 4 separate sections scattered throughout the book.

- Three books (Meers; Wallbank; Knownsclar) contained brief accounts of Latin American Development. The accounts were "encyclopedic" - i.e. factual/chronological representations of some of the major events in Latin American history.

3. Coverage - The "shared events" with the United States that were presented in the texts typically included the Monroe Doctrine, Panama Canal and the Castro Revolution. Peron's rise to power in Argentina was commonly found in the texts. Allende's death and
the subsequent change in the Chilean government had limited coverage — when covered at all. Nicaragua (i.e. the Sandinistas), in particular, and Central America in general, generally were not elaborated upon.

4. Timeliness - The content in all but two books (Wallbank; Meers) provided timely information of relevance to the relations of the United States to Latin America.

5. Stereotyping - There was a general absence of negative stereotyping of the Latin American people.

6. Generalizations - Although information was presented in all texts that could aid the reader in the development of trends and generalizations, in some of the texts, the trends were not readily identifiable. A reader would need to search the material to form the higher level generalizations.

7. Reading Level - According to the Fry Formula, reading level was at the 12th grade level or above.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted at the Master Degree level. The intent was to determine whether the interests of United States' nationalism have influenced the coverage devoted to Latin America in secondary school world history textbooks. Eight textbooks were used in the study. These remarks are offered with hopes that they will benefit publishers, authors and classroom teachers. The following comments are derived from the author's study of eight (8) textbooks. Generalization to all world history textbooks is not implied, nor is generalization to all topics covered within these eight textbooks implied.

Conclusions

Based on the evaluation of eight (8) world history textbooks' coverage of Latin America the following conclusions have been reached by this author:

1. Blatant negative stereotyping is absent from textbook coverage of Latin America. The author believes this is due to publishers and authors being more aware of the pitfalls of stereotyping in textbooks.

2. Although Latin America is a neighbor of the United States, the Latin American region receives little historical and cultural attention in traditional world history textbooks. This could be due to the fact that the majority of the United States population is not of Spanish background, and thus the English heritage of the
United States may predetermine the content direction of the texts. The textbooks contain little elaboration on the major Indian Civilizations of Latin America. Yet viewed rhetorically, can teachers expect to see elaboration on Latin American Indian cultures when native North Americans are traditionally presented in a superficial and cursory manner in United States history textbooks?

3. As noted in the "Findings" section, the shared events with the United States that are described are usually the "safe" topics. Selected individual countries received coverage (e.g. Castro Revolution, Peron's rule in Argentina). Allende's overthrow in Chile and Arbenz's downfall in Guatemala received little development. The United States involvement in such events is left, in most cases, to reader interpretation. This may be a consequence of several factors. The author realizes that publishers have space limitations. This constraint may pose a practical consideration when organizing material for publication. Publishers may also face the dilemma of substantiating the more controversial events as regards the involvement of the United States. Another reason for exclusion of such items may be to avoid offending nationalistic feelings on the textbook selection committees.

4. While United States nationalism does not seem to overtly paint the United States as a "Great Emancipator/Big Brother" of Latin America, harsh judgements against the United States are
generally lacking. The relationship presented is almost one of a sterile nature.

5. A traditional approach to world history textbook content seems to be that of an encyclopedic nature. Presentation of factual information is "cut and dry". It does not put the textbook author in the situation of advancing generalizations, controversial or otherwise. It may also be the intent of the text authors to allow the reader to draw his/her own generalizations without influence.

6. The readability of all texts in this study was impressive. None of the texts were written at too sophisticated or too elementary a level. The phonetic spelling of Spanish names, found in some of the books, was very helpful.

Recommendations

Based on the review of the world history textbooks in this study, the following recommendations are offered for publishers, authors and the classroom teachers:

1. The review of related literature indicates that students should learn: (a) that people of the world have a shared heritage; and (b) that the world is dynamic rather than static (King, 1984-1985). The United States and Latin America have had, and still have, many common interests, goals and problems.

World history textbooks should provide more space for these aspects of the Anglo-Spanish relationship. Students can then draw on historical reference as they develop their own views of the
Latin American cultural region. As Kobus (1983) maintains, an awareness of global concepts such as "change, conflict, community and interdependence" should be introduced in the classroom (p. 21).

The author recognizes the dilemma of the world history textbook author -- an almost limitless amount of material to cover in a comparatively limited amount of pages. The question of which material should be omitted is most difficult. One suggestion is to view the world history course from the teaching perspective. Trying to study 6000 years of history in one school year ("Around the world in 180 days!") is a mammoth undertaking at best. Most world history textbooks contain large tracts on the world since 1900. World War I, World War II, and the Cold war typically receive detailed treatment. While these are vital areas for student analysis, the content may be given more appropriate coverage, from a class time point of view, in another course (e.g. Europe Since 1850). This would allow for more text space for Latin America.

2. Students should understand that society is not a collection of isolated events (King, 1984-1985). In this author's view, social studies, as a subject area in the schools, has too long suffered the reputation of consisting of nothing but dates and names. Publishers and authors would provide a great service to the student by concentrating upon trends and generalizations in general.
Existing parallels with the United States' development should be incorporated to aid the student in understanding the relevance of social studies to his/her life. Teachers, when confronted with less than adequate textbooks in this area, should aid the students by encouraging questions, conclusions, generalizations and predictions for the future.

3. Closely related to #2 above is the fact that critical thinking skills are becoming survival skills of the 1980's. Students need to be taught the process of analyzing situations. The diplomatic recognition of Panama in 1903, the Allende affair, the current Nicaragua and El Salvador unrest, the Castro Revolution, and the Monroe Doctrine–Roosevelt Corollary, are but a few examples of areas that students could analyze as to their current and/or future implications to the United States.

Latin America provides an excellent setting for the teacher to guide the student in discovering the importance of future problem solving. For instance, given two or three possible scenarios of events in Nicaragua, the students can postulate which measures the United States can foster to help promote the future peace and security of the region. They also can compare and contrast their solutions to historical case studies (see Appendix C).

4. Historiography is an area that publishers may wish to visit in future textbook editions. Providing students with various interpretations of key events in Latin American–United
States relations can aid the student in developing a well-rounded viewpoint. If the teacher does not have such textbook interpretations, supplementing the course with point-counter point arguments in selected areas may add stimulation to the curriculum.

Interpretive information presented by the author can serve as a tool for students to critically evaluate opinions, while at the same time developing a base for their own philosophical stance. **Danger:** The teacher must be vigilant in this area. If students are allowed to accept historical interpretations without evaluation the idea of critical thinking will be seriously undermined. The classroom should not be a forum for endoctrination, but rather, a place to facilitate development of personal values and interpretations.

**Summary**

Textbook constraints, a balanced approach to history, and the need not to offend the sensibilities of textbook reviewers are factors that publishers have to realistically address. The needs of the students to understand a close neighboring region is also recognized.

Authors and publishers should make a concerted effort to present data on Latin America that will lend itself to generalization development. This can be done by either providing the data and allowing the students to arrive at generalizations or by providing the generalizations and allowing the students to discover the supporting and/or contradicting data. Students need to be allowed
to critically evaluate this data, while developing their own interpretations of events relevant, for example, to United States-Latin American relations. Teachers should serve as catalyst, model and facilitator for students in this area of interpretation, trend identification and application to future problems.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

TEXTBOOK EVALUATION FORM*  

Title of textbook: 
Author(s): 
Publisher: 
Targeted Grade Level: 
Ability Level: 

I. Readability

Fry Formula Level: ____________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>high</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Content Properties

A. Content is relevant and timely
B. Narrative and graphics avoid stereotyping
C. Graphic material supports narrative
D. Amount of regional coverage in relation to other cultural regions
E. Trends and generalizations are presented in addition to factual content
F. Shared events/culture with the United States are discussed
G. Controversial topics are presented

III. Instructional Properties

A. A useful bibliography is included
B. The reading material requires higher level thinking skills (e.g., analysis, evaluation)

*Adapted from the National Council for Geographic Education Annual Conference (Jamaica, 1983).
Appendix B

GRAPH FOR ESTIMATING READABILITY—EXTENDED

by Edward F. R. Rutgers University Reading Center, New Brunswick, N.J. 08904

Average number of syllables per 100 words

DIRECTIONS

Randomly select 3 one hundred word passages from a book or an article. Plot average number of syllables and average number of sentences per 100 words on graph to determine the grade level of the material. Choose more passages per book if great variability is observed. Conclude that the book has uneven readability if scores fall in gray area but when they do grade level scores are invalid.

Count proper nouns, numerals, and initializations as words. Count a syllable for each symbol. For example, 1945 is 1 word and 4 syllables and IIA is 1 word and 2 syllables.

EXAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYLLABLES</th>
<th>SENTENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Hundred Words</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Hundred Words</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Hundred Words</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

READABILITY GRADE (see dot plotted on graph)
Appendix C

The following is an example of how a student might be led to analyze a particular event in Latin American development. The method is one utilizing a questioning sequence that this author was introduced to in a graduate social studies methods course at the University of North Florida (Northan, 1972).

**TOPIC:** Diplomatic recognition of Panama (1903)

**Set:** Students will have read background information on Panama's independence and subsequent recognition by the United States.

**Questioning Sequence:** (a) What happened? That is, what events led to Panama's independence? Why did these events occur? What does this tell you about the reasons for United States' involvement in Latin America? (b) What happened? That is, what events led to Panama's independence? How do you account for the role of the United States in these events? What does this tell you about the role of the United States in Latin American affairs?

**Generalization:** Based on student responses to the above questions, a variety of generalizations may be offered by the students.

**Example:** "The United States has viewed the Latin American region as an extension of its southern border, and consequently of vital interest in national security matters."

**Follow-up:** Given student generalizations, the teacher should guide the students in applying and evaluating their generalizations to other situations in Latin America.