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**BLACKS IN AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS: A STUDY OF SELECTED  
THEMES IN POST-1900 COLLEGE LEVEL SURVEYS**

*Middle Tennessee State University*

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BLACKS IN AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS: A STUDY  
OF SELECTED THEMES IN POST-1900  
COLLEGE LEVEL SURVEYS

Reavis Lee Mitchell, Jr.

A dissertation presented to the  
Graduate Faculty of Middle Tennessee State University  
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BLACKS IN AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS: A STUDY  
OF SELECTED THEMES IN POST-1900  
COLLEGE LEVEL SURVEYS

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## ABSTRACT

### BLACKS IN AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS: A STUDY OF SELECTED THEMES IN POST-1900 COLLEGE LEVEL SURVEYS

by Reavis Lee Mitchell, Jr.

This research surveys selected college level United States history textbooks published after 1900 to focus on several themes related to the treatment of black Americans in history textbooks. In the period after 1900, historians revealed that black Americans comprised an essential element in American history. The aim of this research is to examine the depiction of black Americans in United States history survey textbooks during three distinct periods of the nation's history. The targeted periods are the Reconstruction era, the vogue of Social Darwinism in America, and the era of the New Deal. This research examines textbooks to discover if the period when the textbook was written was significant to the author's presentation of black Americans.

A further consideration of this research was whether, with the passage of time and reaction to significant events, authors change their presentations. The image of black

Reavis Lee Mitchell, Jr.

Americans has also been affected by the attitudes of textbook writers toward this minority group.

Teachers of the past, present, and future have the responsibility to discover whether textbooks contain statements that are unfair or biased against any racial or ethnic group. This research has also revealed that in all topics related to black Americans, classroom teachers must often direct students to read from supplemental sources to obtain a balanced view of black Americans. Teachers must endeavor to help students recognize that the legal and actual status of black Americans did not always coincide, and realize that, because of this, the historical conclusions presented should be based on various sources in order to obtain a true picture.

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R. L. M.

Dec. 1983

DEDICATION

The author would like to dedicate this research to his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Mitchell, Sr., for the dedication and love shown to their entire family.

R. L. M.

Dec. 1983



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## INTRODUCTION

This research surveys selected college level United States history textbooks published after 1900 to focus on several themes related to the treatment of black Americans in textbooks. In the period after 1900, authors of survey level textbooks revealed that black Americans comprise an essential element in American history. As with other topics, often historical scholarship has not been sufficiently utilized to make the treatment of blacks in college survey texts as well balanced as it might be. The importance of a study of this nature was pointed out in the 1979 textbook by Frances FitzGerald entitled America Revisited. "Each generation of students reads only one generation of textbooks. That transient history is that student's history forever, their particular version of American history."<sup>1</sup>

The aim of the present research is to examine the depiction of blacks in American history textbooks during three particular periods of our nation's history--the Reconstruction era (1865-1877), the period of the vogue of Social Darwinism in America (1880-1914),

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<sup>1</sup>Frances FitzGerald, America Revisited (Boston: Little Brown & Co., 1979), p. 4.

and the New Deal years (1933-1941). An effort will be made to discern the influence of the era in which the textbook was written and of authors' special interest upon the presentation of interpretation. This research will examine textbooks to discover if the era when a textbook was written was significant to the authors' presentation of blacks. Dr. Lawrence Reddick, in an elaborate study of southern schools' textbooks to determine racial attitudes toward blacks, concluded that most of the books were traditional. According to Reddick, their pro-southern bias produced an unfavorable picture of blacks.

A report of the proceedings of the National Education Association's Subcommittee on Textbooks compiled in 1932 stated that "Texts used in schools, especially histories, revealed little about the history and achievement of the Negro." Both of these studies were concerned with books used in secondary schools. It is hoped that this research will eventually contribute to improvement in college level teaching and result in a more accurate reflection of the role of all participants in American history, whether members of the majority groups, or blacks, native Americans or women.

In a 1927 study entitled "The American Race Problem," Edward Ruter remarked on the potential of information for modifying attitudes and behavior. He

noted that new information facilitates the development of a questioning attitude and appetite for even more facts.<sup>2</sup> This dissertation deals specifically with the depiction of black Americans in college level United States history textbooks. The question to be considered deals with the presentation of the activities that cause the formation of images of a racial group in a country. This issue is of particular importance in a country with a multiplicity of racial and ethnic groups.

#### Hypothesis

The basic hypothesis of this dissertation is that the reporting and interpretation of significant events by textbook authors has been influenced by both the current political, social, and economic realities of the period during which they lived and by powerful ideas and images from the American past. This research seeks to determine what specific events have shaped the authors' perceptions, and subsequently their writing, on American history. Also of primary concern are factors which may have effected changes in the authors' opinions and caused them to formulate new hypotheses concerning the actions of blacks.

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<sup>2</sup>Edward Ruter, The American Race Problem (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1927), p. 23.

### Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

- (1) A content analysis of selected United States history textbooks post 1900
- (2) A survey of the relevant literature to discover the temper of the time during which the textbook was written
- (3) An attempt to discover whether the milieu of the era when the textbook was written affected the authors writing about the past
- (4) A survey of certain historical theses and their influence on lower level textbooks
- (5) A drawing of educational conclusions and their implications in the classroom.

### Significance of the Study

Teachers of college level history survey courses rely heavily on the textbook. The desirability and possibility of improving the presentation of blacks in American history texts has been indicated by several studies already completed. John Hope Franklin, in his 1980 presidential address to the American Historical Society, called for the continued monitoring of textbooks to determine how black Americans were depicted. A 1943 pamphlet produced by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People surmised that anti-Negro propaganda was rampant in school textbooks. Lawrence Reddick, in a 1931 Journal of Negro

History article, concluded that southern school textbooks created negative images of Afro-Americans. Frances FitzGerald, in her work America Revisited, points out a fact that is still relevant when considering the importance of textbooks to images of black Americans. FitzGerald observed that a heavy reliance on textbooks is a distinguishing mark of American education.

The publishing of textbooks is a multimillion-dollar-a-year industry. Despite its scope, few educators would charge producers of textbooks alone with the responsibility for race relations in the United States. However, textbook authors, historians and social scientists do have the responsibility of being acutely aware of, not only facts of history, but the images and impressions embodied within textbooks which supposedly reflect the activities of all Americans. Authors of history textbooks have the responsibility of providing the student a factual account of history as well as an unbiased as possible interpretation of history. In a post-1954 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People publication, the organization contended that school textbooks have failed to measure up to some of the standards for adequate textbooks and have not always provided enough factual information on blacks which could be expected to bring about any significant changes in attitude. Research indicates that the bulk of textbooks available for college level use present a biased, inaccurate account of the

participation of blacks in American history. This investigation seeks to contribute data necessary to the revision of textbooks so that they more realistically reflect the role of blacks in American history.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to a survey of the following topics by the factors of time and availability of information:

- (a) The depiction of black Americans in the era after Reconstruction
- (b) The influences of Social Darwinism on the depiction of blacks in college level survey texts
- (c) The presentation of the reaction of black Americans to Roosevelt's New Deal.

This research does not seek to test the validity of factual information, but simply to survey material and describe the presentation of blacks in textbooks during particular periods.

#### Utilization in Teaching

This study can be useful as the classroom teacher helps the student understand differing interpretations of the same event. Many times collateral reading, the primary text, and the lecture will offer differing interpretations. This may result from: the era in which the work was

produced; political changes that have taken place; the discovery of new information; and various combinations of the preceding. Thus, the student could learn to question and not accept statements simply because they appear in print. Encouraging thinking, questioning, and synthesis makes the classroom experience more relevant.



## CHAPTER I

### HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF RECONSTRUCTION AND REVIEW OF SURVEY TEXTBOOKS THROUGH 1940

John Hope Franklin, in a 1980 address to the American Historical Association, claimed that every generation rewrites its history and that every generation since 1870 has written the history of the Reconstruction era. Franklin contended what historians have written on the topic of Reconstruction tells as much about their own generation as about the Reconstruction period itself.<sup>1</sup>

For nearly three decades after the turn of this century the point of view of Reconstruction that was dominant among most American historians was that put forth by Columbia University historian, William Archibald Dunning, and those who studied with him. The Dunning interpretation became the first extensive school of thought in the field of Reconstruction historiography. The Dunning scenario was that of the "good guys" versus the "bad guys." Sidney Fine and Gerald S. Brown, in evaluating Reconstruction historiography in The American

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<sup>1</sup>John Hope Franklin, "Mirror for America," American Historical Review 85 (February 1980):3.

Past: Conflicting Interpretations of the Great Issues,

state quite succinctly:

The Dunning school of Reconstruction historiography has tended to view Reconstruction in the South as a struggle between good white Democrats and a coalition of bad Republican carpetbaggers, scalawags and Negroes.<sup>2</sup>

In 1978, Gerald N. Grob and George A. Billias stated the Dunning thesis this way:

Responsibility for the freedmen should have been entrusted to white southerners. Blacks, these historians believed, could never be integrated into American society on an equal plane with whites because of their former slave status and inferior racial characteristics.<sup>3</sup>

On the political question, Grob and Billias pointed out that there was indeed a struggle for control of the South carried out by northern Republicans and southern Democrats. Radical Republicans and the blacks were helpless and impotent, caught in the middle. The black vote was sometimes sought for sinister purposes.

John Hope Franklin claimed that the Dunning students in the 1920s were more adamant than the professor in denouncing Radical Republicans and their black and white allies. It was their position that these groups were responsible for the regrettable state of affairs in the South wherein misgovernment and corruption flourished.

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<sup>2</sup>Conflicting Interpretations of Great Issues, eds. Gerald Fine and Sidney Brown, (New York: D. C. Heath and Co.), :2.

<sup>3</sup>Interpretations of American History, eds. Gerald Grob and George Billias, (New York: The Free Press, 1978, 1:402. (hereafter cited as Interpretations, eds. Grob and Billias).

They also called for the intervention of "gallant men" to rescue the South through whatever violent or non-violent means they possessed.<sup>4</sup>

History is always open to re-interpretations, especially if new facts and shifting influences seem to warrant its re-evaluation and revision. The first generation of revisionist-minded historians of Reconstruction came to the forefront in the 1930s. They stressed the democratic and constructive aspects of the era and mildly criticized some of the stereotypes of Reconstruction for which Dunning and his fellows were to a large degree responsible. The early revisionists were greatly influenced by that variety of American historiography which emphasized "underlying economic factors" in historic development. These revisionists were much less certain that Reconstruction was as bad as had been commonly supposed, and were not willing to accept the thesis that responsibility for the freedmen should have been entrusted to native white southerners.<sup>5</sup>

Revisionism eventually comprised a wide spectrum of interpretation with numerous mixtures of compatible views. John Hope Franklin contended that the revisionists

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<sup>4</sup>Franklin, "Mirror for America," pp. 3-4.

<sup>5</sup>Interpretations, eds. Grob and Billias, 1:403-04.

were professional in their writing. However, he pointed out that the great majority, when viewing the role of blacks in the Reconstruction governments of the South, saw the need for quick, even violent counter reaction.<sup>6</sup> An excellent example would be Ralph Harlow's 1935 volume of The Growth of the United States. There were, however, sharp voices of discontent. One of the earliest and most notable was W. E. B. Du Bois in his 1935 work, Black Reconstruction. Du Bois contended that white historians had ascribed the faults and failures of Reconstruction to the Negroes' "ignorance and corruption." In 1939, distinguished southern historian Francis Simpkins put forth the prevailing revisionist position. Simpkins concluded that the early revisionists had given a distorted picture of Reconstruction because they had assumed blacks were inferior. The result was a provincial approach to Reconstruction that was based on ignorance and priggishness. Only by escaping the influence of their biases can historians more accurately understand the past, thereby facilitating rational discussion of one of the nation's most critical dilemmas.<sup>7</sup>

The new generation of revisionists closely associated with the consensus school of historiography, which

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<sup>6</sup>Franklin, "Mirror for America," p. 6.

<sup>7</sup>Interpretations, eds. Grob and Billias, 1:404.

emphasized the enduring and unifying themes in history, concerned themselves with the question of Reconstruction beginning in the 1950s. Fine and Brown see these neo-revisionists as "greatly influenced by the civil rights movement of the time." Grob and Billias contend that the neo-revisionists' thesis was that the radicals failed in their objectives because: (1) most Americans harbored conscious and unconscious antipathies toward blacks and were not willing to accept them as equals, and (2) by 1870, the North was willing to return control of blacks to the South in return for economic considerations in the South, and the growing conviction that the rights and cause of blacks entailed too great a sacrifice and was not worthy of future conflict.<sup>8</sup>

Supporting the thesis that history in textbooks does indeed reflect the problems and concerns of the author's own time, John Hope Franklin questioned why the neo-revisionists, in the years since the close of World War II, have not to a greater degree influenced textbook authors with a re-evaluation of Reconstruction and the Negro. It was Franklin's contention in 1980 that:

Since World War II the nation has been caught up in a reassessment of the place of the Negro in American society, and some have even called this period the "Second Reconstruction." Central to this reassessment has been a continuing discussion of the rights of

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<sup>8</sup>Interpretations, eds. Grob and Billias, 1:409-10.

blacks to participate in the political process, enjoy equal protection of the laws and to be free of discrimination in education, employment, housing and the like. Yet among the recent writings on Reconstruction, few major works seek to synthesize and generalize over the whole range of the freedman's experience, to say nothing of Reconstruction as a whole.<sup>9</sup>

Franklin concluded that, "We may be reaching a point after a century of efforts where we can handle the problems inherent in writing about our internal struggle without losing ourselves in the fire and brimstone of the Civil War and its aftermath."<sup>10</sup>

However, the challenge and the aim put forth nearly forty years ago by historian Lawrence Reddick in The Journal of Negro History must not be forgotten or ignored. Said Reddick, "Two of the aims of history textbooks generally are comprehensiveness in the broad outline and objectivity of approach." Reddick contended that when discussing the period following the Civil War, history textbooks show their greatest divergence from this ideal. He believed that there the point of view of the author came closest to the surface, and the emotional weight of their expression was far more noticeable than elsewhere.<sup>11</sup>

This research examines Reddick's thesis to discover what has developed in the thirty-nine years since he published

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<sup>9</sup>Franklin, "Mirror for America," p. 11.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>11</sup>Lawrence Reddick, "Racial Attitudes in American History Textbooks," The Journal of Negro History 19 (1934):247.

his "Racial Attitudes in American History Textbooks" in The Journal of Negro History. Specifically, it seeks to ascertain whether, with the development of several distinct schools of historiography and thought on the issue of black Reconstruction, the emotional weight of expression (particularly in textbooks developed for classroom use) remains as noticeable as Reddick found it to be. An additional concern of this research is whether differing interpretations of the same factual information represents a useful technique for facilitating the development of critical thinking and discernment in college students.

## II

### The Earliest Textbooks: 1904-1914

The remaining sections of this chapter deal with the textbooks available to college students and their presentation of southern blacks during the era commonly referred to as Black Reconstruction. Historians during the period 1890-1930, led by Professor William Dunning at Columbia University, depicted Reconstruction as an era permeated by gloom and tragedy for the South. According to the Dunningites, this was because many of the South's most notable leaders were forced out of power. Of primary importance to this thesis was the assumption that responsibility for the former slave population should have been

returned to the former slave masters. These historians worked from the premise that blacks could never be integrated into American society because of their inferior characteristics and their years spent as slaves.<sup>12</sup>

The oldest text that could be located with relevance as far as publication date for this study was A History of the United States by Waddy Thompson with a 1904 publication date. Thompson was a southerner born in Columbia, South Carolina in 1867. In his preface, Thompson stated the following:

The purpose of this book is to present the history of the United States in such a way that the pupils who study it may become proud of an American heritage. With prejudice eliminated from the accounts of the old sectional controversies, the minds of the children [students] of a re-united country may be more readily directed toward the study of the marvelous progress of America.<sup>13</sup>

On the topic of Reconstruction, Thompson accepted the standard conservative view of the problems of the South and participation in government by the freedmen.

The South, hardly beginning to recover from the war, had another trial before it. Years of misrule followed the giving of the ballot to the negro. The public treasuries were robbed and the states were burdened with enormous debts. It was a dark hour for the South. It was as dark an hour for the

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<sup>12</sup>Interpretations, eds. Grob and Billias, pp. 401-02.

<sup>13</sup>Waddy Thompson, A History of America (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1904), preface.



South as the war had been itself. The white people saw ruin for themselves and the states were powerless.<sup>14</sup>

In 1911, A Short History of the American People by Edna Henry Lee Turpin of Virginia subscribed to what became the "Dunning view." The essence of this viewpoint was that the freedmen were totally incapable of being a participating part of the southern political and governmental process. "Most of the voters were ignorant, untrained Negroes."<sup>15</sup> Turpin expressed her belief that: "After the war of secession, the freedmen were given the suffrage for which they were unfit."<sup>16</sup>

Nathaniel Wright Stephenson, the author of the 1913 text An American History, is the first of the authors surveyed identifiable as a university professor. Stephenson was a professor of history in the College of Charleston, now the Citadel. Stephenson was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and educated at Harvard and Dartmouth. He voiced the views very acceptable to southerners lamenting that the South needed protection and redemption from the emancipated freedmen. The Ku Klux Klan was portrayed as the saving force for the good people (southern white Democrats) of the South from Negro debauchery.

In those states where the negroes formed a majority of the population, the white people returned to power

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 423.

<sup>15</sup>Edna Henry Lee Turpin, A Short History of the American People (New York: Macmillan Co., 1911), p. 384.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 338.

only after a long and arduous struggle. By the way of protection against the irresponsible despots, the southern whites formed secret societies. The most famous of these was known as the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>17</sup>

Roland Green Usher, author of the 1914 volume, The Rise of the American People, was the first of the authors surveyed to stress his training as a professional historian. In the preface he acknowledged his indebtedness to his former professor, Edward Channing, at Harvard. He also admitted the influence exerted upon him by the work of other professionally trained historians, among them Charles A. Beard and Frederick J. Turner. At the time of the writing of his text, he was teaching at Washington University in St. Louis. One could also surmise that Usher was interested in several diverse areas of history. It is noted that he was also the author of "Pan Germanism," The Reconstruction of the English Church, and The Rise and Fall of the High Commission. Usher's northern influenced evaluation of Reconstruction and the activities of blacks differed little from the assessments of other authors, even that of Stephenson. According to Usher:

The south was saved by the moderation and real devotion of southern whites, aided by northern democrats. The methods used were empirical and were discovered almost by accident. To deal with the arrogant negroes and protect the lives and the honor which the southern men were afraid to entrust solely to scattered federal

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<sup>17</sup>Nathaniel Wright Stephenson, An American History (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1913), p. 483.

troops, secret organizations were devised and had the greatest success between 1868 and 1872.<sup>18</sup>

Usher goes so far as to cast the Klan in the role of an extra-legal force for government in the South:

The superstitious terror of the negro for the Ku Klux Klan and the similar societies suggests their use to keep enough of them (blacks) from the polls to allow the whites to successfully choose the candidates.<sup>19</sup>

While these four oldest texts which could be located may well predate wide circulation of the Dunning interpretation, they certainly supported the Dunning thesis. None made any mention of the positive factors of government under radical or Black Reconstruction. Were they not privy to the same information as editorialists for The New York Times, visitors from foreign lands, (Sir George Campbell), or certain Mississippi state officials? (See page 37.)

One voice crying a different tune in the wilderness belonged to George Washington Williams, a black historian. He concluded, "The freed people were rapidly becoming self-sustaining, and the aid rendered by the government was used for a good purpose."<sup>20</sup> Concerning the efforts of blacks, both the newly enfranchised freedmen and those who were free before the conclusion of the war, in their efforts

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<sup>18</sup>Roland Green Usher, The Rise of the American People (New York: The Canterbury Co., 1914), p. 385.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 387.

<sup>20</sup>George Washington Williams, The History of the Negro Race in America 1619-1880 (New York: Arnold Press, reprint 1968, original publication 1881), p. 403.

to secure homes for their families and to invest monetarily in land, Williams surmised:

During the early years of reconstruction, quite a number of negroes began to invest in real estate and secure for themselves pleasant homes. Their possessions increased yearly, as can be seen by a reference to statistical reports. Some of the estates and homesteads of the oldest, most reputable white families, who had put everything into the scales of Confederate rebellion, fell into the possession of ex-slaves. Such a spectacle was not only unpleasant, it was exasperating to the whites.<sup>21</sup>

Williams, through investigation of bank statistics, census reports, and other public records, was able to come up with the following facts.

From 1866 to 1873, besides the money saved in other banking houses, they (blacks) deposited in the Freedman's Bank in the south \$53,000,000! From 1866 to 1875, there were seven negroes as lieutenant governors of southern states; two served in the United States Senate and thirteen in the House of Representatives. There have been five negroes appointed as foreign ministers. There have been ten negro members of northern legislatures; and in government departments in Washington there are 620 negroes employed. Starting without schools, this remarkable people has now 14,889 schools with an attendance of 720,853 pupils and this does not include the children of color who attended white schools in northern states; as far as it was possible to get the statistics, there are at present 169 colored students attending white colleges in northern states.<sup>22</sup>

The question that must be asked here is did the authors of these earliest textbooks surveyed care to concern themselves with such matters as mentioned above, or as the Reddick thesis suggests, did the emotional factor preclude

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 529.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 545.

a valid analysis of black participation in Reconstruction? However elementary in approach these historians were, they were still required to meet the two prerequisites for textbooks, i.e., (a) comprehensiveness in outline, and (b) objectivity of approach. Given what was stated in these works and what appears to have been available to the authors, it must be concluded that in relationship to Reconstruction, they failed to meet the second of these and only partially met the first.

### III

#### Textbooks: 1925-1939

Textbook publication was greatly limited during the period of World War I and immediately afterward until 1925. The Dunning thesis enjoyed its greatest exposure in textbooks which appeared between 1925-1939. During this period, for the first time books were produced specifically as college level textbooks and not simply non-fiction works directed to a popular audience but adaptable to college textbook use.

One of the topics treated by all the authors was the status of the Negroes just freed, i.e., the living conditions of the freedman, his lifestyle, and new-found role in politics. The Negro was no longer a slave, but a free man entitled to the same legal rights as others. Most of these authors lamented what freedom for the Negro meant for the white South and southerner.

William H. Mace, who was born in Lexington, Indiana and served as professor of history at Syracuse University, in his 1925 volume entitled American History, takes what was, for the period, quite a unique view.

The war upset ways of living in the South. It gave greater social and economic freedom to the non-slaveholder. The advantages of slaveholding had disappeared.

By both classes the negro was looked on as an inferior. The non-slaveholder had far less sympathy for him than his former master. The nearer the white man approached the negro in economic condition, the more he emphasized the difference in color.<sup>23</sup>

With his examination of social and economic freedom for different classes in the South, Mace opened a discussion that had not been broached in earlier texts surveyed. Mace then launched into what became a standard interpretation for those who wrote under the Dunning influence. The charge was that the North did not understand what the South was "truly about" at the end of the Civil War. The former slaveholder was the only friend of the Negro in the South. Mace continued:

The radicals caused trouble between white men and black (1) by taking the part of the negro in quarrels with whites, (2) by attempting to educate the black man, a function of the Freedman's Bureau. The church people of the North also sent large numbers of women into the South to conduct negro schools. The southern people had not yet reached the conclusion that an educated negro is better than an ignorant one, (3) by putting the negro on equality with the white man. It was not enough he had made the negro equal to the white

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<sup>23</sup>William H. Mace, American History (New York: Rand-McNally, 1925), p. 214.

man, but he felt in many cases that he must have the satisfaction of asserting that right, (4) by organizing the negro into secret bands called the Union League.<sup>24</sup>

The American Adventure by David Seville Muzzey, published in 1927, became widely adopted for college use. This information can be discovered by consulting the years that the book was reprinted. Those several generations of college students for whom Muzzey's American history became their American history were exposed to a picture of a humiliated South ruined by what was termed "negro domination." In his 1927 volume, Muzzey drew the following conclusion:

The South should have been spared the humiliating experience of negro domination, the carpetbagger, and the scalawag forced upon her at the point of the bayonet.<sup>25</sup>

By the publishing of his 1929 volume entitled History of the American People, Muzzey increased the fervor of his rhetoric concerning black rule. Muzzey in 1929 wrote:

In the entrusted states already amply punished by the dislocation of war, the rule of the negro and his unscrupulous carpetbagger and scalawag patrons was an orgy of extravagance, fraud, and disgusting incompetence.<sup>26</sup>

In 1929, Muzzey concluded that this orgy of fraud and incompetence comprised the "Crime of Reconstruction": "Why did the North put upon the South the unbearable

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>25</sup>David Seville Muzzey, The American Adventure (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1927), p. 9.

<sup>26</sup>David Seville Muzzey, History of the American People (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1929), p. 408.

burden of negro rule enforced with bayonets?"<sup>27</sup> On the same topic in 1927, Muzzey stated:

Undoubtedly there were grave offenses against law and order in those regions of the South in which the negro population was large.<sup>28</sup>

Not all historians concurred with Muzzey's Dunningite interpretation of Reconstruction. As early as 1930, Charles Beard, in his textbook entitled The Rise of American Civilization, appeared to take exception to the Dunning interpretation by offering a compellingly moderate view of the governments established during the Reconstruction. Beard stated:

Power was thrust into the hands of the emancipated male Negro and the handful of whites who alone could show a record of loyalty. Undoubtedly, many honorable people took part in restoring state government in the South, but enough scoundrels had a hand in it to discredit all the good that was done.<sup>29</sup>

Beard repeated this viewpoint in his 1935 and 1941 textbooks. On several points where other author/historians of that era had attempted no thoughtful analysis and simply stated the consensus of opinion, Beard ventured further. In another passage that appeared in all his volumes of The Rise of American Civilization series on the adaptation of the former African slave in America, Beard stated:

Whether handicapped or not for the immediate disabilities of life in America as frequently argued,

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 411.

<sup>28</sup> Muzzey, The American Adventure, p. 49.

<sup>29</sup> Charles A. Beard, The Rise of American Civilization (New York: Macmillan Co., 1930), p. 405.



they (the Africans) certainly had never been subjected to any such cultural discipline as the European peasants or artisans, and they seldom had been inspired through opportunity, and competition to raise themselves in the economic scale by industry and thrift. Whether bound or free, they were poorly equipped for delivering prosperity on the land.<sup>30</sup>

While the wording may have changed slightly, Beard maintained basically the same temperate (for the period) interpretation throughout his The Rise of American Civilization textbooks series between 1930 and 1941. However, few textbook authors during the period shared Beard's fairly moderate outlook on Black Reconstruction and the activities of the black reconstructionists.

John Holliday Latane, a Virginian and one time Dean of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, in his 1930 volume entitled The History of the American People, saw the only result of Black Reconstruction as the increase in public debts. Latane blamed the debt increase on the participation of blacks in public government and failed to mention that this was an era of increased expense for government throughout the nation and the world. Latane, in his The History of the American People, offered a good example of this viewpoint whose proponents sought to trivialize the accomplishments of blacks in Reconstruction while maximizing their alleged excesses:

The reconstruction convention and legislatures contained numbers of Negroes and the extravagance of government

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 259.

knew no bounds. The public debts of several states increased at alarming rates without any corresponding benefit to the people. Vast sums were spent for the purchase of mahogany desks, costly carpets and other furnishings for the legislative halls and the offices of public officials. In the capitol of Columbia, South Carolina the Legislature maintained a free restaurant where its black and tan members could satisfy their desire for meat and drink at any hour, free of charge.<sup>31</sup>

While the point of extravagance made by Latane and others are based in fact, these are shallow charges that could be made of any legislative body, past or present. As Kenneth Stamp and John Hope Franklin point out, during the Civil War years few southern legislatures had the money or inclination to attempt to refurbish or re-carpet their legislative halls. During the Black Reconstruction years, it was simply the time to refurbish. Most of the outlays and acquisitions were made on the advice of committees that were neither black or tan, and purchased from companies definitely not owned by blacks.

In an era that highlighted racial differences (and was constantly pointing out the inferiority of particular races) John Spencer Bassett, who was born in North Carolina and taught at Smith College, author of the 1932 textbook A Short History of the United States, mirrored that concern on racial inferiority. One of Bassett's major points concerning the American Negro was

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<sup>31</sup>John Holliday Latane, The History of the American People (New York: Allyn and Bacon, 1930), p. 505.

that his African ancestry was stronger in determining his outlook than the two hundred years he had spent in America as both slave and freedman. Bassett stated:

In 1865 the average Negro in the South valued freedom because it gave him the simplest privileges of freedmen. He did not desire to vote and did not understand the hopes of the many mercenaries and teachers of the North whose heroism tried to elevate him. At first he was submissive to the whites with that docile self-effacement which has generally characterized the African race.<sup>32</sup>

Concerning the activities of the state legislatures in which blacks were now participants, Bassett offered the following assessment.

Most of the Negro politicians were mulattoes, but sometimes they were of unmixed African stock. The best of them had little education, but a fair amount of common sense and integrity. While in the majority they comprehended little of the duties of their office, they took their election as an opportunity to secure small personal glory and emulation. They quickly fell into the hands of abler white schemers, and in legislatures and elsewhere, facilitated the excesses of bad government without realizing that they brought dishonor to their party and their communities.<sup>33</sup>

In 1935, William E. B. Du Bois published his now famous Black Reconstruction in which he presented an alternative view to the Dunning thesis. It is with a degree of irony that in that same year, 1935, Syracuse University Professor Ralph Harlow, in his college level text, The Growth of the United States, offered to the college students who studied his volume a negative image and a loathing for the Negro emancipated as a result of the Civil War. It

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<sup>32</sup>John Spencer Bassett, A Short History of the United States (New York: Macmillan Press, 1932), p. 620.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 622.

is safe to estimate that in the twenty years following the publication of Du Bois' and Harlow's books that Harlow's work enjoyed far wider circulation and had greater influence on public opinion. Quoting from Harlow:

The largest group was the blacks, who furnished the votes, held some minor offices, and squandered some of the money. Of southern whites, practically all the men of ability and experience were disenfranchised, while the blacks, a terrible mass of domesticated barbarism, were called upon to vote.<sup>34</sup>

Concerning the governments that were elected during Black Reconstruction and their operation, Harlow offered the following assessment:

In practically all the states the men chosen were discouragingly unfit, where they were honest, they were ignorant, while of those who knew anything about the principles of government, far too many would have graced a penitentiary much better than a constitutional convention. Black legislators just out of slavery reveled in extravagance at the expense of disenfranchised property owners of the state.<sup>35</sup>

To the student it may be a peculiar point that most of the authors say first that the state legislatures were composed of Negroes, who were formerly themselves propertyless, scalawags, who came from the poor white class, and carept-baggers, and then make the point that the legislators were not heavy taxpayers. How could it be otherwise since it had previously been established that black and white legislators alike owned very little property of value. An

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<sup>34</sup>Ralph Harlow, The Growth of the United States (New York: H. Holt & Co., 1935), p. 48.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 542.

excellent example of this fact was the following observation by Lawrence Reddick. As Reddick recalled in his article in The Journal of Negro History entitled "Racial Attitudes in American History Textbooks":

The experience of South Carolina may be taken as an illustration of the working of the system. One of the ninety-eight Negro members (of the state legislature) paid \$83.00 in taxes. Thirty together paid \$60.00, and sixty-seven paid none. Of the fifty-seven white members, twenty-four paid no taxes . . . yet the poverty stricken legislators in one year levied \$2,000,000 in taxes on the taxpayers of the state, most of whom were white.<sup>36</sup>

Just as these facts were evident to Reddick writing in 1934, they were available to any interested author writing during the period committed to writing an objective history of the United States.

This survey has found few instances where textbooks authored between 1925-1939 met the criteria of objectivity of approach in areas concerning Black Reconstruction and the activities of the Negro. One must question the effect on the student in the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s. Were students during these years taught to ever question a history book? In George M. Stephenson's 1939 American history textbook entitled American History Since 1865, he offered the following observations and conclusions:

In retrospect, the years from 1868-76 seemed like a nightmare to the people of the South (white people), and remained so as late as the opening years of

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<sup>36</sup>Reddick, "Racial Attitudes in American History Textbooks," p. 253.

the 20th Century. [At this point Stephenson quoted from a speech made by South Carolina Senator Benjamin R. Tillman:] Benjamin R. Tillman confessed bitterness surged up when he thought of the reconstruction period. "It brings up such a volume of animosity and recollection of the degradation to which my people (the white democrats of South Carolina) were subjected from 1868-76 under the horde of carpet-baggers and thieves and scoundrels and ignorant Negroes that I hardly know how to contain myself."<sup>37</sup>

Historians have constantly disagreed not only about what significance to attach to certain events and how to interpret them, but also about the actual events themselves. Some events are obscure and some facts apparently are as unverifiable as if they dated from several milleniums ago, as John Hope Franklin pointed out in his article "Mirror for America." It is Franklin's contention that a "final factor has been the willingness of historians to pay attention only to those phases or aspects that give weight to their arguments and presentations."<sup>38</sup>

It is obvious that these authors felt that the decent white people in the South united out of sheer desperation to force the carpetbaggers, scalawags, and blacks from power. For nearly three decades after the turn of the century, the Dunning point of view was dominant among American historians. In the late 1930s, however, historians began to look at events between 1865-77 from a new and different perspective.

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<sup>37</sup>George M. Sphehenson, American History Since 1865 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1939), p. 24.

<sup>38</sup>Franklin, "Mirror for America," p. 7.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF RECONSTRUCTION AND REVIEW OF SURVEY TEXTBOOKS THROUGH 1983

#### Textbooks: 1940-1954

The first revisions of Dunning's thesis made their appearance in the late 1920's. Influenced by the progressive school of historiography which emphasized conflict in historical development, these progressive revisionist historians were not willing to accept the Dunning view that responsibility for the freedman should have been entrusted to native white southerners. They attempted also to refute many of the familiar assertions of the Dunning school historians. First, they rejected the premise that the radical governments in the South were uniformly dishonest, incompetent, and ineffective. They pointed out that these governments operated through their state constitutions and laws that stated that all men, black and white, were created equal and entitled to equal political protection and liberties. Second, they rejected the idea of widespread illiteracy among black elected officials. These revisionists maintained that black lawmakers were quite capable of understanding

how to obtain their own interests without disregarding the legitimate interests of others. Third, these revisionists rejected the charges that the governments in which blacks participated were corrupt and expensive, or that they saddled the South with large public debts. The revisionists pointed out that, for the first time, local services and public facilities were extended to the South's black citizens by their governments. Fourth, one critical point on which the revisionists agreed with the Dunningites was race. Several scholars were significant to the revisionist point of view.

Francis B. Simpkins, in his 1939 address to the Southern Historical Association entitled "New Viewpoints of Southern Reconstruction," concurred with the Dunningites that the issue of race was central to any evaluation of southern reconstruction. However, Simpkins disagreed that attempts to give the same social, political, and civil rights was impossible because of racial differences. Simpkins charged that Reconstruction failed primarily because of the unwillingness of southern whites to accept blacks on equal terms.<sup>1</sup>

Vernon L. Wharton, in his doctoral dissertation entitled "The Negro in Mississippi 1865-1900," also clearly rejected the Dunning thesis. Wharton concluded that

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<sup>1</sup>Francis B. Simpkins, "New Viewpoints of Southern Reconstruction," Journal of Southern History 5 (February 1939), pp. 50-8.



Reconstruction was a period in Mississippi dominated by the moral question of what role blacks were going to occupy in the state. He stated that during the brief period of time when blacks were in control that their use of civil and political rights differed little from the way whites had used them as far as excessive use.<sup>2</sup>

C. Vann Woodward, in Reunion and Reaction: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction, stipulated that Reconstruction was not a sectional issue as the Dunningites had insisted. It was Woodward's contention that Reconstruction was a national issue. The South was willing to accept control and subservice to the North in return for a free hand to deal with the blacks.<sup>3</sup>

## II

### Facts Past and Present and the Most Recent Interpretation of Black Reconstruction

This section will point out some facts and interpretations that have been available for the consideration of American history textbook authors on the topic of Black Reconstruction since 1900. The intention here is to examine divergent interpretations of the relevant facts revealed

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<sup>2</sup>Vernon L. Wharton, "The Negro in Mississippi 1865-1890" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1947), pp. 182-88.

<sup>3</sup>This was the summarizing point made by C. Vann Woodward in his Reaction and Reunion: The Compromise of 1877 and the End of Reconstruction, (Boston, 1951).

over the last eighty-two years which appear in different textbooks. Also, a number of the most recent available textbooks will be referred to in an attempt to come to a consensus on the present viewpoint on Black Reconstruction, and to discover if Professor Reddick's thesis that authors' interpretations were based on feeling rather than fact. An attempt will be made to discover if the Reddick thesis is more widely accepted now in textbook presentation than in earlier periods.

Few periods of American history have lent themselves so readily to a stereotypical portrayal as the Reconstruction era. As recently as thirty years ago, nearly all American history texts still presented the point of view that Reconstruction (and especially the brief period of time mistakenly called "Black Reconstruction") was the most disgraceful episode in American social and political history. However, as Kenneth Stampp stated in his work, The Era of Reconstruction:

Negroes, most of them illiterate, many easily intimidated because of inexperience and economic helplessness, were sometimes misled and victimized, not only by white Republicans but also by southern Democrats.<sup>4</sup>

Historian Rayford Logan followed the same train of thought as Stampp in his 1970 edition of the history

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<sup>4</sup>Kenneth Milton Stampp, The Era of Reconstruction (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 165.

of black Americans entitled The Negro in the United States, asserting that:

In 1867 more than 90% of the South's Negroes were actually illiterate, propertyless, and paid few taxes. Many Negroes were intelligent enough, however, to believe that men of their own race and the white men who had emancipated them would be more likely to endeavor to promote their interests than would be former slaveholders and their sympathizers.<sup>5</sup>

While often condemned as a period of political mismanagement and corruption, there were positive factors to Reconstruction. As Emma Lou Thornbrough points out, most accounts by contemporary whites are extremely biased, condemning black politicians who had a hand in the period. Thornbrough stated in her book Black Reconstruction that "White writers in general tended to treat black politicians as a stereotyped group, rather than as individuals with individual and distinct backgrounds and personalities."<sup>6</sup> If Thornbrough came to this conclusion about contemporary authors, what could be said of authors writing at a later period? In all fairness to those attempting to write the history of Black Reconstruction, few personal papers of any of the blacks elected during the period survived. Only Black Reconstructionist John R. Lynch of Mississippi published his memoirs. However, there were other accounts,

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<sup>5</sup>Rayford Whittingham Logan, The Negro in the United States (New York: Van Nostrand-Rinhold, 1970), p. 16.

<sup>6</sup>Emma Lou Thornbrough, Black Reconstruction (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1972), p. 8.

of both a positive and negative nature, available as early as the 1870s to aid historians formulating their viewpoints on Reconstruction. J. W. Garner, a white Mississippi legislator and state official, writing on the period known as Black Reconstruction in the state of Mississippi in the 1880s, asserted:

When the party (Republicans supported by blacks) assumed control in January, 1871, the state had an empty treasury and a debt of \$1,178,175.33. When the Democrats returned to power in January, 1876, they found \$524,388.68 in the treasury and a debt of \$3,341,162.89. With the deduction in each case of permanent funds which the state owed itself and the consideration of the treasury balance, the payable debt in 1876, as in 1871, was approximately one half million dollars. . . . Furthermore, the Republican state regime left a record of honesty. So far as the conduct of state officials who were entrusted with the custody of public funds is concerned, it may be said that there were no great embezzlements or other cases of misappropriation during the period of Republican rule.<sup>7</sup>

Historian Vernon L. Wharton pointed out facts that were undoubtedly available to historians as well as textbook authors if they were inclined to include such facts in their presentations. Said Wharton:

Altogether as governments go, those supplied by Negroes and white Republicans in Mississippi between 1870 and 1876 were not bad governments at all. Never in state, county or town did the Negroes hold office in proportion to their numbers although their demands in this direction were understandably increasing. The Negroes who held county offices were often ignorant but under the control of white Democrats or Republicans. They (the freedmen) supplied a form of government which differed little from that in counties where they held no office. The three (blacks) who represented the state in the

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<sup>7</sup>Wharton, "The Negro in Mississippi 1865-1890," pp. 178-81.

National Conference were above reproach. Those in the legislature sought no special advantages for their race and in one of their first acts they petitioned Congress to remove all political disabilities from the whites. With their white Republican colleagues, they gave to the state a government of greatly expanded functions at a cost that was low in comparison with that of almost any other state. The legislature of 1875 reduced the cost to some extent and opened the way to further reductions by the passage of constitutional amendments.<sup>8</sup>

It should be noted that Wharton's comments were limited to Mississippi. But if a researcher is interested, similar reports of a positive nature can be found concerning all reconstructed southern states. Given the evidence available, Kenneth Stampp came to the same conclusion in his work, The Era of Reconstruction.

The Negroes were seldom vindictive in their use of political power, or in their attitudes about native whites. To be sure, there were cases of friction between Negroes and whites. Negro militiamen were sometimes inordinately aggressive. But in no southern state did any responsible Negro leader or any substantial Negro group attempt to get complete political control into the hands of the freedmen. All they asked for was equal protection before the law.<sup>9</sup>

These facts, interpretations, and considerations could have been drawn as easily in 1880 as in 1970 because of their availability. Emma Lou Thornbrough pointed out numerous other positive aspects of the efforts of blacks during the era of Reconstruction. Among the most notable was the extension of voting rights and public education.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 178-81.

<sup>9</sup>Stampp, The Era of Reconstruction, p. 168.

<sup>10</sup>Thornbrough, Black Reconstruction, p. 100.

The New York Times, in editorials written in 1868 and 1874, spoke not of the corruption and scurrilous debauchery of the enfranchised freedmen, but of their responsibility and excellent conduct.

The question that must be considered is why those who wrote textbooks seldom if ever provided any picture but a negative one of the Black Reconstruction period, the black reconstructionists and the newly enfranchised freedmen. Were positive facts extremely difficult to discover? If that excuse is offered, one must consider the accounts of Sir George Campbell, an Englishman who visited the South soon after the collapse of the last Republican state regime. Campbell came to the following conclusion:

During the last dozen years the Negro has had a very large share of political education considering the troubles and the ups and downs that they have gone through. It is, I think, wonderful how beneficial their education has been to them and how much their people, so lately in the debased condition of slavery, have acquired independent ideas and, far from lapsing into anarchy, have become citizens with ideas of law, property, and order. The white serfs of European countries took hundreds of years to rise to the level which the Negroes have attained in a dozen years. When I went through South Carolina, I thought that there at least I might find great social disturbance. I went to the county of Beauford, the blackest part of the state in point of population, and that in which black rule has been most complete and has lasted longest. It has the reputation of being a sort of black paradise and, per contra, I rather expected a sort of white hell. There I thought I should see a rough Liberia where blacks ruled roughshod over the whites. To my surprise, I found exactly the contrary. At no place that I have seen are the relations of the two

racess better and more peaceful. Here the blacks still control the elections and send their representatives to the State Assembly; but though they elect to the county and municipal offices, they by no means elect blacks only.<sup>11</sup>

Louis Hacker, who was born in 1899 in New York and taught for twenty years at Columbia University, was considered an authority on economic history. Hacker, writing in 1941, squarely placed his interpretation of Black Reconstruction in the revisionist school. In a text entitled The United States Since 1865, he offered the following evaluation of radical Reconstruction:

The constitutions provided for universal manhood suffrage (with the exception placed on certain classes of ex-Confederates), granted equal civil rights to Negroes, provided for a system of public education, reorganized the judiciary on a popular basis, and instituted democratic principles in the machinery of local government. In the abstract all these innovations were highly commendable, but whatever southern whites may have thought of these changes in themselves, they opposed the constitutions because these documents were designed to insure for the future a large and perhaps controlling participation of the Negroes in the functions of the government. Before this fear, all other questions were subordinate and the Negro became the focus of a growing contempt and hatred.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1946 revision of The United States Since 1865, Hacker not only placed stronger emphasis on his economic interpretation of Reconstruction, but he sought to limit black responsibility for the corruption of Reconstruction. It could also be inferred from Hacker's statements that

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 117-18.

<sup>12</sup>Louis M. Hacker, The United States Since 1865 (New York: S. F. Croft & Co., 1941), p. 26.

black involvement in Reconstruction had less importance than other historians accorded it. Hacker stated in 1946:

To a very real degree, the blacks were the innocent victims of an economic program fathered by the Radical Republicans of the north and carried out in its political details by its tools and agents, the carpetbaggers of the south.<sup>13</sup>

Like Hacker, John D. Hicks, who was Professor of History at the University of Washington, and later, the University of Southern California, in both the 1943 and 1946 volumes of his American history textbooks, saw blacks as far less culpable of overt corruption and fraud as far as the excesses of the Reconstruction era. Hicks portrayed the Negroes, and most of the southern whites, as simply illiterate dupes and pawns. In A Short History of American Democracy (1943), he wrote of Black Reconstruction:

Most of the Negroes and many of the whites chosen to office including even judicial positions, were utterly illiterate. Of all those who participated in the work of radical reconstruction, the Negroes were the least to blame for its excesses. Only a few of them understood what was being done, and only a few of those who did were shrewd enough to line their pockets with plunder. For the most part they were helpless victims of the conscienceless rogues who controlled them.<sup>14</sup>

Hicks, in his expanded 1946 textbook, The American Nation (A History of the United States from 1865 to Present), opened with the same basic interpretation of

<sup>13</sup>Louis M. Hacker, History of the United States Since 1865 (New York: S. F. Corft & Co., 1946), p. 26.

<sup>14</sup>John D. Hicks, A Short History of American Democracy (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1943), p. 431.



Black Reconstruction that he offered in his 1943, A Short History of American Democracy, that being the "unfitness of the Negro due to the fact that many who held office were illiterate." However, he also offered further analysis of the state of the government in the South and the reputation of Black Reconstruction.

The inevitable results of entrusting the power of government to such persons was an orgy of corruption. The rule of the carpetbaggers raised tax rates to figures never known before, and piled up debts which most of the southern states felt obliged later on to repudiate, but it must not be forgotten that such political disparity was no monopoly of the south.<sup>15</sup>

At this point, Hicks offered a comparative analysis of government in the North during the same period. Such a comparison had apparently never been placed in any of the earlier texts written under the Dunning influence. After the Hicks offering in 1946, however, this type of analysis was provided by several other authors writing under the progressive influence. Hicks wrote in 1946:

In New York, for example, during this same period, the Tweed Ring reduced graft to a science that the carpet-baggers might well have envied, while the word racketeering, with all of its relevant connotations was the product of a much later age, it might have well been applied to this point in history.<sup>16</sup>

Historians Frank Owsley, whose teaching career was divided between the University of Alabama and Vanderbilt, and Oliver Chitwood, a Virginian who taught for forty years

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<sup>15</sup> John D. Hicks, The American Nation from 1865 to the Present (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1946), p. 38.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

at the University of West Virginia, were the next historians writing what would become a major textbook during the era of the late 1940s and early 1950s to voice what, by that time, had become the classic revisionist interpretation of the Black Reconstruction period. Like John D. Hicks, Lewis Hacker, and many other less well known authors, Chitwood and Owsley stressed that the Negro could more justly be accused of inexperience in government management, of ignorance, and unawareness of their moral responsibility than of criminal responsibility for the crimes of Reconstruction. The following evaluation is offered in Chitwood and Owsley's 1948 A Short History of the American People:

In all the Negro, unlettered, untaught by experience and tradition (and unaware of moral responsibility attached to the political franchise and power) was being used to his great detriment by fraudulent obstructionists like Charles Sumner and political opportunists like Benjamin F. Butler. Fraudulently, the negro would be made to pay for misdeeds for which he was only in the smallest degree responsible.<sup>17</sup>

One of the striking features of the revisionist interpretation as offered in the survey textbooks was a total disregard for any black ability. While one did not find the striking condemnation of "African debauchery" that was so glaringly the cornerstone of the Dunning interpretation of Black Reconstruction, all the revisionists,

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<sup>17</sup> Oliver Chitwood and Frank Owsley, A Short History of the American People (New York: Macmillan & Co., 1948), p. 168.

to a greater or lesser degree, took a paternalistic view of the Negro and his ability. While the black man was not offered as an object of ridicule or condemnation, as in earlier textbooks, the student studying from a revisionist textbook was left with a picture of the Negro as an object of pity. Another shortcoming of the revisionist interpretation of Reconstruction was the failure to mention that there were some very capable blacks elected during this period. If black historians George Washington Williams and W. E. B. Du Bois had earlier discovered the activities and abilities of a Hiram Revels, Blanche Bruce or J. H. Leach, just to mention a few, one must question why trained researchers (who made up the majority of the revisionist historians) failed to note the activities of these black reconstructionists.

The thesis that textbooks do in fact reflect the era during which they were written is supported by an examination of the revisionist literature. The same paternalism was accepted as the prevailing view toward blacks in the 1940s and early 1950s. A segregated military with blacks, in most cases commanded by whites, and religious and social organizations providing for the Negro rather than participating with blacks in their development, mirrored the society revealed in the revisionist interpretation of history. Revisionist theorists concluded that while the black man may have been elevated

from the "savage" depicted in the "Birth of a Nation" stereotypical image, he still needed "help" and "protection" in life. Evidently, it was their contention that many things he was incapable of understanding. It was with a degree of irony that in the same era America witnessed the coming of prominence of black entertainers Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, stepin-fetchit, and Willie Best, such great artists as James Weldon Johnson, Aaron Douglas, Arna Bontemps, and Paul Robeson failed to achieve wide popular acclaim. As far as the image of the black man in the 1940s and early 1950s was concerned, it was not the poetry of Bontemps or the prose of Johnson that provided the image of blacks for America. It was the syncopated dance and happy childlike attitude offered by "Bojangles" that was reflected in motion pictures, most notably through interaction with child star Shirley Temple. It was not the art of Aaron Douglas with the style he developed during the Harlem Renaissance and honed to a point of quintessential splendor by the 1940s, or the rich and mellow voice of Paul Robeson that is recalled as the image of blacks in the 1940s. Instead, it is the childish behavior and pitifully slurred speech patterns of Stepin-fetchit and later, Willie Best that provided the image to the popular culture of a childlike black. At the time of this writing (1983), there has been a revitalization of interest in movies featuring

Stepin-fetchit. "Bojangles" maintains popular appeal through a contemporary song and now a chain of restaurants, and the movie "Uncle Remus" is re-named "Song of the South" and hailed as an American classic.

One of the most thorough textbook presentations concerning the era designated as Black Reconstruction was offered by Samuel Eliot Morison, a Bostonian who taught at Harvard, in his 1950 edition of The Growth of the American Republic. Morison was not as firmly couched in the revisionist interpretation, and devoted greater interpretive analysis and coverage to the difficult topic of Reconstruction than any textbook surveyed so far in this study. In his opening statement, Morison argued that the blacks:

Were catapulted into politics without preparation and experience, and this at a time that would have tried the statesmanship of the wisest and most experienced political leaders, they were abandoned by the best men of the south and deceived by the worst, their innocence exposed them to temptation and their ignorance betrayed them into the hands of astute and mischievous spoilmen who exploited them for selfish and sordid ends.<sup>18</sup>

Concerning the activity and performance of blacks during the era, Morison provided the following evaluation:

The term "black reconstruction" does not imply that the negroes dominated the reconstruction process; it implies merely that this period of reconstruction was distinguishable by the activities and successful participation of negroes in politics for the only time in the history of the south.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Samuel Eliot Morison, The Growth of the American Republic (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 46.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

Morison concluded with a thorough summation as many of the earlier progressive historians had. However, it is apparent that Morison was posing new questions and setting the stage for yet a new evaluation of the problems of Reconstruction in light of a changing era. He stated:

Corruption, extravagance and mal-administration were not confined to the south. It was during these unhappy years that the Tweed Ring robbed New York City of over 75 million dollars, the Gas Ring in Philadelphia increased the city's debt at a rate of three million dollars a year, and in national politics, it was the era of the Credit Mobiliere, the Whiskey Ring, and the Navy Department frauds. The corruption of the negro governments in the south was directed largely by unscrupulous northerners who harvested the profits and in the end the negroes had nothing better to show for their day of power than the plunder that their more fortunate fellows managed to carry off from the state capitols.

More important indeed was the constructive side of black reconstruction. Much of this had to do with mere physical rehabilitation necessitated by the ravages of the Civil War, but in almost every one of the southern states a good deal of progressive legislation was written into the statute books. In South Carolina, for example, the radical legislators reformed the system of taxation and provided relief for the poor and distressed.<sup>20</sup>

The progressive historical point of view generally dominated the field of American historical scholarship down to the close of World War II, and influenced textbook authors to the mid-1950s. Economic, class, and sectional conflicts, the progressive historian implied, were the assets of progress. Even during those eras in American history when the forces of reaction triumphed, as during

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

the Reconstruction period, the view of progressive historians was that this victory was only temporary. "Ultimately the forces of good and progress regrouped and thereby gained the initiative. Such an approach, of course, led to a broad and sweeping interpretive synthesis of American history, for the basic framework was clear and simple and the faith of the historian in ultimate triumph of good over evil remained unquestioned."<sup>21</sup>

This interpretation made its appearance and had its influence on the college level textbooks of that era. The college level student who studied from textbooks written during that period was offered many of the same facts as the students who used the books produced during the Dunning influence era. However, a vastly differing interpretation of those facts was proposed which allowed them to fit into the progressive interpretation. For the classroom teacher, another question arises. When interpretations shift or change, what steps must be taken to aid the undergraduate to understand how the same basic facts may be offered in differing interpretations to support alternate viewpoints? The revision of the Dunning viewpoint by the progressive represented the first major shift in interpretation of the Reconstruction era in the South. A second major revision occurred in the early 1950s.

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<sup>21</sup>Interpretations, eds. Grob and Billias, p. 11.

Textbooks: 1954-1983

Studying the works on Reconstruction that have been written over the last century can provide a clear notion of the problems specific to the periods in which the historians lived, but not always as clear a picture of Reconstruction itself. John Hope Franklin warns, "It is important to make certain that the zeal for revision does not become a substitute for truth and accuracy and does not result in the production of works that are closer to political tracts than histories."<sup>22</sup> It is Franklin's contention that the decision of some historians, especially of the later decades, has been to use the Reconstruction era to bolster their case in their own political or personal arenas. This is the reason we do not have a better general account of what really happened during Reconstruction.

The histories that began to appear during the 1950s, in many instances, support Franklin's contention. This era was dominated by those historians who wrote under the influence of the consensus school of historiography. While these neo-revisionists accepted many of the findings of the revisionists, they rejected the idea of interpreting Reconstruction in strictly economic terms. Of additional importance to this research is the fact that the neo-revisionists stressed the critical factor of race as a moral

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<sup>22</sup>Franklin, "Mirror for America," p. 12.



issue and the unresolved dilemma of the role of blacks after the Civil War in the South, both politically and socially.<sup>23</sup>

This section will consider classroom textbooks between 1950 and 1983. In the later part of the period 1965-1980, there appeared several works by historians associated with the New Left. Additionally, this period witnessed the greatest proliferation of college level United States history textbooks of any period under consideration in this research so far. For that reason, only selected textbooks which enjoyed great popularity and respect among scholars will be considered.

Leland D. Baldwin, a novelist and editor born in Pennsylvania and a teacher at the the University of Pittsburgh, in his 1955 Survey of American History, offered an excellent early example of the neo-revisionist interpretation of American history. It is John Hope Franklin's contention that the neo-revisionist interpretation was quite slow to make its appearance in history texts, though it appeared early in many monographs. Baldwin's 1955 presentation on the topic of Black Reconstruction provided one of the first discussions of what appeared as the neo-revisionist view in history textbooks. Baldwin stated:

Neither carpetbaggers nor scalawags were anxious to have negroes comprise a majority of the

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<sup>23</sup>Interpretations, eds. Grob and Billias, p. 408.

legislature. In every case white Republicans were definitely in control. Carpetbagger rule was corrupt, but if was negro votes that made some astonishing steals possible. It should be remembered that it was white men who got the bulk of the graft and that was the generation of grafters even in states where no negro ever entered office.<sup>24</sup>

Baldwin followed his presentation of Black Reconstruction in the South with a comparison of governmental conditions throughout the nation during the 1870s, contending that freedom for the Negro had little to do with corruption overall.

The letdown in moral standards which now swept the nation may or may not have been the result of the war, but it penetrated to every city. The Tweed Ring, headed by Tammany's William Marcy Tweed, which milched New York City of untold millions of dollars, was only the most dramatic of many steals. Corruption made its way into the excise service (the Whiskey Ring), the Indian Bureau, and into the construction of public works in Washington, D. C.<sup>25</sup>

Henry Steele Commager of Harvard and Samuel Eliot Morison, in 1962, released another volume of Morison's textbook, The Growth of the American Republic, which, by that date, had established itself as a standard among college level United States history textbooks. In comparison to the 1950 text (previously surveyed in this research), the 1962 edition of The Growth of the American Republic by Commager and Morison contained a much briefer presentation on the material relevant to Black Reconstruction. One

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<sup>24</sup>Leland D. Baldwin, Survey of American History (New York: American Book Company, 1955), p. 336.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 356.

obvious change was the difference in chapter headings. In 1950, Morison headed his chapter "Black Reconstruction." The 1962 textbook chapter on the same topic was headed "Radical Reconstruction" and opened with the following discussion: "This period is sometimes called 'Black Reconstruction,' but the term is misleading for it implies that the reconstruction was headed by negroes."<sup>26</sup> This is identical to Morison's 1950 statement under the caption "Black Reconstruction." Another difference was the addition of the following sentence at the end of the chapter: "Radical control of the southern states was exercised by an uneasy coalition of three groups--negroes, carpetbaggers, and scalawags."<sup>27</sup> The 1962 edition, though far briefer, did include a comparison of conditions in the North to the South. It also provided a biography of Frederick Douglass. While the Commager and Morison interpretation of 1962 differed little from the 1950 offering by Morison, its objectivity in approach placed it modestly in the neo-revisionists camp. The Commager and Morison text was a major offering to the college student in the years after World War II, and has appeared in several volumes. The Growth of the American Republic illustrated the point

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<sup>26</sup> Henry Steele Commager and Samuel Eliot Morison, The Growth of the American Republic (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 41.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

that every textbook produced during an era does not necessarily reflect the dominant school of historiography.

Couched much more firmly in the neo-revisionist tradition was the broad and thorough presentation of the Reconstruction era in the 1965 edition of Samuel Eliot Morison's The Oxford History of the American People. Stressing the fact of race as a moral issue, Morison opened with a thought-provoking discussion on the topic of Reconstruction and the effect of stereotyping when applied to groups of individuals. Morison deals with stereotyping of blacks during the Reconstruction era: He asserted:

The reconstruction stereotype, already generally accepted in the 1890s, was promoted by David W. Griffith's film "Birth of a Nation" (1915) and reinforced by Margaret Mitchell's novel Gone With the Wind in 1936. It has now taken so strong a hold on the American mind, north as well as south, that it seems hopeless for mere historians to try to deflate it.

The accepted fable represents reconstruction as a ruthless attempt by northern politicians to subjugate the white south, starving and helpless, to an abominable rule by ex-slaves which, as the Bible says, is a thing the earth cannot bear, and from which it was rescued by white hooded knights on horseback who would put the negro "back where he belonged." There is some truth in this, but it is far from being the whole truth and only recently have southern, as well as northern historians endeavored to bring out facts on the other side. Yet, even after it is known, reconstruction was a deplorable and even tragic episode in our history. One basic fact ignored by the Griffith-Mitchell stereotype is this: The white people of the Confederacy were masters in their own states for a period of one to three years when no compulsion was put on them to re-enfranchise the negro. During that period, when no negro was allowed to vote and nothing was done to prepare him for responsible citizenship, on the contrary, the

whites did everything conceivable to humiliate him and keep him down. In the south there were half a million free negroes--mechanics, truck farmers, barbers, small businessmen and the like; the literate third generation of free colored in New Orleans owned property worth forty-five million dollars. This could have been used as the nucleus to educate the ex-slaves, but the south would have none of that, or of them. And no counsel was taken of Maryland and Kentucky whose free slave population quietly took its place in society without violence or oppression.<sup>28</sup>

Morison then continued with first, a general biography of different types of black reconstructionists, and a summation with an evaluation of the black voter of the period. Morison observed in 1965:

Although some illiterate negroes were elected to state legislatures and conventions, many of the colored leaders were men of education who showed ability equal to the ordinary run-of-the-mill state legislator [he then includes biographies of Jonathan J. Wright, state senator and associate justice of the Supreme Court of South Carolina, Robert B. Elliot of South Carolina, Hiram Revels of Mississippi]. They were as a rule studious, earnest, ambitious men whose public conduct would be honorable to any race. Negroes did not attempt to domineer over or pass vindictive legislation against their former masters. In Mississippi the colored members of the legislature petitioned Congress to restore the political abilities of former Confederates. He (the negro) made no attempt to repeal laws against mixed marriages, or to force his way into white society. On the contrary, he founded hundreds of African Methodist, Baptist, and other Protestant churches.<sup>29</sup>

The Morison textbook was the first of the major college level history textbooks surveyed in this research to reflect not only neo-revisionism, but also the 1954 Brown

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<sup>28</sup>Samuel Eliot Morison, The Oxford History of the American People (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 709.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 718.

Decision and that era's interest in a remedy for racial prejudice. Kenneth Stamp, as co-author of the 1964 report to the State of California Board of Education entitled The Negro in American History Textbooks, found:

The bulk of available textbooks present a biased and inaccurate account of minority participation in the history of America.<sup>30</sup>

This view was supported by Robert Boone in his article, "The Teaching of Negro History," in Integrated Education in 1968,<sup>31</sup> and William Katz in his article, "Minorities in American History Textbooks," presented in Equal Opportunity Review in 1973.<sup>32</sup> The era between 1960 and 1970 also witnessed the largest increase in enrollment of black college students in United States history. History textbooks had to be more adaptable for use with a larger black college population.

In 1966, John A Garraty of Columbia University presented his survey level textbook entitled The American Nation, which was adopted for use in several large black colleges (among them Tennessee State University and

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<sup>30</sup>Kenneth Stamp et al, The Negro In American History Textbooks, Report to the California State Board of Education, (Berkeley: University of California, 1964), pp. 197-202.

<sup>31</sup>Robert Boone, "The Teaching of Negro History: An Interdisciplinary Approach," Integrated Education, ed. M. Weinberg, (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Glenco Press, 1978), pp. 195-96.

<sup>32</sup>William Katz, "Minorities in American History Textbooks," Equal Opportunity Review, Teachers College, Columbia University (June 1973), p. 24.

Tuskegee Institute). The American Nation also enjoyed great popularity among college history departments throughout the nation. In support of the thesis that textbooks do in fact reflect the era in which they were written, the Garraty textbook is one among several surveyed that reflect a trend of combatting earlier history textbooks which provided a negative image of black participation in United States history. According to research conducted by Patricia W. Mitchell:

Textbooks such as those [texts that provide negative images such as the Mitchell-Griffith stereotype] have no value in providing blacks with a realistic understanding of their heritage necessary for a healthy self-image. Nor can they aid in dispelling the complacency or assumption of superiority on the part of whites. Their use in a school setting only reinforces that racist character of the educational institution [whether elementary or college level] which integration seeks to eradicate.<sup>33</sup>

The Garraty 1966 text would have well served the aforementioned purposes. He observed on the slave and education:

The former slave grasped eagerly at the opportunity to learn. Nearly all appreciated the immense importance of knowing how to read and write.<sup>34</sup>

Later the text provided the following evaluation of black office holders:

Those negroes who did hold high office during the Reconstruction period were in the main able and conscientious public servants, because the best tended to rise to the top in such a fluid situation

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<sup>33</sup>Patricia W. Mitchell, "Maximizing The Quality of Racial Interaction in School Setting" (Master thesis, Peabody College, Nashville, Tennessee, 1972), p. 26.

<sup>34</sup>John A. Garraty, History of the American Nation (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 436.

and conscientious because most of those who achieved importance sought eagerly to demonstrate the capacity of their race for self-government.

In power, the negro displayed remarkable little vindictiveness, by and large, for example, they did not restrict the rights of ex-Confederates. That blacks should fail to dominate southern governments is certainly understandable. They lacked experience in politics and most were poor and uneducated.<sup>35</sup>

The same year, 1966, also witnessed the release of a textbook by John D. Hicks, William Mowry, and Robert Burke. John D. Hicks had authored two of the most widely adopted texts in the 1940s and '50s. Hicks' 1946 A Short History of American Democracy had been offered under the banner of the revisionist interpretation and offered a lengthy interpretation of Reconstruction. However, in the 1966 edition, co-authored with Mowry and Burke, there is little discussion of the era identified as "Black Reconstruction" in the South and almost no discussion of the role of blacks. In a discussion of Reconstruction, Hicks, Mowry, and Burke state simply that the "excesses of reconstruction should be blamed on carpetbagger rule."<sup>36</sup>

The National Experience (1968) by John M. Blum, Bruce Catton, and Edmund S. Morgan offered an interesting parallel to the Garraty and Morison texts written just a few years prior to the publication of the National Experience.

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 436-37.

<sup>36</sup>John D. Hicks, William Mowry, and Robert Burke, A History of American Democracy (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Press, 1966), p. 358.



While supporting the thesis that Black Reconstruction was never really dominated by blacks, this volume sees far less capability on the part of blacks who did participate in Reconstruction. While Garraty and Morison saw blacks as "talented" or "educated," The National Experience saw them as "enlightened." The authors of The National Experience followed a pattern begun by the revisionists and continued by many of the neo-revisionist authors of offering a comparison of conditions in the North to those in the South during the Reconstruction era. The revisionists and neo-revisionists attempted to highlight the fact that corruption was at this point in United States history not a phenomenon confined to the South and its Black Reconstruction governments. They stated in The National Experience:

In the south the period of black reconstruction cut raw wounds. Southerners tended to remember the era as one in which government fell to uneducated negroes, to selfish northern carpetbaggers, and a treacherous minority of southern white scalawags. It was a time, according to the memory, of unmitigated public corruption. But the recollections drew on evidence that confirmed negroes never dominated the governments of southern states. They never held public office in proportion to their numbers within the population.<sup>37</sup>

The National Experience is an extremely well-written textbook authored by respected historians. One of its co-authors, Kenneth Stampp, has written extensively on the era of Reconstruction, and is generally regarded as one of

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<sup>37</sup>John M. Blum, Bruce Catton, Edmund S. Morgan et al, The National Experience (New York: Harcourt and Brace, 1968), p. 384.

the leading modern experts on the era. On the topic of the quality of Black Reconstruction office holders, The National Experience offered the following exposition:

Negroes elected to lower offices, to state legislatures and the position of Justice of the Peace had, on the whole, qualifications equivalent to the average incumbent in such undistinguished posts, and some negroes elected to office were talented and forceful men. The graft and fraud, moreover, were not peculiar to the south and its carpetbag administration. The "Tweed Ring" in New York City and its counterparts in New York and Philadelphia were more corrupt than the State House gangs in Texas, Georgia or Florida. To most southern whites at the time, however, the patterns of reconstruction seemed a pattern of oppression, Africanization and misrule.<sup>38</sup>

Richard Hofstadter, Columbia University professor, William Miller, and Daniel Aaron of Smith College, in their 1970 survey textbook entitled The American Republic, offered a well-balanced interpretation of the Reconstruction era. An intriguing point is the chapter entitled "Black or Tan Reconstruction," was limited to concerns about carpet-bagger rule. However, the presentation of the Reconstruction era in The American Republic is thorough, well-balanced, and thought-provoking. The student who studied from this textbook was presented with both fact and interpretation. The Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron textbook is firmly within the neo-revisionist tradition. The following evaluation of Reconstruction was offered:

Under carpet bag rule, political and social advances were made in the south which benefitted both races. They

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 385.

also eliminated property qualifications for voting and office-holding for blacks as well as whites, and more firmly appointed representation in state legislatures and in Congress. These constitutions also abolished imprisonment for debts and other archaic social legislation. Above all, for the first time in many southern states they provided for public schools for whites and blacks.<sup>39</sup>

In the era of the 1970s when the question of voting rights and office holding by blacks was of major concern throughout the nation, Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron offered a thoughtful analysis of black voting during the Reconstruction era. They stated:

The ballot, though at first misused, was a notable step forward for the freedman. Office-holding, though also abused, was another significant advance, but was not so widespread as the term "black reconstruction" might imply. Only in South Carolina in 1868 did negro legislators outnumber whites 88-67, but the sessions were not controlled by the negroes. In other state legislatures, blacks made up sizeable minorities, but white politicians always dominated the proceedings. . . . Negroes became congressmen, two became U. S. senators. Others gained administrative posts in which they did well.<sup>40</sup>

According to Grob and Billias, the prevailing mood among the American people shifted dramatically in the 1960s and 1970s. The climate of greater social consciousness among the general populace was paralleled by the efforts of American historians to include several heretofore disregarded minorities in their discussion of the nation's history. For the first time, scholars detailed the

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<sup>39</sup>Richard Hofstadter, William Miller, and Daniel Aaron, The American Republic (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1970), p. 23.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

contributions of blacks, the poor, women, and other organized protest groups to the making of America. Not only were their contributions cited, but these traditional underdogs, their plight and contributions, were dealt with in a sensitive and compassionate manner.

An excellent early edition (1971) of what Grob and Billias consider one of the textbooks by the "new social historians" (who would hope to widen the scope of American history and make it more inclusive) is American History A Survey Since 1865 by Richard N. Current, University of North Carolina, T. Harry Williams, Professor of History, Louisiana State University, and Frank Freidel, Professor of American History, University of Washington. They stated:

The most numerous Republicans in the south were the freedmen, the vast majority of whom had no formal education and no previous experience in the management of affairs. Among the negro leaders, however, there were well-educated, highly intelligent, and even brilliant men, most of whom had never been slaves, and many of whom had been brought up in the north or abroad. The blacks quickly became politically self-conscious. In various states they held their own colored conventions.<sup>41</sup>

Current, Williams, and Freidel offered a brief, but to the point, analysis of corruption and a comparison of the South with the nation as a whole. They observed:

In large measure, corruption in the south was a phase of a national phenomenon with the same social forces and expanding capitalism eager to secure quick results acting as the corrupting agent.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Richard N. Current, T. Harry Williams, and Frank Freidel, American History A Survey Since 1865 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), p. 413.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 415.

A salient point of this research is that in no era surveyed has every textbook reflected what is often designated the dominant historiography of that period. While the "new social historians" enjoyed great popularity in the 1960s, Thomas A. Bailey, a diplomatic historian who wrote under the influence of the old progressive school, authored one of the most widely adopted college level textbooks of the 1970s. Bailey's The American Pageant was couched more in the revisionist interpretation than that of the new social historians or the neo-revisionists. Bailey wrote, of Black Reconstruction:

Greatly to their credit, these black and white legislators passed much desirable legislation and introduced many overdue reforms. In some states a better tax system was created, charities were established, public works were launched, property rights were guaranteed to women, and free public schools were encouraged for negroes as well as whites. Some of these reforms were so welcome that they were retained along with the more enlightened state constitutions when the south's whites finally regained control.<sup>43</sup>

Bailey then provided an evaluation of a black voter that must have been shocking to the new social historians and to the social activist students of the 1970s, both black and white. Bailey offered the conservative view that gradual suffrage for blacks may have been preferable.

Bewildered, the blacks were poorly prepared for their new responsibilities as citizens and voters. Democracy is a delicate mechanism, which requires education and information. When registering, many did not know their ages. Some of these voters could not even give their

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<sup>43</sup>Thomas A. Bailey, The American Pageant (New York: D. C. Heath & Co., 1975), p. 502.

last names if indeed they had any and many took any surname that popped into their heads. On the voting list of Charleston South Carolina, there were forty-six "George Washingtons" and sixty-three "Abraham Lincolns." Gradual suffrage for qualified negroes would have been better for all concerned than hasty wholesale suffrage. A sudden thrust of the ballot into hands of ex-slaves between 1867 and 1870 set the stage for stark tragedy. Wholesale liberation was probably unavoidable, given the feverish conditions created by the war.<sup>44</sup>

Rebecca Brooks Gruver, History Professor at Hunter College, in her 1976 An American History, offered an excellent example of what Grob and Billias describe as a "New Social History" interpretation in the form of a college level survey textbook.

Although it did not live up to radical hopes, reconstruction did have some successes. The southern constitutional conventions produced documents that were distinct improvements on those they replaced. They provided for more equitable apportionment of representation, they often included recognition of women's rights and penal code reforms and made many appropriate offices elective. State-supported education began to close the educational gap between the south and the rest of the nation.

Under radical reconstruction southern blacks began to take part in the political processes. Although it was never as large a part as many have claimed it was, it was significant in the political plans of the Republican Party.

Some historians have alleged that reconstruction failed to create a new south [one with a diversified economy and greater economic prosperity for a majority of its people] because of the large scale corruption, extravagance and waste in reconstruction governments which plunged the southern states into debt. Corruption did exist. Yet, corruption was widespread throughout

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

the country at this time and the level of corruption in reconstruction governments was probably no greater.<sup>45</sup>

In 1976, Peter d'A. Jones, historian of the University of Chicago, introduced one of the most unique textbooks surveyed by this researcher. In this textbook, entitled The U. S.: A History of its People and Society to 1877, Jones provided a thorough and well written interpretation, not only of Black Reconstruction, but of its short and long-term influences on the black and white populations of the United States. At a time when American education was concerned with the inclusion of minority groups, Jones provided a textbook that ideally suited this purpose. As of this writing, the Jones text is still in its first printing, hence it is too soon to evaluate its impact. Jones' approach to Black Reconstruction is as unique as any perspective examined during the course of this research. He titled his chapter "Black Reaction to Black Reconstruction." Jones contended:

The ex-slaves were not passive or lacking in opinions and aims. What did they want? This is not easy to elucidate since the mass of slaves were kept illiterate and uneducated, and were largely inarticulate. At least two indications of that desire are available: First, their remarkable reserve and moderation with the coming of freedom. Emancipation did not bring a tax on the master class or widespread bloodshed, despite the history of intermittent, often bloody slave uprisings in the south. Abandoned white homes were briefly vandalized in South Carolina and elsewhere by freed slaves. Examples of negro violence amount to little when compared

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<sup>45</sup>Rebecca Brooks Gruver, An American History (New York: Addison-Wesley Publishers, 1976), p. 536.

with the destruction by Sherman's forces and white attacks on blacks as Union armies approached. Thus, the fears of Lincoln's critics that his Emancipation Proclamation would start a race war came to naught.

A second indication of the mood of the ex-slaves was their courage in registering to vote in the face of white intimidation and the obvious return to power of ex-Confederates during Presidential Reconstruction and their general enthusiasm to go to new schools. The vote and education, many blacks realized, were the key to the future, security and progress. After reconstruction, most negroes were deprived of both.

Some field hands immediately gave up working upon receiving the news of emancipation. The "Day of Jubilee" did not bring an end to hard labor of blacks. However, many had hoped it would bring them a free plot of land per family--a goal shared by few whites, even among radical abolitionists. "Forty acres and a mule" proved to be a political impossibility.<sup>46</sup>

Jones completed his presentation on Black Reconstruction in a second chapter entitled "From Slavery to Serfdom." Here in quite cogent terms Jones explored the myths of "Reconstruction" as he saw them:

The reconstruction era is shrouded in myths. First, the extent of radical reconstruction has been exaggerated, and the length of time and degree of military occupation of the south overstated. Actually, federal troop strength was negligible, especially in contrast with the rising violence in these years in the south. Federal soldiers were kept out of the way in their barracks and inadequate federal protection led to a greater dependence on state militias, which did enlist some black troops. They were hated and often murdered in their uniforms by whites. But the south was never dominated by black or white Union forces.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Peter d'A. Jones, The U. S.: A History of its People and Society to 1877 (Hillwood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1976), p. 363.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 369.



This interpretation, closely associated with the "New Left" or "New Social" history, is the most favorable to blacks of any major college text to this day.

In 1980, distinguished historian and textbook author John A. Garraty offered to classroom history professors preview copies of his forthcoming A Short History of the American Nation, a revised and briefer version of his 1966 major survey volume The American Nation. While such distinguished historians as John D. Hicks, Frank Owsley, Olver Chitwood, and others have offered shortened versions of textbooks after producing major survey volumes, the Garraty text represents a continuation of a trend begun in the late 1970s. With the increased cost in printing and a decline in college enrollments, many departments may move for the adoption of shortened, less costly textbooks. With the amount of misinformation and mis-statement of facts concerning blacks in United States history textbooks that this research has discovered, it is doubtful that less information concerning blacks and their history in America is likely to facilitate the development of corrective images. These corrective images and awareness of a proper history concerning blacks in college level history texts is still of primary importance if black Americans are to truly become a part of the national mainstream. In Garraty's A Short History of the American Nation (1980), the author has made a noteworthy effort to meet the challenge

of providing a just and credible image of Black Reconstruction, while limiting the amount of space allotted the subject. The first notable difference between Garraty's 1966 and 1980 editions is the substitution of the word "black" for "negro." The discussion of Black Reconstruction is thought-provoking and brief. Garraty stated:

The subject is controversial, but certain facts are beyond argument. For one thing, black office-holders were neither numerous or inordinately influential. The real rulers of the "black Republican" governments were white, the carpetbagger northerners who went to the south as idealists eager to help the freedmen as employees of the federal government, or more commonly as sellers of hope to improve their lot and the scalawag southerners willing to cooperate with the blacks out of principle or to advance their own interests.

That blacks should fail to dominate southern governments is certainly understandable. They lacked experience in politics and were mostly poor and uneducated.<sup>48</sup>

Garraty's theory that blacks were used as tools to advance the political aspirations of white politicians is supported by the continuing scholarship of the 1980s. In a 1982 text, Charles M. Dollar, a Tennessean who received his Ph.D. at the University of Kentucky and has done work in quantitative history as well as southern history, served as general editor of the textbook, America's Changing Times. Dollar quoted from Thaddeus Stevens, a leading Republican

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<sup>48</sup> John A. Garraty, A Short History of the American Nation (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), p. 269.

politician of the Reconstruction period, on the advantages to the Republican Party of black suffrage in the South.

Dollar observed:

Black suffrage was politically advantageous for the Republican Party. Thaddeus Stevens himself frankly admitted that he favored black suffrage in the South because, "it would assure the ascendancy of the party."<sup>49</sup>

Current, Williams, Freidel, and Brinkley, in the sixth edition of their popular American History A Survey A Survey Since 1865 published in 1983, continue the positive scholarship which is becoming a feature of 1980s college level texts. The authors, in their presentation on Reconstruction, support John Hope Franklin's thesis that textbooks in the present period may at last be able to handle the perplexing problem of writing about a great internal struggle and the aftermath of the Civil War. Current, Williams, Freidel, and Brinkley inform students that:

When white southerners spoke bitterly in later years of the effects of Reconstruction, they refer most frequently to the governments Congress imposed on them--governments, they claim, that were both incompetent and corrupt, that saddled the region with innumerable debts, and that trampled on the rights of citizens. When black southerners and their defenders condemned Reconstruction, they spoke of its failure to guarantee to freedmen even the most elemental rights of citizens--a failure that resulted in a new and cruel system of economic subordination. . . . Most students of Reconstruction tend now to agree, however,

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<sup>49</sup> Charles M. Dollar, gen. ed., America's Changing Times (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), p. 456.

that the complaints of southern whites, although in some respects accurate, greatly exaggerated the real nature of post war government; while the complaints of blacks, although occasionally overstated, were to a large extent justified.<sup>50</sup>

A second textbook, published in 1983, that has made great strides in attempting to accurately depict the events of Reconstruction is A People and A Nation-A History of the United States by Mary Beth Norton, David M. Katzman, Paul Escott, Howard P. Chudachoff, Thomas G. Patterson, and William M. Tuttle, Jr. These authors are contemporary and presently teaching scholars as well as writers. This text provides a longer, more detailed presentation and analysis of the problems of Reconstruction as a whole, and the freedmen in particular. The focus of this text is not only those few blacks who sat in state legislative chambers, but the effect of Reconstruction on the black populace in general. The authors assert:

They [the blacks] moved out of slave quarters and built cabins of their own; they worked together in family units and worshipped in their own churches without white supervision. Blacks also took the risk of political participation, voting in large numbers and gaining some offices.<sup>51</sup>

It will benefit teachers, students, and American higher education if the eighties are keynoted by honesty on Reconstruction and all matters.

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<sup>50</sup>Richard N. Current et al, American History A Survey Since 1865, vol. 2. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983), p. 461.

<sup>51</sup>Mary Beth Norton et al, A People and A Nation-A History of the United States (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1983), p. 404.

## Chapter II: Conclusions and Evaluations

Reconstruction is a label that historians have generally applied to "the years following the Civil War and a restoration of the peace." The arrival of peace in 1865 introduced difficulties perhaps more appalling than the nation had ever faced before. Certain facts are indisputable. The war left much of the South in ruins, wreaking havoc on its economic and transportation systems and causing tremendous property losses. The devastation of the South made it essential to render direct aid to the freedman and actively involve blacks in the governmental process.

When Congress convened in December 1866, it promptly laid out a plan of Reconstruction far more radical in nature than anything envisioned by Presidents Lincoln or Johnson. The key to their plan of Reconstruction was black suffrage and the participation of the freedmen in the government. The presentation and evaluation of the actions of blacks during this period of radical (Black and Tan) Reconstruction and their changing interpretations through each generation of textbook authors have been the subject of this chapter's research. John Hope Franklin's contention that "every generation of historians has re-written the history of Reconstruction" can be expanded to include survey level United States history textbooks as well.

Once the basic facts are presented in textbooks, authors, to a greater or lesser degree, launch into interpretation. In most of the early textbooks few facts for evaluation were offered to the college student. Often selected facts were presented to support the writer's own viewpoint or, as this researcher discovered, a national or regional conscious or subconscious image of the American black. The modern classroom teacher, armed with this awareness, can endeavor to instill within the student not only an appreciation for fact, but an awareness that authors of history, social studies, or humanities offerings do not operate within a vacuum and are influenced by the forces prevalent in the times during which they write.

When considering United States history texts written between 1904-1914, one is struck by the fact that, with few exceptions, authors presented selected facts of Reconstruction to support their selected theses, and the mirrored image of American blacks. Most prominent among the ideas voiced in the majority of textbooks concerning Reconstruction was the assumption that responsibility for the freedman should have been entrusted to white southerners. That the ex-slave could never be integrated into American society on equal terms with whites was a prevailing opinion. Waddy Thompson, in 1904, concluded that giving the vote to the freedman "was as dark an hour for the South

as the war had been."<sup>52</sup> More than ten years later, Nathaniel Wright Stephenson (1913) came to virtually the same conclusion as Thompson. Stephenson admitted that the South needed "protection from the emancipated freedman."<sup>53</sup> Almost identical wording appeared in a series of United States history textbooks as late as 1928.

Thompson and Stephenson exemplify most of the authors of the period in offering their evaluations of Black Reconstruction as a period rife with chaos and corruption, while offering few concrete examples. There was the correct charge of general illiteracy among the freedmen. Here the classroom teacher has the excellent opportunity to challenge the student to discover whether ignorance of political affairs and illiteracy were not common among white southerners of the period. Additionally, the teacher, operating in the past or present, when given such a broad general fact of ignorance of an enslaved people has an obligation to point out where responsibility for that ignorance lies.

What is noticeable about United States history textbooks and blacks in the pre-World War I period is what author Thomas F. Gossett saw as the predominant racial feeling and thought of the era. Gossett observed: "Generally,

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<sup>52</sup>Thompson, A History of America, p. 423.

<sup>53</sup>Stephenson, An American History, p. 483.

the period lacks any perception of the negro as a human being with potentialities for improvement."<sup>54</sup>

The authors who wrote during this early period, while their works were not always written as college level textbooks, were firmly convinced that intelligence and temperament were racially determined and unalterable. The conclusions were simplistic. The failures of Reconstruction, the low educational status of blacks, the high statistical crime rate, disease, and poverty were the inevitable results of having government at the hands of blacks, and factors peculiar to black heredity. Textbooks did in fact reflect the timbre of the times. C. Vann Woodward, in his Strange Career of Jim Crow, related that The New York Times of May 10, 1900 reported editorially that "Northern men . . . no longer denounced the suppression of the negro vote (in the South) as it used to denounce it during Reconstruction days." Woodward related that Alabamian Hillard A. Herbert could openly advocate and expect to gain support of others, North and South, in his call for complete disenfranchisement of Alabama's black voting population in May of 1900.<sup>55</sup>

The tone of the era was characterized by historian Roland G. Usher who, in 1914, suggested that the South

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<sup>54</sup>Thomas F. Gossett, Race-The History of an Idea in America (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1963), p. 142.

<sup>55</sup>C. Vann Woodward, Strange Career of Jim Crow (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 16.



was "saved by the moderation and real devotion of southern whites aided by northern Democrats." Usher further recommended the use of the Ku Klux Klan and similar societies to keep enough of "them" (blacks) from the polls to allow whites to successfully choose their candidates.<sup>56</sup>

The period that stretches from the first to the second world wars saw a subtle but determined effort on the part of the American Negro to advance himself. When the era opened, any improvement, as far as respect for blacks, seemed very unlikely. As a group, they had been deprived by law of nearly every basic individual and public right throughout the South, and had been stripped by custom and acquiescence in the North. Black life was held cheaply and chances for advancement limited, and the blacks own awareness of ways to effect change by concrete action were as yet rudimentary.

In the textbooks of the 1920s and 1930s, it was quite common to read that the South had been humiliated and ruined by what David Seville Muzzey termed "Negro domination."<sup>57</sup> The student later reads that there was additional involvement by both carpetbagger and scalawag during Reconstruction. John Holliday Latane's 1930 evaluation that "The only benefit of Black Reconstruction

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<sup>56</sup>Usher, The Rise of the American People, pp. 385-87.

<sup>57</sup>Muzzey, The American Adventure, p. 9.

was the increase in public debts," was a widely disseminated idea of the period.<sup>58</sup>

The teacher who wishes to stimulate though could point out, or arrange to have students discover through research, that the 1930s comprised a period of increased interest in racial superiority theories, not only in Hitler's Nazi Germany or England or France, but also in the United States. This point is substantiated by an examination of college texts of the 1930s. John Spencer Bassett, in 1932, concluded that "The American Negro was more influenced by his African ancestry than by his two hundred years spend in American slavery."<sup>59</sup> Ralph Harlow, in 1935, made the race question a high point for students who studied from his The Growth of the Unites States textbook when he commented "The primary problem for the South during Reconstruction was that the vote was given to the black, a terrible mass of domesticated barbarism."<sup>60</sup>

Lous Hacker and John Hicks were among the leading authors offering revisionist inspired interpretations in the college texts of the 1940s. The student of the 1940s, through his textbook, was introduced to the idea of limited black responsibility for the corruption of Reconstruction, and rejection of the idea that excessive involvement of

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<sup>58</sup>Latane, The History of the American People, p. 505.

<sup>59</sup>Bassett, A Short History of the United States, p. 620.

<sup>60</sup>Harlow, The Growth of the United States, p. 48.

of blacks was the cause of the corrupt governments of the period. Reflecting the era in which they were produced, both Hacker and Hicks texts contend that the lack of involvement in the corruption of Reconstruction by blacks was because they were simply illiterate dupes and pawns of the scalawags and carpetbaggers. As late as 1948, Chitwood and Owsley, presenting their revisionist interpretation of Reconstruction government, concluded that the Negro was guilty only of ignorance, inexperience and moral irresponsibility. When such conclusions are offered, the teacher must be careful that the student does not mistake a patronizing and paternalistic view of blacks for a liberal and well balanced view of Reconstruction.

The period beginning in 1954 was monumental for the United States, as far as education was concerned, primarily because of the Supreme Court's Brown Decision. College texts of the 1950s reflected not only revisionism, but a new consciousness of social issues. Since that 1954 decision, America has been caught up in a reassessment of the role of blacks in America. Within all segments of the American society there has surfaced a discussion of the rights of blacks and measures calculated to bring about an end to discrimination in education, housing, and other areas. Many textbooks written since 1954 mirrored this reevaluation, as well as voicing a new concern for social issues.

Leland D. Baldwin, in his 1955 textbook, expressed to the student that increased concern on social issues. Baldwin cautioned, "It should be remembered that it was white men who got the bulk of the graft (during Reconstruction) and that era was the generation of grafters even in states where no Negroes ever entered office."<sup>61</sup>

The period 1957 to 1975 witnessed the largest increase in college enrollment in United States educational history. Significant within that increase was the largest black population ever to attend college. If college level United States history textbooks during this period were to be relevant and useful, they had to address the needs of this greater number of diverse students. This research discovered great diversity of opinion on topics related to blacks, particularly Black Reconstruction. John A. Garraty, in 1966, told the student that, "In power, the Negro displayed remarkably little vindictiveness, by and large, for example, they did not restrict the rights of ex-Confederates."<sup>62</sup> During the same era, however, historian Thomas A. Bailey, in one of the most widely used United States history textbooks, regaled its readers concerning the ". . . simple minded freedmen who 'insolently' jostled white men off the into the 'gutter,' and how the enfranchisement of the former

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<sup>61</sup>Baldwin, Survey of American History, p. 336.

<sup>62</sup>Garraty, History of the American Nation, pp. 436-73.

slaves set the stage for 'stark tragedy.'" Bailey then offered the following negative evaluation to college students studying from his text: "Enthorned ignorance" which led inevitably to a carnival of catastrophe and misrule.<sup>63</sup>

To the greatest degree the 1960s reveal in many college level survey textbooks more concern or moral conscience about race than any period before or since. An excellent example of the race question as a moral issue and the effects of stereotyping of a minority group was presented by distinguished historian Sameul Eliot Morison. Morison, in his 1965 text, related to the student the harmful effect of what he describes as the Griffith-Mitchell stereotype of southern blacks. Morison describes this stereotype as a fable, a fable of the South as being starved out and exploited by ex-slaves.<sup>64</sup> Like Morison, the classroom teacher must never let fables be presented as history to students.

The pattern of textbooks offering a social awareness and conscience to students which began in the late 1950s and 1960s was continued in the 1960s. With emphasis on voting rights a major concern of the 1970s, textbook authors Miller, Hofstadter, and Aaron offered a thoughtful analysis of black voters during the Reconstruction era.

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<sup>63</sup>Bailey, The American Pageant, p. 502.

<sup>64</sup>Morison, The Oxford History of the American People, p. 709.

Numerous social protests during the 1970s created in textbooks authors more consciousness of the importance of minority groups. Rebecca Brooks Gruver, in a 1976 textbook, provided for the classroom teacher an excellent example of a textbook voicing social consciousness not only for the present, but also in considerations of the past. Gruver's conclusions on the contributions provided during the era of Black Reconstruction denotes acute social consciousness: "They (the Reconstruction governments) provided for more equitable apportionment, recognition of women's rights and penal codes reforms and made many appropriate offices elective."

The era of the 1970s also provided vibrant examples of diversity among college textbooks. Peter d'A. Jones, in 1976, offered not only a presentation on Reconstruction, but also on what he considered the "myths" of Reconstruction. Jones went to great lengths to support the thesis that radical Reconstruction was not that radical, and that federal troop strength was negligible and not sufficient to meet increased southern violence against blacks.

It is the contention of John Hope Franklin, "Recent scholarship on the Reconstruction era leaves the impression that we may be reaching a point after a century of effort where we can handle the problems inherent in writing about an internal struggle without losing ourselves in the fire

and brimstone of the Civil War and its aftermath."<sup>65</sup>

John A. Garraty, in his 1980 edition, went to great lengths to stand up to the challenge of writing a thorough and historically dignified version of Reconstruction. Garraty's conclusion that the subject of Reconstruction is controversial, in light of this chapter's research, can be accepted without contention. Garraty theorized that the real rulers of the "black Republican" governments were white, carpetbagger northerners who went to the South as idealists eager to help the freedmen as employees of the federal government, or more commonly, as "sellers of hope" to improve the freedman's lot. Garraty then identified a second group involved in Reconstruction, also white--scalawag southerners, willing to cooperate with blacks out of principle or to "advance their own interests."<sup>66</sup> Even with a text as carefully written and precise as the Garraty text, the responsibility still lies with the classroom teacher to have the student realize the fullness of the interpretation offered, especially if it is a new or different interpretation from that which is generally accepted.

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<sup>65</sup>Franklin, "Mirror for America," p. 4.

<sup>66</sup>Garraty, The American Nation, p. 741.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE IMPLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS OF SOCIAL DARWINISTIC PRINCIPLES EXHIBITED TOWARD NON-ANGLO-SAXONS IN UNITED STATES HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

The thesis of this research, as stated in the introduction, is that survey level United States history textbooks reflect, not only the facts of the past, but, in most instances, the Zeitgeist of the era in which they were produced. Continuing to seek the relationship between the Zeitgeist of an era and the interpretations advanced in texts for survey courses in United States history, it seems likely that the wide acceptance of Social Darwinism in the late 19th century would affect historians' views of the role of blacks in that period. This chapter, therefore, will focus on textbooks; specifically it seeks to examine their presentations of authors in United States history survey textbooks on the period during the vogue of Social Darwinism. Goals are not only to discover facts, but to ascertain whether objective views of race can be presented when writing on a particularly divisive era in American history. This chapter's research will be concerned with the time from the close of Reconstruction to the outbreak of World War I.



On the depiction of the black man after Reconstruction, John Hope Franklin wrote:

It would seem that the history of the Negro in America since freedom is rather more distinctive than before freedom. This was due to several important factors. In the first place, the efforts to justify slavery and defend it against its assaults had resulted in the development of an ideology of white supremacy that easily survived war and emancipation. If, as the defenders of slavery claimed, the Negro was innately inferior, his lowly status was the result of divine ordination, and, the dependence of a superior civilization required the Negro remain in a servile status, no mere proclamation by a president or an amendment to the Constitution could change that fact.

Indeed, by the end of the 19th Century, the view that the Negro was innately inferior seemed to be as widely held as it had been a half century earlier. The Social Darwinists justified the Negroes' lowly position on the grounds that in the full competition to survive, the Negro had only barely done so. Public servants, politicians, writers, even philanthropists subscribed to the view and acted accordingly.<sup>1</sup>

When Darwinism first appeared on the American scene, the country was engrossed in the greatest political issues, and the gathering clouds of slavery overshadowed intellectual interests. During the years after the Civil War when the Radical Republicans were abandoning, or simply forgetting southern blacks, businessmen were looking for justification for their actions and justification for their motives. Social Darwinism offered the justification needed. In the book by Greta Jones entitled Social Darwinism and English Thought,

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<sup>1</sup>John Hope Franklin, "The Negro Since Freedom," Comparative Approaches in American History, ed. C. Vann Woodward, (New York: Basic Books, 1968), p. 165-66.

the ideas of the social phenomenon were outlined in this way:

Social Darwinism secularised these ideas. It removed God but it reinstated the idea of order, equilibrium and hierarchy, this time in a social context. It therefore "naturalised" the social order. Even the social Darwinists' interest in evolution was often basically a journey into the past in order to discover the roots of their own society. Social Darwinism substituted natural, scientific processes for God as the guarantor of social equilibrium. This had profound consequences for the status of science in society. Much of contemporary struggle over the meaning of science for and against its influences arises precisely from its use for this purpose.<sup>2</sup>

The public became absorbed in the movement to make evolution respectable. The rise of biblical criticism and comparative religion prepared a favorable climate for evolution, particularly among the liberal clergy, but often among a much wider audience. The idea of a struggle for existence precipitated a collapse of ethical standards in an age when "the survival of the fittest" rolled glibly off everyone's tongue and was in fact the spirit of the age. Concerning the reflections in the popular literature of the period, C. Vann Woodward, in The Strange Career of Jim Crow, offered the following summation:

It was quite common in the '80's and '90's to find in the "Nation," "Harper's Weekly," the "North American Review" or the "Atlantic Monthly" Northern liberals and abolitionists mouthing the shibboleths of white supremacy regarding the Negroes' innate inferiority, shiftlessness

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<sup>2</sup>Greta Jones, Social Darwinism and English Thought (Sussex: Humanities Press, 1980), Preface xiii.

and hopeless unfitness for full participation in the white man's civilization.<sup>3</sup>

In the late 1880s and early 1890s, Americans also began to take notice of the fact that other western nations (most notably England, France, and the Netherlands) had embarked upon imperialistic expansionist adventures in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. These adventures began in the late fifteenth century. One of the arguments offered to justify this expansion was uplifting the people of the area through contact with white westerners. In the United States, a people long familiar with Indian warfare on the frontier and the pro-slavery arguments of southern politicians and publicists had been thoroughly grounded in the notion of Anglo-Saxon superiority. Americans began to wonder if they were falling behind the times, and whether they would even be able to protect their own interests if they did not enter, even belatedly, into these imperialistic adventures and take up what author Rudyard Kipling concluded was "the white man's burden." The Indians had been subdued and the West had been settled by the 1890s, at least according to census reports. The South had resumed control of the domestic "white man's burden." All of this imbued the doctrine of racial superiority with a sense of national

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<sup>3</sup>Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow, p. 70.

mission. Woodward offered the following evaluation of the national climate:

Adventure in the Caribbean and the Pacific suddenly brought under the jurisdiction of the United States some eight million people of the colored races, "a varied assortment of inferior races," as the "Nation" decried them "which, of course, could not be allowed to vote." As America shouldered the White Man's Burden, she took up at the same time many southern attitudes on the subject of race. "If the stronger and cleverer race," said the editor of the "Atlantic Monthly," "is free to impose its will upon 'new caught sullen people' on the other side of the globe, why not Carolina and Mississippi?"<sup>4</sup>

With the rise of American imperialism, self-confidence, and entrance into the game of world politics, Americans once again seriously entertained thoughts of war and empire building. A search was instituted for arguments to support imperialistic actions. The Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life (the subtitle of The Origin of the Species) seemed a made-to-order justification of Anglo-Saxon superiority. Richard Hofstadter, in Social Darwinism in American Thought, expressed it this way:

At a time when Darwin was still timidly outlining his theory in private, racial destiny had already been called upon to support the conquest of Mexico. "The Mexican race now see in the fate of the aborigines in the north their own inevitable destiny," an expansionist had written. They must amalgamate or be lost in the superior vigor of the Anglo-Saxon race, or they must utterly perish.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959), pp. 171-72.

It was Hofstadter's premise that the same Anglo-Saxon dogma comprised the chief element in American racism in the imperialist efforts, but the mystique of Anglo-Saxonism which fascinated American historians, had been totally dependent on Darwinism for its growth. "American historians for a time fell under the spell of the scientific ideal and dreamed of evolving a science of history comparable to the biological sciences."<sup>6</sup>

In the year 1898, the United States plunged into a war that led to imperialism in the Pacific and in the Caribbean and both brought suddenly under the jurisdiction of the United States, many different peoples, all non-Anglo-Saxon. Rumblings of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority were voiced by Ernest W. Burgess of Columbia, Alfred T. Mahan of the United States Navy, and Albert J. Beveridge of the Senate. They all rationalized American imperialism in the Philippines, Hawaii, and Cuba with thoughts that reflected the same racial theories that Senators Tillman and Vardaman used to justify white supremacy in the South. C. Vann Woodward, in his Strange Career of Jim Crow, concluded:

At the very time that imperialism was sweeping the country, the doctrine of racism reached a crest of acceptability and popularity among respectable scholarly and intellectual circles. At home and abroad, biologists, sociologists, anthropologists, and historians, as well as journalists and novelists, gave support to the doctrine that races were discrete

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 172.

entities and that the "Anglo-Saxon" or "Caucasian" was the superior of them all.<sup>7</sup>

Julius W. Pratt, in 1936, authored his landmark work entitled Expansionists of 1898. His thesis was that Social Darwinism, with its emphasis on survival of the fittest and competition, provided a segment of the American people with the intellectual justification for expanding America's sphere of influence. The argument advanced was "that nations, like individuals, must struggle to prove their 'fitness' to survive."<sup>8</sup> The result was American expansionism.

In its expansion, however, the United States exhibited the same dedication to the idea of Anglo-Saxon superiority that it had displayed in dealing with blacks during the years after Reconstruction. David Healy, in U. S. Expansionism, explained the mood of America's imperialistic urges in the 1890s. Healy observed:

The Nineteenth Century saw a marked decline in the equality of man. The growing emphasis on the importance of race accompanied a new conviction that the region which had produced such superior achievements must be inhabited by superior men. The result, by the end of the century, was a general European belief in white superiority.<sup>9</sup>

A paramount consideration that must be raised in textbooks when discussing American imperialism and the

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<sup>7</sup>Woodward, The Strange Career of Jim Crow, p. 74.

<sup>8</sup>Julius W. Pratt, Expansionists of 1898 (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1936), p. 124.

<sup>9</sup>David Healy, U. S. Expansionism (Madison, Wis.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), p. 14.

attempt of the United States to uplift non-Anglo-Saxon peoples in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the treatment of non-Anglo-Saxon people within the borders of the United States. By 1890, the former states that had composed the confederacy added amendments restricting black rights to their state constitutions. In 1896, the Supreme Court of the United States, with the passage of Plessy versus Ferguson, gave its unconditional approval to the concept of segregation. However, America was still willing to plunge into adventures which would further involve them with non-Anglo-Saxons.

George P. Marks, III offered insight into the reactions of black Americans of the 1890s to America's imperialistic adventures. Marks, writing in The Black Press Views American Imperialism, explained:

For southern blacks the American shock at "Spanish brutality" and enthusiasm for a "free Cuba" must have seemed a cruel joke. Only one week after the explosion that sank the United States battleship Maine in Havana harbor, a white mob in Lake City, South Carolina shotgunned and fired the home and office of the duly appointed black U. S. Postmaster, Frazier Baker, killing him and his infant son and wounding his wife, older son, and four daughters.

In the South, mob action accompanied discriminatory laws and decisions. From 1899 to 1901, when overseas expansion was escalated, almost 2,000 black men, women and children were lynched, often with unspeakable brutality.<sup>10</sup>

Today, serious students question America's sincerity in the 1890s concerning the uplifting of non-Anglo-Saxon

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<sup>10</sup>George P. Marks III, The Black Press Views American Imperialism (1898-1900) (New York: Arno Press, 1971), preface viii.

people around the world considering the plight of non-Anglo-Saxon citizens here at home.

Several difficult problems are associated with the present research. Perhaps the most serious relates to the confounding of facts and attitudes. While the avowed goal of survey level history texts is to objectively present the facts concerning significant historical events such as Social Darwinism and imperialism, the emotional nature of issues of race and racial superiority invite subjective interpretation.

Each author's discussion of Social Darwinism is colored by his personal perspective on race. Thus, an analysis of his work reveals, either explicitly stated or discreetly implied, his position on the issue of race.

This confounding of the author's racial attitudes with the actual facts and events of history is a difficult problem. It certainly complicates discussions such as the present one which seeks to examine the implications of Social Darwinism on students of United States history. On a topic as potentially inflammatory as the discussion of material related to race and racial superiority, the problem presents even more acute difficulty.

#### Textbooks: 1904-1914

Of the textbooks surveyed, the ones written closest to the date of the era presently under consideration are



the vaguest in many of their implications. According to Thomas F. Gossett, in his book Race-the History of an Idea in America, "Race consciousness was sharpened among social scientists in this country about the time of the beginning of the eugenics movement." The early eugenics movement emphasized heredity and selective breeding among humans to bring about the elimination of the "unfit" races. The date of the beginning of that movement was the 1890s.

Gossett surmised:

Social Darwinism provided remedy and seemingly invincible arguments for the expansionists of 1898. Darwin himself had invested the westward movement of the American nation with all the force of a law of nature. "There is apparently much truth in the belief that the wonderful progress of the United States as well as the character of the people," Darwin had written in the Descent of Man, "are the results of national selection."<sup>11</sup>

On the topic of expansion into the islands of the Pacific in the 1890s, Waddy Thompson, in his 1904 A History of the United States, stated that "The inhabitants of the islands would never become fit for citizenship." One is left to draw his own implications concerning the connotation of the phrase "fit for citizenship" and also, what constitutes "fitness." Thompson continued: "To govern them and not make them citizens would be contrary to the principles of the Declaration of Independence."<sup>12</sup> Identifying the

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<sup>11</sup>Gossett, Race-the History of an Idea in America, p. 311.

<sup>12</sup>Thompson, A History of the United States, p. 480.

inhabitants of the island as "them" also denoted a difference from the Anglo-Saxon people of the United States who constitute the audience to which the textbook is aimed.

A striking feature of many of the textbooks of the twentieth century is what in a later period would have been explained as a blatant racist interpretation put forth as "scientific fact." In 1905, Albert Bushnell Hart, Harvard professor of history and editor of a multi-volume series on history, offered one of the earliest textbooks clearly adaptable for college classroom use. He stated:

(1) The tribal indians, now settled on separate lands, are treated as a kind of big children; (2) the Chinese, now in this country, are now subject to special restrictions and no more laborers are allowed to come; (3) Filipinos are practically not free to come to the main part of the United States, and in the islands are treated much like Indians; (4) the negroes, for a century and a half held in bondage, are still under many practical, and some legal, disabilities.<sup>13</sup>

Edna Henry Lee Turpin, writing in 1931, was more explicit than Thompson or Hart when discussing what she considered "the race problem" in America. In her A Short History of the American People, Turpin offered the following analysis:

With the Indian and negro problems under control at the end of the 19th century, the United States cheerfully took up another race problem, bringing under its rule the Malay races of the Pacific. It gave them good schools and religious freedom but not free government. [At this point Turpin challenges the

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<sup>13</sup>Essentials in American History, ed. Albert Bushnell Hart, (New York: American Book Co., 1905), p. 569.

student by asking the following question.] Is the Declaration of Independence to apply to white people and to favored black ones and not to red or brown races? Are all men or only selected parts to share the government? These questions remain to be answered. But more and more, the suffrage is coming to be regarded as a privilege rather than a right.<sup>14</sup>

Willis Mason West, who is identified in the flyleaf of his 1913 volume entitled American History and Government as "sometime professor and head of the department at the University of Minnesota," saw the "negro problem" in a vastly different light from the previous early textbooks surveyed. West commented:

The blunders of Reconstruction, together with the tremendous difficulties of the situation, have left America burdened with a frightful race problem. On the political side, southern whites have continued to agree in the necessity for keeping the Negro from the polls,--at least whenever his vote might be a real factor,--and that race remains (1913) practically destitute of political privilege. To keep it so, there has been created and preserved for a third century the "Solid South" in close alliance with the Democratic Party without the possibility of natural and wholesome divisions on other issues.

The [southern] states have adopted property qualifications and educational tests for the franchise; and then these qualifications, in practice, are invoked only against the Negro, not against the illiterate white. Sometimes the latter is protected further by the notorious "Grandfather Clause," expressly declaring that the restriction shall not exclude anyone who could vote prior to January 1, 1861, or who is the son or grandson of such voter. So plain an evasion of the Fifteenth Amendment might be declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, but great reluctance is felt, even in the North, to interfere again in State control of the suffrage.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Turpin, A Short History of the American People, p. 231.

<sup>15</sup>Willis Mason West, American History and Government (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1913), p. 636.

West, in what many historians would today consider a well balanced offering of the facts, left the student reader or professor to draw conclusions.

This was not the case with all textbooks produced during the early part of this century. Roland Green Usher, in his The Rise of the American People textbook released in 1914, offered a less than objective portrait of the Negro in the South in the years after 1880:

The negro has not shown himself capable, industrious and energetic as the humanitarians assumed he would once his shackles had been struck off. Men are not changed by legislative fiat nor by the good intentions of other people. Whether the result of inherent racial deficiencies or of the environment provided by slavery, the negro as a race has not been capable of self-development, and the more intelligent negroes themselves now realize that their fathers were economic as well as legal slaves and that emancipation did not strike off the shackles welded by the negroes' own ignorance, laziness, and lack of personal ambition and moral strength. Educational and religious organizations have accomplished much and will undoubtedly accomplish proportionately more each decade, but the solution of the negroes' difficulties has been found in the exercise, by most employers, of a sort of patriarchal authority.<sup>16</sup>

With the United States history textbooks of the early 1900s, it is impossible to measure precisely the circulation of a volume among only college level students. No matter what the audience, no matter how large or small the circulation of a book (such as Usher's book) a negative image of blacks was provided. His motivation may have

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<sup>16</sup>Usher, The Rise of the American People, p. 389.

been "the spirit of the age"; however, to provide such negative images was harmful, no matter who the reader.

A pervasive feature of the literature of the late 19th and early 20th century was the patent way in which racism was portrayed as scientific fact. Thomas F. Gossett, in his revealing study Race-The History of an Idea in America, provided many excellent examples of the negativism so prevalent in the early 20th century toward all non-Anglo-Saxons, particularly the Negro. These attitudes were consistently voiced by every influential segment of the population, southern politicians, writers, and influence peddlers. One editorial attacking Booker T. Washington read as follows:

What does Civilization owe to the negro?  
Nothing!  
Nothing!!  
Nothing!!!<sup>17</sup>

James K. Vardaman, Governor of Mississippi campaigning for election in 1900, declared: "We would be justified in slaughtering every Ethiope on the earth to preserve the honor of one Caucasian home." The Negro was a "lazy, lying, lustful animal which no conventional amount of training can transform into a tolerable citizen." "Pitchfork" Ben Tillman of South Carolina declared in 1913 that from "four to a hundred southern maidens were annually offered as sacrifice to the African Minotaur and no Theseus

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<sup>17</sup>Gossett, Race-The History of an Idea in America, p. 253.

had arisen to rid the land of this terror." On another occasion, he declared that his opinion was "to hell with the Constitution" when it stood in the way of mob justice to (black) rapists. Tom Watson of Georgia said that the Negro simply had "no comprehension of virtue, honesty, truth, gratitude, and principles." The South had "to lynch him occasionally and flog him now and then to keep him from blaspheming the Almighty by his conduct on account of his smell and color."<sup>18</sup>

There were, of course, men with different views in both the North and South. But what is noticeable is that America, during the period 1880-1920, generally lacked any perception of the Negro as a human being with potentialities for improvement. With a few exceptions, most of those who wrote about the non-Anglo-Saxon races were firmly in the grip of the idea that intelligence and temperament are racially determined and unalterable.

#### Textbooks: 1921-1939

This research discovered few textbooks still available written between 1917-1921. Evidently publication ceased, or drastically slowed down, during the war years. Thus, those textbooks written before the war were used by students and their influence remained potent well into the mid-1920s.

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 271.

In the years after the "Great War," authors, in most instances, were influenced strongly by a wave of riots, Negro awareness of his experience in Europe and corresponding new ideas concerning his position in America, and the ideas Americans of the older order who were increasingly intent on holding the line against racial and ethnic groups they believed to be inferior. Much of this unrest showed itself in the wave of race riots which began in 1919. In Chicago, twenty-three whites and fifteen blacks were killed, 537 people were injured and over 1,000 people left homeless. Less than a year later, there was another major riot in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In the summer of 1920, the Ku Klux Klan, which had been a relatively small organization since it was revived in 1915, accelerated its membership drive. By 1923, membership in the Ku Klux Klan was estimated at between three and six million people, and it was to exert great influence, not merely in the South, but in several northern and western states, and on individuals in all walks of life. During this period, there was also the fear of "anything different," leading to immigration restrictions. Not immune from these influences were textbook authors producing their works during this period. Thomas F. Gossett offered the following evaluation of the 1920s: "Racism was increasing in the United States in terms not only of violence and open hatred, but in the subtle insidious forms of discrimination. The academic

disciplines would eventually provide a real defense against the ideas of the racists. At the time, however, they were in a state of confusion and unable, effectively, to combat the onrush of prejudice."<sup>19</sup>

S. E. Forman, A Virginian, in his 1922 textbook entitled Our Republic-A History of the American People, presented to students the role of the United States in the Philippines in this way:

The treatment accorded to the Philippines in matters of government was only one aspect of a policy that was upon the whole enlightened and liberal from the beginning. We did not go into the Philippines to exploit and oppress. Rather, acting like a "big brother," we tried to elevate them, and improve their condition. And we have done this: The Filipinos are better off for our having come among them. They have not yet secured their independence but they will be given that when the proper time shall come. We kept the faith with the Cubans, and we shall keep it with the Filipinos. "We are trustees for the Filipino people," said President Wilson, "and just as soon as we feel that they can take care of their own affairs without our direct interference and protection, the flag of the United States will again be honored by the fulfillment of a promise."<sup>20</sup>

Forman also offered an enlightened and sympathetic view of the plight of the Negro in the years from the close of the Reconstruction era to the time when America entered World War I:

The negro vote in the southern states had by this time (1890) been reduced to an almost negligible factor owing to the unfair and intimidating methods adopted by the whites to keep the blacks from the

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 283.

<sup>20</sup>S. E. Forman, Our Republic-A History of the American People (New York: The Century Co., 1922), p. 690.



polls. This suppression of the negro vote seemed to Republican leaders to be a wrong to their party as well as an injustice to the black man. They were therefore determined that negroes should be given an opportunity to cast their ballots. That the ballots would be cast for Republican candidates was not to be doubted. Negroes had remained true to the Republican Party, but the Party had not remained true to them. The measure brought forward to resuscitate the rights of blacks was the Federal Election Bill, generally known as the Force Bill. It was introduced in the House in June, 1890 by Henry Cabot Lodge, "as a national bill intended to guard congressional elections in every part of the country." But in reality it was a sectional bill aimed directly at the South. "It is believed by a very large portion of the American people," he said, "that there are districts in the South where fraud in some form controls despotically the verdict of the ballot box." ". . . We have clothed the negro with the attributes of American Citizenship. We have put in their hands the emblems of American sovereignty. Whether wisely or unwisely done is of no consequence now; it has been done and it is irrevocable. The Government which made the black man a citizen of the United States is bound to protect him in his rights as a citizen of the United States, and it is a cowardly Government if it does not."<sup>21</sup>

William H. Mace, in his 1925 volume American History, when considering government administration and eventual independence for the possessions of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, presented the following evaluation for students using his text: "The problem of independence for these possessions is complicated by the question of different races, degrees of civilization, and so on." Mace continued and related to the student that in all these areas, "white races were admitted to the rights of citizenship but not so the Asiatics."<sup>22</sup> Mace offered no evaluation of these actions for the students' consideration.

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 628-29.

<sup>22</sup>Mace, American History, pp. 241-43.

Theodore Calvin Pease, writing in 1927, like several of the authors surveyed in this research, had little or nothing to say of the position of blacks between Reconstruction and World War I. However, in a commentary on his own age, Pease made the following statement for the classroom student studying from his text:

Race feeling is as strong as ever, and the black is becoming more self-assertive. He seems, however, unable to develop leaders. As exceptional people of color acquire means they look down with contempt on their race and either exploit it politically and economically or seek to push themselves in association with whites.<sup>23</sup>

On the peoples of the islands who came under the control of the United States after the Spanish-American War, Pease offers a glib comment only: "On the task before the Congress as far as government for these possessions, the United States has turned its attention to the wild tribes of the islands never subjugated by Spain, partly by military force and partly by devices such as substituting baseball for headhunting as a competitive intertribal sport."<sup>24</sup> Undoubtedly, the United States military did introduce baseball into the islands, but to comment glibly that head-hunting, which in some few instances was noted to take place in the islands as a cultural phenomenon, was a competitive sport demonstrates little understanding of a foreign culture by the author.

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<sup>23</sup>Theodore Calvin Pease, United States History (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1927), p. 694.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 565.

David Seville Muzzey released textbooks under two different titles in the era under consideration--Muzzey's American Adventure first offered in 1924, and re-released in 1927, and his History of the American People first offered in 1929. When surveying Muzzey's texts, one discovers almost identical wording considering the results of the Spanish American War and the problem of the dependencies for the United States. In his American Adventure, 1924 and 1927 editions, Muzzey stated:

The United States had taken up "the White Man's Burden." We had assumed the responsibility for restoring orderly rule in the devastated island of Cuba. We had acquired nearly a million subjects of Spanish and negro blood in Puerto Rico. We had planted our flag in the Pacific. We had become the masters and protectors of seven and a half million people in the Philippines ranging from the cultured Tagalogs of Manila to the naked Negritos dwarfs, the savage head-hunting Igorots and the brutish Moros of Sulu Peninsula. We had, indeed, entered "on untried paths," and only time could show how we should walk therein.<sup>25</sup>

In 1929, Muzzey's only statement concerning the population of the islands was related by revealing that many prominent educators, clergy, intellectuals, and lawyers were opposed to annexation. Muzzey also saw fit to relate conversations between Speaker of the House Reed and President McKinley. Muzzey quoted Reed as stating satirically:

With the policy of buying ten million Malays "at two dollars a head" for better or worse, the United States had taken up "the White Man's Burden" and entered upon "untried paths." We had undertaken the responsibility of providing an orderly government for the island of

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<sup>25</sup> Muzzey, The American Adventure, p. 324.

Cuba. We had acquired nearly a million subjects of Spanish-Negro blood in Puerto Rico. We had become the masters and protectors of eight million people, ranging from the cultured Tagalogs of Manila to the naked Negritos dwarfs and the savage head-hunting Igorots and the brutish Moros of the Sulu Peninsula.<sup>26</sup>

Textbooks written during the 1930s were certainly influenced by the ascendancy of proponents of theories of racial superiority, notably Adolf Hitler. For many authors, of course, there was no change in their outlook. They still believed that character, intelligence, and human worth were largely contingent on race. However, Gossett pointed out in his work on race that:

In the academic disciplines (by the 1930s) there had been a sharp swing away from the racial interpretation of either individuals or cultures. Although we still have race problems aplenty in the country, we no longer have any psychologists, sociologists, historians, or creative writers with any considerable reputation who rely on race theories to explain human nature.<sup>27</sup>

In 1931, Thomas Russell Garther reviewed the vast literature which had developed on the subject of mental differences among the races and came to the conclusion that, "There are no sure evidences of racial mental traits." Garther admitted that his work had begun with "a silent conviction that he would find a clear-cut racial difference in mental processes." But, after diligent work he concluded, "It is useless to speak of the worthlessness of a so-called

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<sup>26</sup>Muzzey, A History of the American People, p. 514.

<sup>27</sup>Gossett, Race-The History of an Idea in America, p. 424.

inferior people when their worth has never been established by fair tests.<sup>28</sup>

However, in 1930, John Holliday Latane, Professor of History at Johns Hopkins University, concluded on the topic of blacks' "fitness" for the vote in the late 1880s and early 1890s, that "giving full suffrage to the Negro was a stupendous error."<sup>29</sup>

Charles A. Beard, the prominent northern European economic historian, most definitely saw a difference in the nature of people by race. He commented that "The Hawaiians could not possibly hold their own in a contest with pushing Yankees, thrifty Chinese, and tireless Japanese." At this point, Beard launched into a discussion of what he considered the nature of the Hawaiians which is far less tied to the "inferiority of the races" theory than most authors of the 1930s.

The Hawaiians whom the white men found in the possession of the little paradise fitted it with strange exactness. Primitive in their culture, they wore scanty clothing adapted to the climate and lived in a tribal state under a warrior chieftain by a stretch of courtesy called the king. They were simple in heart and untroubled by literacy; if they lacked the virtues of civilization they were fortunate in escaping most of its vices.<sup>30</sup>

It is the contention of C. Vann Woodward, in his Strange Career of Jim Crow, that tension between the races eased somewhat during the 1930s because of the involvement

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 428.

<sup>29</sup>Latane, History of the American People, p. 571.

<sup>30</sup>Beard, Rise of American Civilization, p. 357.

whites and blacks with the immediate problems of the depression. The volume of available textbooks from the 1930s also would lead to the conclusion that textbook publication lessened during the years of the Great Depression. One of the more popular and most re-printed textbooks was New York historian James Truslow Adams' The American Epic, first released in 1931 and re-released several times during that year and again during January of 1932. The only sign of Adams' concern with or consideration of the race question was far less clear than in many of the earlier textbooks. On the subject of government for the Philippines by Filipinos, Adams commented, "Even when people want to govern themselves, they may not be capable of it."<sup>31</sup> The student is left to ponder what, in Adams' mind, constituted capability.

An additional consideration of government for the Philippines in the form of the extension of the Fifteenth Amendment was discussed by Smith College American History Professor John Spencer Bassett in 1935. It was Bassett's contention that:

To apply the Fifteenth Amendment to the situation was utterly absurd. A great many of the people were illiterate and most of them without rudimentary knowledge of civil life. There were many tribes who spoke a variety of languages, and were used to the authority of a strong superior.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>James Truslow Adams, The American Epic (New York: Holt Press, 1932), p. 610.

<sup>32</sup>John Spencer Bassett, A Short History of the United States 1492-1929 (New York: Macmillan Press, 1935), p. 810.

Again, the student using Basset is left with questions unanswered, most strikingly, what constitutes a "strong superior?"

It is Gossett's contention that by the mid-1930s, the historians and social scientists who had prided themselves on the acceptance of facts were no longer able to accept myths about race. As frequently happens in the history of thought, after a change of opinion occurs one can only wonder why that change is so long in reaching monograph and textbook. John Spencer Bassett's summation of the 1930s concerning the scientists and social scientists reaction to race seems correctly applicable to the history textbook author. "Racism had developed into such a contradictory mass of the unprovable and the emotional that the serious student eventually recognized that as a source of explanation for mental or tempermental traits of people, it is worthless."<sup>33</sup>

In the United States history survey textbooks written between 1921 and 1933, considerations of race were always of the utmost importance, whether in dealing with the black population of the United States or the indigenous inhabitants of the imperialized regions.

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 680.

Textbooks: 1940-1954

The 1940s witnessed monumental changes for the American people--total war, the disillusionment with the peace terms from World War I, recurrent international crises always overhung after 1945 with the threat of nuclear holocaust, and a steadily expanding prosperity that made rapid changes and continuous adjustments normal features of American life. In the years between 1940 and 1954, legal, judicial, and executive response on the part of the federal government began to redress many of the grievances of American blacks. Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman issued several executive orders affecting civil rights. These touched upon areas of fair employment practices, federal contracts with private industry employment, and integration of the armed forces.

These executive and judicial responses alarmed southern whites and their conservative counterparts throughout the nation, who decried interference with state and local affairs and denounced any surrender to minority group protest. Opponents of civil rights openly expressed their resentment against executive policy and initiated a campaign to discredit the Supreme Court.

The constant pressure of the burgeoning black legal and political battles movement, coupled with the changes at home and abroad, forced American society to recognize the necessity of racial reform. How much racial reform



was forthcoming and how much was voiced in the college level texts of the period are two different questions. With respect to such ideas as Darwinism, the rank ordering of the races and imperialism, was there actual change in presentation from that of the previous era surveyed.

Fremont P. Wirth, Professor of the Teaching of History and Chairman of the Division of Social Sciences at Nashville's George Peabody College, first introduced his textbook, The Development of America, in 1936 and re-released it each year between 1936 and 1941. The Wirth text is remarkable for its objectivity, and it rejected many of the fallacies of Anglo-Saxon and western racial superiority. Wirth challenged the student with an in-depth look at and questioning of the imperialism of the 1900s. He commented, "Improved transportation made potential customers out of the inhabitants of every retarded country in the world." On the topic of conflict with the native inhabitants of the imperialized areas, Wirth offered an insightful analysis:

Imperialism, which became the keynote of the foreign policy of all the leading powers of the world during the half-century preceding the outbreak of the World War was to be found in two different forms, both of which were founded on commercial interests. First, there was the desire for more territory, and many nations attempted to extend their rule by purchase, annexation or conquest over other lands. Second, there was economic imperialism, or imperialism of dollars and goods, by which nations did not actually extend their dominion over the retarded areas, but merely satisfied their commercial needs by "economic penetration," by getting control of trade or natural

resources. Friction with the natives, growing out of commercial concessions and loans which could not be repaid were two of the most common excuses for intervention, which almost inevitably resulted in the administration of the finances of the smaller state by the "protector" or the forcing of other commercial concessions.<sup>34</sup>

Wirth's ability of expression and apparent desire to present imperialized people in nondiscriminatory terms was not true of the great majority of authors of the 1940s, even if they were only reflecting the era in which they were writing. Allen Nevins and Henry Steele Commager, two famous historians, in their 1942 text entitled A Short History of the United States, in referring to the inherited responsibility facing the United States in the years after the Spanish-American War, saw it this way. "It (the United States) consciously became one of the tutors of backwoods people." Nevins and Commager quoted from Kipling, who called those peoples "new-caught, sullen people, half-devil, half-child."

In 1943, John D. Hicks saw as one of the paramount issues of imperialism, how could it (the United States) hope to solve the problems of a distant and alien race? Hicks then related the rhetoric of the election of 1900 when Republican orators, in justifying imperialism in the Philippines with the following arguments:

The Philippines, they claimed, offered an inviting missionary field. The United States had at last an

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<sup>34</sup>Fremont P. Wirth, The Development of America (Boston: American Book Co., 1941), p. 589.

opportunity to extend the blessings of American civilization. The Filipinos were not yet capable of governing themselves. Freedom would mean only anarchy and misrule, or perhaps conquest by some predatory commercial nation such as Germany or France. The United States had become a great power, and must accept the responsibilities of greatness or, as Kipling phrased it, "Take up the white man's burden." . . . Why should Americans deny themselves whatever glory colonial possessions would bring?<sup>35</sup>

Hicks offered his presentation not as an interpretation of his, but simply as a revealing of facts, statements, and attitudes of others.

Charles A. Beard, in a 1944 general history textbook which could have well been adopted for college level courses, when discussing the people of the Pacific, commented only that magazines carried solemn articles on "our new obligations" in the dependencies and descriptions of the land occupied by "our" new subjects. 1944 is also the publication date of one of the more unique textbooks surveyed in this research, The Miracle of America, written by André Maurois, a French social scientist who taught at the Sorbonne in Paris, and translated from the French by Denver and Jane Lynley. Concerning the islands of the Pacific and their inhabitants, Maurois' comments were few, and like many of the authors of the 1940s, he felt confident in quoting from Kipling:

For the United States, this victory raised serious questions of principle. It was a time when Kipling in England was justifying imperialistic policies and praising the white man for accepting the burden of

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<sup>35</sup>Hicks, A Short History of American Democracy, pp. 614-15.

power. Many liberal Americans believed that "the white man's burden" threatened rather to be a burden for the red, black, and yellow man.<sup>36</sup>

The Maurois textbook offers to the classroom teacher two useful tools: first, to have the student discover what are offered as examples of United States history to college students in foreign lands (in this case France), and second, to discover whether facts are sometimes altered in meaning through interpretation and translation.

Of significance is the fact that in 1945, Nevins and Commager offered a new edition of their now successful A Short History of the United States, which included an almost identical analysis of the problems of the United States in its attempt to govern the Philippines, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. Apparently the ensuing years since the previous offering had not altered their analysis of the culture of the inhabitants they described as "half-childlike, half-devil."

In the 1948 volume of The American People, Frank Owsley, Oliver Chitwood, and H. C. Nixon relate to the student America's reaction to the Philippines and its inhabitants by relating the Schurman Commission Report in which Admiral Dewey and other commissioners reported that the Filipinos were not yet "ready for independence." Therefore, in making its report in June 1900, while suggesting

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<sup>36</sup> André Maurois, The Miracle of America, trans. Denver and Jane Lynley (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1944), p. 338.

independence as a goal, recommended that the training and tutelage of the United States be continued for "an undetermined period."<sup>37</sup>

Samuel Eliot Morison, in his 1950 textbook, reported for the student instead of commission reports, President McKinley's conclusions on "what to do with the Filipinos." McKinley stated, "There was nothing left for us to do but to take them (all the Filipinos) and uplift and Christianize them." On the population of the Filipinos, Morison and Commager offered the "Little Brown Brother" interpretation of the Philippine population that had been circulating for years, but began to surface in textbooks in the 1930s and 1940s.

The insular population in 1900 was about seven million, of which only four per cent were Mohammedans and five per cent wild pagan tribes. Christian Filipinos, "the Little Brown Brothers" who comprised eighty-five per cent of the total, were a fairly homogenous group, law-abiding and intelligent. [Morison concluded his presentation on the Philippines with the following conclusion.] . . . Despite these benefits which flowed from the assumption of the white man's burden, the Philippines stubbornly continued to demand independence.<sup>38</sup>

In 1953, an objective analysis of the points of American imperialism in the Pacific was offered by Harry J. Carman, educator and Columbia University historian. The type of analysis offered by Carman was not widespread

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<sup>37</sup> Frank Owsley, Oliver Chitwood, and H. C. Nixon, A Short History of the American People (New York: Macmillan Co., 1948), p. 326.

<sup>38</sup> Morison, The Growth of the American Republic, p. 348.

in history texts. However, Miller, Hofstadter, and Aaron offer the identical quote in their 1959 text. On the Philippine situation Carman noted:

Although an uneasy conscience, or perhaps, as some contemporaries put it, a sense of justice drove the American people to "uplift" the backwards people who had come under their control, they did not feel equally obliged to extend to their new subjects all the blessings of American liberty.<sup>39</sup>

The Carman textbook is also ahead of its time in its presentation concerning the close of Reconstruction and the completion of World War I.

In the years immediately following the Civil War, most free Negroes remained in the South and worked as farmers, and it was not until World War I that they migrated in comparatively large numbers from southern farms to northern cities to take jobs in industry. Many southern Negroes who did not support themselves by farming were employed as domestics or longshoremen. Others worked so-called "Negro jobs," industries which included coal mining, railroading, lumbering, and the building trades. Although the South experienced a comparatively rapid industrial expansion after 1890, it had little effect on the Negro, for most of the new jobs were reserved for white workers. Male Negroes in 1910 comprised only a small percentage of the working class, but they were a disruptive force out of all proportion to their numbers. White workers considered Negroes a threat to their jobs and refused them admittance to their unions. That Negroes, who often could get no other type of work, served as strikebreakers tended to confirm the hostility of white workers and to reinforce their traditional racial prejudice.<sup>40</sup>

Survey United States history textbooks of the World War II and post-war era followed a pattern of quoting to students from official and semi-official records of American

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<sup>39</sup> Harry J. Carman, A History of the American People (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 308.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 153.

activities in the islands. In discussing the inhabitants of the islands and their place in the larger society, Rudyard Kipling's ideas on race and responsibility were often relayed to students.

Textbooks: 1954-1983

In his Strange Career of Jim Crow, C. Vann Woodward quoted from an editorial in the Nashville Tennessean of May 18, 1954, the day following the famous Brown Decision. On the decision, the Tennessean stated, "It is not going to bring overnight solutions."<sup>41</sup> This statement also proved true in the case of textbooks which discuss not only questions pertaining to blacks, but the entire spectrum of American race relations.

Nineteen fifty-five was the year of the publication of Leland Baldwin's Survey of American History. In that text, Baldwin offered a presentation on the circumstances of blacks in the South after the Civil War entitled "The Negro in the New South." Baldwin concluded:

Post-War reports show discouragingly few improvements in the Negroes' condition. Indeed, conditions seemed to deteriorate in those aspects of personal cleanliness, sanitation, and home care over which white owners had once had supervision. If possible, the Negroes' ignorance and superstition deepened as contacts with white men became rarer. Disease and crimes of violence increased at an appalling rate until the negro furnished one third of the nation's criminals.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>Woodward, Strange Career of Jim Crow, p. 92.

<sup>42</sup>Baldwin, Survey of American History, p. 449.

There are undoubtedly those who would question Baldwin's reasons for including such a presentation. Even if there were facts to support Baldwin's statements, undoubtedly, there were also facts which would contradict them. However, the Baldwin textbook is useful in pointing out that while some presentations may be questionable, others demonstrate in-depth insight into an issue. This is demonstrated by a consideration of Baldwin's analysis of the race question and American imperialism in the 1890s. In a section he titles "The Nature of American Imperialism," Baldwin commented:

American ideology presented a clash between the democratic doctrine of equality and the heritage of a people accustomed to regard Indians and Negroes as inferiors. Thus it did not need the rising racism of Europe to implant the concept of master race in America, but many Americans welcomed the "scientific" demonstration of the master race theory by Social Darwinism and the propagandism of Teutonism and Anglo-Saxonism. These ideas found acceptance in American universities and influenced some of the men who were becoming the leading politicians and publicists at the turn of the century.<sup>43</sup>

The period beginning in 1957 witnessed the most dramatic change in status of American blacks since the Civil War and Reconstruction era. The tempo and demands of the black protest movement intensified. A younger generation, angered by continued delays on the part of segregationists, disheartened by the high court's delayed litigations and what they interpreted as the insincerity of public leaders, turned from the tactics of non-violence to the tactics of direct action.

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 487.



In 1959, distinguished Stanford University Historian Carl Degler analyzed the forces that shaped modern America in his survey level textbook, Out of Our Past. In discussing the period of the 1880s and the perception of the progress of American blacks by the rest of the world, Degler offered reactions to America by Maurice Evans, a South African who compared the United States, especially the South, to his homeland. Evans was astonished to discover "The American solution to the question of the races was strikingly parallel to that of South Africa. How often the very conditions I had left were reproduced before my eyes."<sup>44</sup>

A point previously stated in this research remains a consideration. The period following World War II witnessed the greatest proliferation in production of American history textbooks of any time. Many of the texts are merely reproductions of more famous volumes and offer little uniqueness in interpretation. The aim of this research is to mirror as many of the unique presentations as possible.

Of interest is the fact that the 1963 edition of The National Experience, edited by John M. Blum and contributed to by distinguished historians Bruce Catton, Edmund S. Morgan, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Kenneth M. Stamp, and C. Vann Woodward, offered the identical McKinley quote cited by Miller, Hofstadter, and Aaron. The National Experience then offered the provocative analysis that

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<sup>44</sup>Carl Degler, Out of Our Past (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), p. 367.

"Though many Americans seem willing to surrender to imperialistic politics, few did so because they wanted to." The National Experience concluded that imperialism did not result from reason, or even conscious desire on the part of the American people. Rather, it surmised that a group of powerful forces accounted for the blatantly imperialistic policies of the period. This notion is forcefully advanced in the following quote:

Attribute imperialism to a determinism of some sort: the hand of God, the instinct of race, the laws of Darwin, the forces of economic trade--anything but a rational and responsible decision.<sup>45</sup>

John A. Garraty presented what became one of the most popular and influential texts of the mid-1960s. When commenting on the plight of blacks following 1877, he used the term "the nadir" of the history of the American Negro when describing the period. This term was not originated by Garraty, but was used by others, notably historian Rayford Logan. The American Nation presented to the student solid historical interpretation concerning the plight of black American which probably contributed to the great popularity of his text nationwide. Garraty observed:

The period following 1877 marks what one historian has aptly called "the nadir" of the history of the Negro in the United States. Forgotten in the North, manipulated and callously rejected in the South, rebuffed by the Supreme Court, voiceless in national affairs, he and his descendants were condemned in the

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<sup>45</sup> John M. Blum et al, The National Experience (New York: Harcourt, Bruce & World, Inc., 1963), p. 531.

interest of sectional harmony to lives of poverty, indignity, and little hope. Meanwhile, the rest of the United States continued its golden march toward wealth and power.<sup>46</sup>

By forthrightly stating for the consideration of all students that the "rest of the nation continued its golden march towards wealth and power," Garraty said what other authors had only implied.

On the subject of American expansion into the Pacific, The American Nation stated that "Most southern anti-imperialists were governed more by race prejudice than by democratic principles." Garraty reported the comment of Senator Benjamin R. Tillman, "I strenuously oppose incorporating any more colored men into the body politic."<sup>47</sup>

By the mid-1960s, elements within the black community had become convinced, as had Booker T. Washington years earlier, that blacks must first secure conscious self-respect and an economic and political power base before they could hope to deal effectively with the dominant white majority. Despite obvious advances in interracial reform, the nation had come only part of the way. Progress as far as ideas to assist in changes in textbook reform were slow in appearing. The 1966 edition of A History of American Democracy by John D. Hicks, George Mowry, and Robert E. Burke presented, not just facts,

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<sup>46</sup>Garraty, The American Nation, p. 447.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 463.

but interpretations on American racial attitudes of the 1880s and 1890s. Concerning American blacks in this period, It was Hicks, Mowry and Burke's contention that:

Many of the games he had stood to win by the outcome of the Civil War had vanished. In the North he was, at best, a dubious and frequently unwanted person. In the South, he was often without a vote and by law denied equal education and social opportunities afforded even the poorest of his fellow white citizens.<sup>48</sup>

On the subject of imperialism during the period, Hicks, Mowry and Burke asked the students "How could it [the United States] hope to solve the problems of a distant and 'alien' race?" Then, in describing those alien people, they concluded only that:

The Philippine population, which was a mixture of native people and immigrants from the Asiatic mainland, included about seven million Spanish-speaking and Roman-Catholic Filipinos besides about three quarters of a million uncivilized "Igorots and Moros."<sup>49</sup>

The students were not subjected to any presentation of acts of barbarism or uncivilized behavior by these people which often appeared as a regular part of earlier textbooks, and certainly affected the college student's evaluation of these people.

It was the contention of historian Rayford W. Logan that by mid-1969 or early 1970, new attitudes surfaced among young, black Americans. Despite the strong emphasis on "self-help," many blacks were willing to suggest that

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<sup>48</sup> Hicks, Mowry, and Burke, A History of American Democracy, p. 368.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 506.

cooperation with whites was essential to continuing the struggle for equality. In 1971, historians Richard N. Current, T. Harry Williams, and Frank Freidel released a third edition of their successful college level textbook that first appeared in 1959. In discussing the plight of American blacks after 1877, they offered a presentation entitled "Discrimination Made Legal." The authors surmised, "The southern problem was to exclude Negroes from the franchise without seeming to base the exclusion on race." Current, Williams, and Freidel then presented to the student an overview of the problem for the South at the turn of the century:

As the turn of the century approached, southern whites seemed to have won a complete victory over the outsiders influence that sought to disturb their way of life and reconstruction seemed to these people like a bad dream receding into the past.<sup>50</sup>

This presentation on the southern viewpoint was supported in essence by Rebecca Brooks Gruver in 1972 when she offered the following presentation on the topic:

With the end of Reconstruction, control of southern politics was returned to southerners. State governments fell into the hands of the old planter aristocracy and the equally conservative and new business class called the "Bourbons" after the French royal house. Within twenty years after the end of Reconstruction, blacks had been deprived of radical Republican protection. Southern states acted to insure the segregation of the races.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Current, Williams, and Freidel, A History of the United States Since 1877, p. 430.

<sup>51</sup> Gruver, An American History, p. 547.

When considering American involvement in the Philippines, Gruver was willing to offer her own evaluation that many of the motives of the United States were suspect at best. Gruver reported:

The alleged religious motives for extending the American map halfway across the globe was a little suspect. Most of the Filipinos had converted long before, albeit to Catholicism. One historian, pointing to America's trading interest in the area, had noted that McKinley's policy came down to "God directs us--perhaps it will pay."<sup>52</sup>

A salient point that this research has revealed is that, while textbooks may be innovative and trudge new ground as far as viewpoint and presentation in one area of history, say Black Reconstruction, the same text may be quite conservative on other topics. An excellent example of this point was offered in the survey level textbook of Peter d'A. Jones which broke new ground as far as interpretations of Black Reconstruction. However, it only mirrored to the world other popular texts on the topic of imperialism of the 1890s. On the topic of the progress of blacks after 1877, Jones, in discussing the mood of the nation, demonstrated the same originality that made his discussion of Black Reconstruction so distinctive:

Segregation rules became general in the South in the 1890s. They were called derisively "Jim Crow" laws after a minstrel character created by a black-faced white entertainer, Thomas D. Rice, of New York. Along with segregation came disfranchisement. For a short time during the 1890s, the advent of

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 712.

Populism and farm reform movements of blacks and whites alike, in response to depression conditions, brought the possibility of black-white cooperation among poorer farmers in the South. Populist agitators like Tom Watson of Georgia frightened the conservatives by appealing to Negroes for support.<sup>53</sup>

In attempting the evaluation of material recently produced, one is always tempted to offer the most popular response. John A. Garraty, in his 1980 A Short History of the American Nation, offered Darwinism and Darwinistic principles as a strong force behind the disfranchisement of blacks after 1877. Garraty, in explaining the events of the 1880s and 1890s, provided comments from the leading figures of the period as well as newspaper and magazine editorials. Under the chapter heading "Victims of Prejudice," quoting from William Graham Sumner in the popular periodical of the day "The American Commonwealth," Garraty reprinted for the students:

"The Negro's day is over," the tough-minded Darwinist William Graham Sumner explained. Nearly all newspapers commented favorably on the decisions in the Civil Rights cases. In news stories, papers presented a stereotyped, derogatory picture of blacks, no matter what the actual circumstances. Since nearly all contemporary biologists, physicians, and other experts on race were convinced that they were inferior beings, well-educated northerners could hardly avoid accepting their opinion.<sup>54</sup>

Garraty continued his presentation to include the fact that southern blacks reacted to this deplorable situation in a variety of ways. Some sought redress in racial pride and

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<sup>53</sup>Jones, The U. S. A.: A History of Its People, p. 374.

<sup>54</sup>Garraty, A Short History of the American Nation, p. 284.

what would later be called "black nationalism." Few textbooks continue their presentations to include the reactions of southern blacks to the disfranchisement that began in the 1880s. In that respect, each generation does produce additional points for consideration on historical topics.

Garraty, on the subject of United States relations with the inhabitants of the Philippines, observed that most of the objections voiced by political leaders were spurred by labor leaders. In support of this thesis, he offered the following presentation:

Labor leaders particularly feared the competition of "the Chinese, the Negritos, and the Malays" who presumably would flood into the United States if the Philippines were taken over.<sup>55</sup>

Charles M. Dollar, general editor of America's Changing Times published in 1982, offered to the student a presentation on the political disenfranchisement of blacks during the 1890s. In a section entitled "Race and Politics," Dollar outlined the unique features of southern politics.

The reasons and motives for disenfranchisement were complex. Some political leaders were determined to eliminate certain classes of white voters along with blacks.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Charles M. Dollar, gen. ed., America's Changing Times (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1982), p. 589.



In discussing American foreign policy in the 1890s, Dollar charged that anti-imperialism "fanned the flame of racism noting that a dark-skinned empire could cause greater problems in the future," and that "Anglo-Saxon people do not flourish in the tropics."<sup>57</sup>

Current, Williams, Freidel, and Brinkley, in their 1983 sixth edition of A Survey of American History, presented an analysis of what the "Jim Crow laws" meant for blacks in the United States during the 1880s and 1890s. Like Dollar, they also stressed that many poor white southerners suffered as a result of Jim Crow laws. Current, Williams, Freidel, and Brinkley commented:

Blacks, of course, suffered by far the most from the violence, the Jim Crow laws, and the whole climate of racial oppression in the South. But many white southerners suffered as well."<sup>58</sup>

On the topic of the United States foreign policy of the 1890s, of interest is the fact that while Dollar offered the white supremacist sentiments of the anti-imperialists, Current, Williams, Freidel, and Brinkley offered the white supremacist views of the imperialists:

God has not been preparing the English-speaking and Teutonic peoples for a thousand years for nothing but vain and idle self-contemplation and self-admiration. No! He has made us the master organizers of the world to establish a system where chaos reigns.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 629.

<sup>58</sup>Current et al, Survey of American History, p. 490.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 611.

Mary Beth Norton, David M. Katzman, Paul D. Escott, Howard P. Chudacoff, Thomas G. Patterson, and William M. Tuttle, Jr., collaborators in the publication of a new textbook published in 1983 entitled A People and a Nation, offered a thorough analytical approach to the entire melee of issues raised concerning the country's foreign policy and race issues in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The authors informed the students on the subject of American expansionism and imperialism. They stated:

American expansionism in turn led to imperialism: the imposition of control over other peoples, denying them the freedom to make their own decisions undermining their sovereign independence. Moreover, notions of racial superiority and Jim Crow practices at home influenced American policies toward Asian and Latin American peoples of color who were considered inferior.<sup>60</sup>

While these textbooks written during the early years of a decade cannot provide a definitive pattern of the direction of survey texts in an era, one definite pattern is discernible. A more analytical, questioning presentation is offered to students on topics related to race relations. It can only be hoped that the interest in cutting the cost of printing and reducing production will not limit these relevant presentations so desperately needed by students to cope in a world no longer completely dominated by the Anglo-Saxon.

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<sup>60</sup> Mary Beth Norton et al, A People and a Nation (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1983), p. 609.

Summary, Conclusions, and Evaluations

When the biological concepts of Charles Darwin were becoming popularly accepted in Europe, Americans were more immediately concerned with the tough political questions resulting from the Civil War, the war that only briefly altered the political status of the American Negro. By the 1880s, social scientists had appropriated the biological concepts of "evolution" and "survival of the fittest" and were applying them to social, political, and economic developments in a theory that came to be known as "Social Darwinism." William Graham Sumner led the argument that social interference with the natural processes would slow or prevent the ideal development.

By the 1890s, it was quite common to see Social Darwinistic viewpoints circulated widely in the popular press. The Nation, Harper's Weekly, The North American Review, and The Atlantic Monthly were all permeated with Social Darwinistic theory, cartoons, and editorials exemplifying their perspective on black inferiority.

It was C. Vann Woodward's contention that by the 1890s, the doctrine of racial superiority was imbued with a sense of "national mission" and that the American adventure into the Caribbean and the Pacific suddenly brought under its jurisdiction some eight million people of the colored races which gave cause to a national situation. It was Woodward's further contention that as America

shouldered "the White Man's Burden," she took up, at the same time, many southern attitudes on the subject of race.

This research has endeavored to discover how closely the racial Zeitgeist of a given era influenced authors of survey level United States history textbooks in their presentation of material related to Social Darwinism and the race question in America. In surveying the earliest textbooks available on the topic, one fact was apparent. The textbooks written closest to the 1880s and 1890s when Social Darwinism was in vogue in America were the vaguest in their application of the theory.

In his 1904 textbook, Waddy Thompson stipulated for his audience of Anglo-Saxon students that there were great differences between the readers of his textbook and the inhabitants of the Pacific which he referred to as "them." During the early 1900s, students who studied from what constituted survey level texts (even if books were not written specifically for this use) were constantly reminded that all non-Anglo-Saxon people constituted a race problem for the United States. Edna H. L. Turpin openly lamented the taking in of foreign people and races as a part of the United States or letting them establish free governments.

Authors who wrote textbooks in the period just prior to and following World War I, in addition to their statements of Social Darwinistic theories, often implied that non-Anglo-Saxon people frequently caused race problems for the United

States or would experience race problems in the United States. Willis West, in his 1913 textbook, took the unique position for that period, that the cause of America's race problem was the "blunders of Reconstruction." However, one year later, Roland Green Usher stipulated from his book a different culprit of America's race problem. Usher, like most authors who produced survey level texts of the period, saw the negro as the primary cause of the race problem in America. The most important conclusion that can be reached from survey textbooks between 1904 and 1914 is that negativism was prevalent toward all non-Anglo-Saxon people, particularly the Negro.

In the years immediately following the "Great War," textbook authors, like most Americans, were greatly influenced by heightened race awareness. The Anglo-Saxon felt pressured to "hold the line" against what they interpreted as increased pressure from racial and ethnic groups they believed to be inferior. This was made evident by a series of race riots during the 1920s and the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. In addition to these native influences, textbook authors, like most American academicians, were influenced by English author Rudyard Kipling. Richard Hofstadter pointed out yet a third factor influencing American historians and textbook authors. They fell under the spell of the scientific historian and dreamed of developing a science of history comparable to the biological sciences.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, P. 172.

S. E. Forman, in a 1922 textbook told the student that the United States went into the Philippine Islands to elevate and improve, not to exploit, the population. Foreman cast his presentation in the terms that the United States was involved in a scientific experiment when she engaged in imperialistic adventures in the Pacific.

Race considerations were always of the utmost importance during the 1920s and 1930s in survey level textbooks whenever topics relating to non-whites were discussed. William H. Mace, in his 1925 text related, "The problem of independence for the possessions [the islands of the Pacific] is complicated by the issue of different races and their degrees of civilization." Theodore Calvin Pease, in 1927, commenting not on an earlier era but on his own times, observed "Race feeling is as strong as ever."

Sociologist Thomas F. Gossett theorized that by the 1930s, academicians had swung away from racial interpretation of either individuals or cultures. Thomas Russell Garther surveyed the vast literature on race and mental differences in 1931 and concluded that there was no real evidence of racial influence on mental traits. However, noted historian Charles A. Beard, in his 1930 text, credited race as a primary consideration in all matters. James Truslow Adams, in his college level survey text of 1931, told the student that the Filipinos, "even when they wanted to rule themselves, were not capable of it." These are

excellent examples of the lag between prevalent ideas and concepts and their application in survey level textbooks.

In the 1940s, Americans were shocked to learn of the activities that had taken place in Nazi Germany with respect to dictator Hitler handling the Jewish "race problem." At home, there were burgeoning Negro legal and political battles to address the problems of discrimination. However, still in 1940, Allen Nevins and Henry Steele Commager, in discussing the people of the islands, described them to students by quoting from Kipling as "new caught, sullen people, half-devil, half-child." Eight years later, Frank Owsley, Oliver Chitwood, and H. C. Nixon, like many other authors, chose to quote to students from official and semi-official records on American activities in the islands. Chitwood and Owsley chose the Sherman Commission Report and related the statements by Admiral Dewey, one of the principal commissioners, to the students. It was Dewey's opinion that the Filipinos were not yet "ready for independence." In 1950, Samuel Eliot Morison chose to relate to students President McKinley's explanation concerning the islands that there is nothing else for us to do but to take the Filipinos, uplift and Christianize them.

The 1954 Brown Decision did not immediately effect a reaction from textbook authors with regard to questions of race in textbooks. However, by 1959 Richard Hofstadter, William Miller, and Daniel Aaron explained to the student,

when discussing the application of Social Darwinistic principles by Americans to minority groups, that "The Negro, like other groups, grew less silent and less patient with America."<sup>61</sup>

By the mid-1960s, historian John A. Garraty and other authors of survey level United States history textbooks were forthrightly stating for the consideration of students that often during the period in which Social Darwinism was in vogue, the view of blacks and other minority groups was to consign these people to poverty, indignity, and circumstances of little hope. Another factor that Garraty and other sixties authors made known to students was that most of the southern anti-imperialism was governed more by race prejudice than by democratic principles.

Even though the 1960s witnessed advances in inter-racial reform, textbooks which related racial changes in attitudes with respect to non-Anglo-Saxon groups were slow to make their appearance. Even with a consideration for the lag in time between a change in attitude and the notice of that critical change in textbooks, by the 1960s, with the nation's supposed interest in racial harmony, there should have been some change in the stereotypical ideas that had long been the outstanding feature of textbooks in their presentations on Social Darwinism and race relations in America.

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<sup>61</sup>Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron, The American Republic, p. 309.



Historians John D. Hicks, George Mowry, and Robert E. Burke, by 1966 felt compelled to offer not just the facts concerning the American racial scene of the 1880s and 1890s, but also a thoughtful interpretation for the student. They observed that the advances that blacks had won as far as being citizens in the North with the winning of the Civil War had vanished, through no fault of the Negroes. Hicks, Mowry, and Burke stated for the student that in the North, by the 1890s the Negro was an unwanted person. In the South, the Negro had no social status, much like his situation before the war.

A fact of particular importance to this research is that by the mid-sixties, authors of survey level textbooks no longer subjected the students to presentations concerning uncivilized and barbarous acts by the peoples of the imperialized American possessions of the pre-World War I era. These accounts of uncivilized behavior had been a regular part of texts prior to this period.

By the 1970s, textbook authorship, for the most part, was no longer limited to male Anglo-Saxons. A wide spectrum of authorship provided an expanded viewpoint for students. Rebecca Brooks Gruver, in her 1972 text, challenged the student not to accept the religious motivation for American imperialism. Gruver reminded the students that most of the Filipinos had converted before, albeit, to Catholicism.

A unique feature of the textbooks of the 1970s is the unusual glimpse of the past they provide of life in

an earlier period. Peter d'A. Jones discussed the manifestations of Social Darwinism in the South. Segregation rules became unwritten laws. Jones discussed the emergence of the concept of Jim Crow and Jim Crow laws. A presentation of this nature was not discovered in textbooks of the previous eras, but were evident in several 1970s texts.

If the textbook authors who produce survey level United States history textbooks of the 1980s follow the pattern set forth in texts of earlier eras, the books produced by the mid-1980s will reflect America's present diminished concern with questions of racial equality and the non-Anglo-Saxon. Textbooks in the future may reflect attitudes more rapidly because of high speed, computerized printing. An additional trend that became evident by the late 1970s was the fact that survey level texts were increasingly released in briefer, paperback formats because of increased printing costs. With many topics being greatly reduced in coverage and others being deleted altogether, conceivably, the amount of available information on the participation and problems of minority groups in America could be adversely affected. These concerns seem to be the primary developments in the textbooks of the 1980s.

## CHAPTER IV

### BLACKS AND THE NEW DEAL

Even events within the past fifty years have evoked radically different interpretations. For some time, Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal was viewed as a change from moderate to revolutionary. This research has discovered on the topic of blacks and the New Deal, as with other topics researched, the authors of survey level United States history textbooks usually follow the middle of the road in their interpretations.

On the topic of blacks and the New Deal, nothing of note was available in survey level textbooks until 1953. Even at this late date, authors made little distinction between black Americans and other American recipients of benefits from the New Deal. Of interest is the fact that by Roosevelt's second term, he had solidly convinced the majority of the black voting population of the United States that they were among those described by New Dealers as the "forgotten men." This chapter is concerned with the varying portrayals of the New Deal's treatment of blacks in textbooks. As with other chapters, it does not examine the factual validity of textbook presentations.

The worldwide economic collapse that set in and initiated total economic chaos by 1930 had been characterized

everywhere by the slipping of prices. The effect was still that the poor could not afford to buy consumer goods. Louis Hacker concluded "The greater efficiency of production and wider distribution of commodities made the element of price a comparatively unimportant factor in the economic process."<sup>1</sup>

To bring under control the economic chaos and great public misery of the Depression, Franklin Roosevelt, after his election in 1932, surmised that there must be "a reappraisal of values," a New Deal. When Roosevelt was inaugurated as President of the United States on March 4, 1933, the economic life of the nation was at a standstill. Agricultural prices were less than half what they had been four years earlier, industrial production had declined by more than one-half, and more than twelve million workers were unemployed. To Roosevelt, making it possible for business to sell its products and for farmers to buy them with the corresponding raising of farming prices and elimination of cutthroat competition was at the heart of the "New Deal" program. This "definite and deliberate" policy can be discerned in numerous instances from the statements of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. In an early speech just after his inauguration on the intent of the National Recovery Act, Roosevelt stated:

The National Industrial Recovery Act was drawn with the greatest good of the greatest number in mind. Its

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<sup>1</sup>Louis Hacker, A Short History of the New Deal (New York: S. E. Croft & Co., 1934), p. 27.

aim was to increase the buying power of wage earner and farmer, so that industry, labor, and the public might benefit from the buildup of the market for farm and factory goods. Employers, wage earners, and consumer groups are all represented on its boards and with the government; all three groups with the government must have the interest of all the people as their man responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

Blacks were the most disadvantaged major group in America. It is trite and commonplace to say, but nevertheless accurate, that blacks were the last hired and the first fired. Black people naturally hoped that the economic policies of the Roosevelt administration would be constructed in such a way as to assist in their recovery even though there had never been any special appeal to blacks during his election. According to Raymond Walters, "The New Deal had no fixed policy with regard to the protection of black people."<sup>3</sup> Each department and administration agency established its own policies and procedures for handling "Negro problems." Often, the fate of blacks depended upon the extent to which the dominant personality felt either sympathy or indifference to their special needs. The Farm Security Administration, the Public Works Administration, and, to a lesser extent, the Works Progress Administration all implemented policies that insured fair treatment for black people. Walters charged that the leaders of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration,

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 27-28.

<sup>3</sup>Raymond Walters, Negroes and the Great Depression (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), p. 251.

and the National Recovery Administration were not willing to make the efforts needed to insure racial justice.

An overwhelming factor, however, that caused blacks, especially in the North, to switch from the party of Lincoln to the party of Roosevelt was the personalities and views of the New Dealers. The dominant personality of the administration, and of the era, was the President himself. In a discussion of the New Deal and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, John Hope Franklin offered the following thesis concerning the shift toward Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the New Deal:

The dramatic manner in which he tackled the problems before him captured the imagination of blacks just as it did most Americans, his fireside chats gave many a feeling of belonging that they had never experienced before.<sup>4</sup>

Another important factor in the onset of political responsibility on the part of blacks was the New Deal's policy of securing the assistance of black specialists in various government departments. Members of Roosevelt's so called "black cabinet" were not, for the most part, political. Franklin notes, to be sure, there were Negro political advisors to the President but few of them were in positions of accountability for the government. Among the most important members of the "black brain trust" was Robert L. Vann, the editor of the Pittsburgh Courier, who served as a special advisor to the Attorney General.

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<sup>4</sup>John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), p. 398.

William H. Hasty, Dean of the Howard University Law School, entered governmental service as Assistant Solicitor in the Department of the Interior. Hasty went on to serve as the Judge of the Virgin Islands and later, as Civilian Aide to the Secretary of War. Robert C. Weaver was the first black to be a racial advisor in the Department of the Interior. Weaver continued his government service, reaching his pinnacle in 1966 when he became the first black to serve as a cabinet member in his role as Secretary of Housing. Of late, historians have come to the conclusion that the most influential member of the "black brain trust" was Mary McLeod Bethune, founder and president of Bethune-Cookman College. For several years, Mrs. Bethune was the Director of the Division of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration. Mrs. Bethune also became a close friend and confidant of Mrs. Roosevelt, and was able to exercise much influence through that association.<sup>5</sup>

Among the white administrators and New Deal officers who demonstrated strong convictions concerning the need for racial justice were Harold Ickes, who had long been active with the N. A. A. C. P., Will Alexander, who did not remain throughout the entire New Deal, and Harry Hopkins, who had the greatest access to the President.

As the Roosevelt administration established numerous agencies to help the general populace recover from the severe

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 533.

depression, blacks, to be sure, would benefit to a lesser degree. This was substantiated by the evaluations of John Hope Franklin and Raymond Walters taking exception to the idea of any large-scale benefit to blacks from the New Deal. Franklin felt that because of a "long custom of discriminating against blacks, it was inevitable that in agencies there would be variation between Negro and white relief grants, numbers of workers, salaries, and the like."<sup>6</sup> Walters, in his work Negroes and the Great Depression, stated: "By 1935, most articulate Negroes had concluded that government offices had paid insufficient attention to the special problems of Negroes and that the New Deal recovery programs had failed to improve significantly the economic condition of the black masses."<sup>7</sup>

This chapter seeks not to evaluate the New Deal, but to examine the presentation of material pertinent to the New Deal and its relation to American blacks in survey level United States history college textbooks. This research will reflect when college level textbooks first included significant information on the topic of the Negro and the New Deal, the manner of that presentation, and the relevance of the information.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 252.

<sup>7</sup>Walters, Negroes and the Great Depression, p. 253.



Textbooks: 1953-1983

Harry J. Carman, in 1953, provided one of the first analytical discussions of blacks and the New Deal. It was Carman's thesis that as far as blacks were concerned, the New Deal was a regional program. It was intended only as an influence on northern blacks. Carman's contention that, for blacks, the New Deal represented a political triumph might be questioned by some latter day historians. However, in 1953, Carman stated:

Since the Civil War, the negro had looked on the party of Lincoln as its liberator and staunchest political ally. But Republicans had come to take the negro vote for granted and had made no move to improve the lot of this underprivileged minority for more than fifty years. Republican negligence proved to be the Democrat's opportunity. New Dealers permitted the Negro (if he did not live below the Mason-Dixon line) to share equally with his fellow white citizens in most of the government's social and economic programs. Moreover, the Roosevelt administration gave its support to labor organizations that opposed and forbade racial restrictions in their membership.<sup>8</sup>

Nineteen fifty-five represented a pivotal year as far as United States racial and educational history. United States history textbooks demonstrated an increased interest in the role of blacks in American history. However, on a topic as contemporary as blacks and the New Deal, textbooks offered wide variance in their coverage, and some books which seemed progressive on other racial issues said little. An excellent example was Leland Baldwin's 1955 survey text on American history which offered a provocative examination

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<sup>8</sup>Carman, A History of the American People, pp. 516-17.

and discussion of Black Reconstruction, but said nothing on the subject of the New Deal. In great contrast to the Baldwin text was Arthur S. Link's 1955 textbook The American Epic-Part II. Under caption heading "Prosperity, Depression, and the New Deal 1921-1941," Link discussed the 1936 election. He noted two significant political developments in 1936, the first being "the development of a vigorous political consciousness" among organized labor. The second significant development was "the shift of a majority of Negro leaders and newspapers in northern and midwestern states from the GOP to the party of the Democrats in 1936."<sup>9</sup>

On the decision of the Supreme Court relevant to the New Deal after 1937, Link called the student's attention to the fact that:

Negroes who had most been denied civil rights on account of race benefitted most from the court's increased vigilance . . . they enjoyed a larger degree of personal safety and the right to a fair trial in which members of their race would participate.<sup>10</sup>

The first notable criticism of the New Deal with regard to blacks was voiced by Richard Hofstadter, William Miller, and Daniel Aaron in their 1959 edition of The American Republic, re-released in 1970. Miller, Hofstadter, and Aaron provided a greater analysis and more details on

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<sup>9</sup>Arthur S. Link, The American Epic (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), p. 420.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 444.

blacks and the New Deal than any college text so far surveyed. They stated:

Among ethnic elements, Negroes had ample grounds to shun the Administration. Virtually all NRA codes, for example, discriminated against black workers on employment, wages, and job opportunities. AAA crop control payments went largely to farmers with sizeable acreage, leaving black sharecroppers empty-handed, their market curtailed. The CCC, in turn, began as a "lily white" agency; less than three per cent of the first quarter million enrolled were black. Complete segregation, moreover, remained the rule here, even when black participation was enlarged.<sup>11</sup>

As editor of The National Experience, John Blum, in his 1963 and 1978 volumes, was not as critical of Roosevelt's New Deal and its relationship to blacks as were Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron. Instead of criticizing the racial outlook of New Deal agencies and New Dealers, Blum voiced black criticism against the Hoover administration:

Though he [blacks] had voted Republican since the Civil War, the Republican administrations had showed little concern for his welfare; Negro leaders had denounced Hoover as "the man in the lily-white house." Roosevelt brought to Washington an unprecedented sympathy for Negro problems. New Deal agencies generally conformed to local folkways, but they made special efforts to help Negroes; Roosevelt himself repeatedly denounced lynching and the Northern Democrats in the Senate took the initiative to sponsor a bill to make lynching a federal crime. By 1936, Negro voters had begun to shift to the Democratic Party.<sup>12</sup>

There is, however, considerable opposition to such interpretations as Blum's of unprecedented sympathy by Roosevelt toward blacks. One of the most popularly read

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<sup>11</sup>Hofstadter, Miller, and Aaron, The American Republic, p. 462.

<sup>12</sup>Blum, The National Experience, p. 700.

and widely circulated critics of the benefits brought to blacks by Franklin Roosevelt and the New Dealers is Lerone Bennett, Jr., senior editor of Ebony Magazine. It is Bennett's contention that, "Roosevelt knew little about black people before his involvement in politics. He was a wealthy man who knew blacks almost solely as servants."<sup>13</sup>

In the proliferation of texts that occurred in the mid-1960s, two 1966 textbooks are notable because of the fame and reputation of the authors and the large-scale popularity each of the texts enjoyed. John D. Hicks, in collaboration with George E. Mowry and Robert E. Burke, offered a new edition of the textbook, A History of American Democracy, which first appeared in 1943 and was a standard by 1966. John A. Garraty released the first edition of his The American Nation. Garraty and Hicks both discussed the question of the economic effects of the New Deal on blacks. Garraty offered only a superficial analysis, similar to those that appeared in the textbooks of the 1950s. He stated that, "The New Deal relief programs looked especially important to Negroes, for in bad times they had always been the first to lose their jobs."<sup>14</sup>

John D. Hicks offered the students a more in-depth presentation. In his textbook, he attempted to span the plight of blacks from 1930 to the 1950s. The author looked

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<sup>13</sup>Lerone Bennett, Jr., Ebony Pictorial History of Black America (Nashville: Southwestern Co., 1971), p. 214.

<sup>14</sup>Garraty, The American Nation, p. 741.

at the effects of rising economic prosperity on black Americans. Of note is the fact that Hicks devoted more space, words, and statistical analysis to questions related to black Americans and the New Deal era than any text surveyed so far. In all fairness, however, the point should be made that the Hicks' text is not one of those wordy, patronizing efforts on black topics which began to appear so frequently in the 1960s. Hicks stated:

In spite of the reform measures, the economic status of Negroes remained far less satisfactory than that of whites. For thousands, there was no alternative but flight to the industrial centers. They soon learned that Negroes were almost inevitably the first to be fired and the last to be hired. During the Depression of the 1930s, the relief measures of the New Deal had proven to be a boon to the Negroes and resulted, incidentally, in a wholesale drift to the Democratic Party. Fortunately, the rising tide of prosperity that characterized the '40s lifted the Negroes along with the rest of the population. Their incomes tended to be substantially lower than those of the whites, their living conditions less satisfactory, and their jobs less secure, but in comparison to their earlier economic status, they made progress. No longer were they all in the lowest income brackets. Many had lifted themselves from the bottom fifth of the "spending units" to the fourth, third, and even second fifths.<sup>15</sup>

One characteristic of the post-1970 texts surveyed was a definite limitation in number of pages. Authors began to shorten some topics and delete others altogether. Also, the 1970s witnessed a shift in the country's outlook away from civil rights and a retreat from affirmative action to concern for Vietnam and a worsening economy. When checking

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<sup>15</sup>Hicks, Mowry, and Burke, A History of American Democracy, p. 791.

survey level texts of the 1970s (textbook indices and chapter headings), it is notable that inclusion of topics concerning blacks is limited to slavery, Reconstruction, and civil rights. One finds little if any mention of topics such as the organization of the N. A. A. C. P. or black participation in the New Deal. Richard N. Current, T. Harry Williams, and Frank Freidel, in their 1971 edition of American History Since 1865, made no mention of blacks and the New Deal or blacks and the Roosevelt administration. Current, Williams, and Freidel also excluded the effects of the Great Depression on blacks.

In the textbook, The Progressive Century-The American Nation in its Second Hundred Years by Paul W. Glad published in 1972, there is no specific topic heading on blacks and the New Deal. There is a discussion of black employment during the last days of the New Deal and the opening of World War II. He observed:

Racial minorities had suffered greater hardship during the Depression than a majority of Americans; and, with increases in industrial productions for military needs, they shared with the economically disadvantaged a hope for better times. Yet when blacks and other minorities sought jobs with companies advertising for workers, they usually encountered discriminatory hiring policies. "The Negro will be considered only as janitors and other similar capacities," announced North American Aviation with ungrammatical bluntness. "Regardless of their training as aviators, we will not employ them."  
. . . The proportion of all blacks working in all branches of manufacturing in 1940 was less than it had been a decade earlier and at the end of the year, one out of five black workers were unemployed. Those who did have jobs commonly held menial positions vacated

by whites who took advantage of better opportunities in war related industries.<sup>16</sup>

In 1975, several survey level textbooks in paperback form were sent out in mass distribution to university history departments for possible adoption for classroom survey use. These textbooks were usually in two-volume editions cut down from the one thousand pages that became common in textbooks in the 1950s and 1960s to a five to seven hundred page editions. A pattern of elimination of particular topics, as well as limitation of information on other topics, was noted in a majority of these briefer mid-seventies texts. This pattern was noted over a wide spectrum of topics. One of the areas to feel both the effects of elimination and the paring knife of limitation was topics related to black history. Two excellent examples of the phenomena of elimination and limitation were Ray Ginger's 1975 textbook People on the Move-A United States History Since 1860, and Thomas A. Bailey's The American Pageant-A History of the American Republic, also published in 1975. Ginger has no discernible discussion of the New Deal and blacks or any particular mention of the Roosevelt administration and its relations with minority groups. Bailey's discussion of blacks centered around Franklin Roosevelt's political victory in 1932. He observed:

One striking feature of the election [1932] was the beginning of a heavy shift of Negroes, traditionally

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<sup>16</sup>Paul W. Glad, The Progressive Century-The American Nation in its Second Hundred Years (New York: Heath & Co. 1972), pp. 354-55.

grateful to the Republican Party of Lincoln, over to the Roosevelt camp. As the "last hired and first fired" blacks had been among the worst sufferers of the Depression. Beginning with the election of 1932, they were to comprise, especially in the great urban centers of the North, a vital element in the Democratic Party.<sup>17</sup>

Peter d'A. Jones, in his 1976 survey level textbook, was one of the few exceptions to the pattern of deletion and elimination. On the topic of blacks and the New Deal, Jones presented one of the most critical analyses of any of the texts reviewed. He stated:

A larger minority, black Americans, were of peripheral interest to the President. Eleanor Roosevelt showed more direct interest, socializing to some extent with black leaders and inviting them to White House functions, to the horror of many southern Democrats. An interracial joint committee was set up to insure equal coverage for blacks in the recovery programs after 1933. However, federal housing programs inevitably encouraged segregated patterns in cities and many labor unions remained hostile to Negro membership. F. D. R. appointed a few blacks to higher offices such as Mary McLeod Bethune, who headed Negro Affairs in the NYA. The Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, was the first high official to hire blacks; he was ex-President of the Chicago NAACP.

Mild tokenism typified New Deal policy towards black Americans. F. D. R. gave no overt, strong support for anti-lynching bills and offered no civil rights legislation during his four terms in office. The political realities were that Roosevelt had many battles to fight, and southerners were very powerful in the party of the '30s. Without a "southern strategy" F. D. R. could not win. It was a political miracle that Roosevelt's alliance could include, side by side, black members and white racists.<sup>18</sup>

The ideas Jones voiced had been heard before and expressed by Dan Lacy in his 1972 study of race relations

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<sup>17</sup> Bailey, The American Pageant, p. 871.

<sup>18</sup> Jones, The U. S.: A History of its People, pp. 616-17.



in the United States entitled The White Use of Blacks in America. Lacy stated:

The New Deal protected the home of the homeowner, the deposit of bank depositors, the right of the securities investor to honest disclosure, the right of the farm owner to minimum prices, the right of the union worker to organize and have his union recognized, the right of employees in industry to social security and a minimum wage. But these New Deal measures did nothing for the man who owned no home or farm, had no money to invest or deposit, was excluded from unions and worked in agriculture or domestic service--in short, for the black.<sup>19</sup>

However, Rebecca Brooks Gruver's 1976 text is another excellent example of the trend of textbook writers to limit their explanation and presentation on particular topics. While Gruver offered an in-depth analysis of Reconstruction and black involvement, on the subject of blacks and the New Deal, she stated simply that:

The election [1932] produced at least one significant shift in voting patterns. Many northern blacks left the Republican fold and voted for Roosevelt. Two factors causing this shift were the hardships of the Depression and the Republicans failure to make an effort to end discrimination.<sup>20</sup>

In 1980, John A. Garraty revised his popular American Nations textbook, which first appeared in 1966. The 1966 edition of Garraty's work was hardback, totalling more than nine hundred pages, and included a brief, but in-depth discussion of New Deal policies affecting blacks.

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<sup>19</sup>Dan Lacy, The White Use of Black Americans (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1972), pp. 227-28.

<sup>20</sup>Gruver, An American History, p. 832.

In the Garraty 1980 abridged edition entitled A Short History of the American Nation, which appeared in a paperback edition of only 544 pages, there is no in-depth general discussion of blacks and the New Deal. Also, there is a deletion of the discussion of relief efforts and minority groups which had appeared in the previous Garraty edition. The only discussion of black involvement and the Roosevelt administration is a brief statement on the 1936 election. "Black voters, traditionally Republican, switched to the Democrats in large numbers."<sup>21</sup>

Charles Dollar, in his 1982 America's Changing Times, followed Garraty's pattern of providing no general discussion of blacks and the New Deal. In a brief presentation discussing Eleanor Roosevelt and her relationship with Mary McLeod Bethune, Dollar asserted that the Roosevelt administration had a poor record of protecting the rights of minorities. Dollar stated:

In the area of protecting minority civil rights, the record of the New Deal was relatively poor despite the efforts of Eleanor Roosevelt and the efforts of the "black cabinet" of advisors. Mrs. Roosevelt worked very closely with Mrs. Mary McLeod Bethune, President of the National Council of Negro Women, in focussing attention on the plight of blacks.<sup>22</sup>

Current, Williams, Freidel, and Brinkley actually increased their presentation on blacks and the New Deal

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<sup>21</sup>Garraty, A Short History of the American Nation, p. 444.

<sup>22</sup>Dollar, America's Changing Times, p. 799.

from previous editions. They concurred with Dollar's assessment that Eleanor Roosevelt was responsible in the greater degree for winning the support of blacks for Roosevelt and the New Deal. They stated:

For the first time in American history, supporters of racial equality had an ally in the White House. It was not the President, however, but Eleanor Roosevelt. . . . The President, although basically sympathetic to the plight of blacks, believed that other problems were far more pressing and was unwilling to risk losing the support of southern Democrats by becoming too much identified with the race issue.<sup>23</sup>

Eleanor Roosevelt appeared as the heroine of the Roosevelt administration in the 1983 volume, A People and a Nation by Mary Beth Norton, David M. Katzman, Paul D. Escott, Howard P. Chudacoff, and Thomas G. Patterson. The authors present to the student a discussion of Mrs. Roosevelt's arranging for black contralto Marian Anderson to sing Easter Sunday at the Lincoln Memorial after she was denied a chance to perform at Constitution Hall. The authors of A People and a Nation also bluntly informed the students "The President himself, however, remained uncommitted to the black civil rights movement."<sup>24</sup>

In the A People and a Nation textbook the authors also felt comfortable in informing the students:

Some New Deal programs and agencies functioned in ways that were definitely hostile to black Americans, and Roosevelt and the Congress shared the blame for their

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<sup>23</sup>Current et al, American History A Survey Since 1865, pp. 772-773.

<sup>24</sup>Norton et al, A People and a Nation, p. 740.

failing. The AAA, rather than benefiting black tenants and sharecroppers, actually forced many of them off the land. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) refused to guarantee mortgages on houses purchased by blacks in white neighborhoods, and the U. S. Housing Authority financed segregated housing projects. The CCC was racially segregated, as was much of the TVA, which constructed all-white towns, handed out jobs to whites first, and segregated its labor crews. When the NRA agreed to lower wages for blacks, one black newspaper commented, "The Blue Eagle may be for Negroes a predatory bird instead of a feathered messenger of happiness." Finally, waiters, cooks, hospital orderlies, janitors, farm workers, and domestics, many of whom were black, were excluded from Social Security coverage and from the minimum-wage provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. In short, though blacks benefited, they did not get their fair share.<sup>25</sup>

It became quite apparent to the researcher that Roosevelt, the New Deal, and its relationships with black Americans received constant and rapid re-evaluation from textbook authors. This type of re-evaluation is essential if textbooks are to remain relevant, useful tools to the classroom teacher.

Summary and Evaluation: Blacks  
and the New Deal

Throughout the Great Depression, Franklin Delano Roosevelt said nothing about black-white relations. Statistics, however, report that he succeeded in winning black support in his political contests. So as not to anger southern whites when he was President, Roosevelt never openly condemned lynching. Because Roosevelt had

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<sup>25</sup>Norton et al, A People and a Nation, p. 741.

no fixed policy about improving social and economic conditions for blacks, the matter rested with individual heads of Roosevelt's New Deal agencies who had spotty records at best in matters concerning equal opportunity. In spite of this, Roosevelt and his New Deal converted the majority of black voters from the party of Lincoln to the party of Roosevelt.

The textbooks surveyed written during the 1940s said nothing regarding Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the New Deal, and blacks. Samuel Eliot Morison, in his 1950 textbook, presented a general discussion of blacks and their quest for civil rights during the Roosevelt and Truman administrations. Morison also presented a brief discussion of Roosevelt's proclamation that there be "no discrimination in the employment of workers for the civil defense industry."

By 1953, Harry J. Carman was crediting Republican negligence of blacks with the catapulting of this minority into Roosevelt's New Deal Democratic Party. Carman stipulated that the New Deal permitted the Negro in the North to share in most, if not all, the New Deal's social and economic programs. As pointed out previously in this research, survey level textbooks written after 1954 have, in most instances, demonstrated as positive as possible a portrayal of topics concerning blacks. As might be expected, historians were prone to imply that it was Roosevelt's intention to have

his New Deal benefit blacks. As this research has discovered, this was not a primary intention, but a circumstantial result. However, in 1955, Arthur Link felt justified in calling students' attention to the fact that "Negroes enjoyed a large degree of personal safety and the right to a fair trial in which members of their race would participate." This Link credited to the Supreme Court and its decision relative to the New Deal after 1937.

By 1959, Miller, Hofstadter, and Aaron produced the first major interpretation of blacks and the New Deal after 1954 and the Brown Decision. It is their contention that blacks had numerous good reasons to shun the New Deal. Miller, Hofstadter, and Aaron charged that the N. R. A. codes and the A. A. A. and C. C. C. agencies both discriminated against blacks and were completely segregated agencies.

By the mid-1960s, John D. Hicks instructed students that "In spite of the reform measures [of the New Deal] the economic status of the Negro was far less satisfactory than that of whites." However, Hicks surmised that the rising tide of prosperity generated by the 1940s lifted the Negro along with the rest of the population. However, John A. Garraty, in a 1966 textbook, stated that the New Deal relief programs were important in those bad times to Negroes. It seems clear from this brief statement that Garraty, like other authors writing during this period,

implied that the benefits of the New Deal for blacks were intentional when, in actuality, they were residual.

As the textbooks of the 1970s made their appearance, several changes were discernible. With few exceptions, they were paperback editions of less than a thousand pages, with deletions of many traditional topics previously included in survey level works. One of the topics that suffered serious deletion in many 1970s texts was Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal and its effect upon the "forgotten man," a title encompassing American minority groups, including blacks. In their 1970s textbooks, neither Current, Williams, and Freidel, or Ray Ginger made any statement on the New Deal and its effect on American minorities, nor did they detail the misery suffered by blacks during the Great Depression. Thomas A. Bailey, in a 1975 major textbook, limited his discussion of blacks and the New Deal to a presentation concerning black political support for Roosevelt in his 1932 campaign.

There were few notable exceptions to the pattern of elimination and reduction in coverage of topics related to the New Deal and black Americans as the 1970s proceeded. Where there were presentations in textbooks, authors were split as to whether the benefits were intentional or residual. Peter d'A. Jones, in a lengthy 1975 presentation, charged that black Americans were only a peripheral interest to Roosevelt and his New Dealers. Additionally, Jones

stipulated that Roosevelt gave no overt, strong support for civil rights legislation or anti-lynch law during his years in office. Jones, however, did not see fit to discuss any factors that might have prevented Roosevelt's intervention on behalf of blacks during the New Deal Years.

Rebecca Brooks Gruver, in 1976, demonstrated another significant pattern characteristic of textbooks of that era, i.e., a presentation limited to the political shift of blacks in 1932 and the crediting of that shift to the New Deal. However, there was no discussion of anything controversial in nature.

It has become apparent that limited presentations on blacks and the New Deal will be a pattern continued until authors feel compelled by classroom teachers to provide more accurate information on the topic. In examining John A. Garraty's 1980 survey, this pattern of deletion and limitation concerning blacks and the New Deal is presently continued. The only exception to this pattern discovered through this research was the Mary Beth Norton text, A People and a Nation, which contains moderate coverage but excellent analysis. It is the contention of Charles Sellers, Henry May, and Neil R. McMillen, in their analysis of American history entitled A Synopsis of American History, that "The most important changes brought about by the New Deal were social, rather than economic, and incidental, rather than programmatic. Domination of American society by an elite made up of a native [white], urban, upper



middle-class, a combination never secure and never official, but long particularly effective, had become impossible."<sup>26</sup> If this contention is acceptable to the authors of survey level textbooks and classroom teachers, continued analysis and evaluation of the immediate and long range effects of the New Deal and black Americans will be necessary and useful for students in survey level United States history courses.

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<sup>26</sup>Charles Sellers, Henry May, and Neil R. McMillen, A Synopsis of American History, vol. 2, (Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1974), p. 358.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, TEACHING RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Most course outlines and proposals suggest "critical thinking" as a course objective of survey level United States history courses. Development of critical thinking usually ranks high among the professed objectives of higher education. For the history professor, it is so easy to become engrossed in what happened that the significance of training the student in logical thinking may be overlooked. Conscientious teachers may prefer to concentrate on the facts, of which they are more confident, than on debatable learning principles which are difficult to measure.

Many teachers encourage students to read contrasting views which may range from outright propaganda to scholarly monographs, but the varying interpretations may be even more striking when they appear in textbooks which provide the core of a generation's understanding. A teacher handling a survey course cannot hope to make every student a competent scholar. But if the student learns to question beliefs, especially his own, the teacher has succeeded.

This research has focused on a survey of college level United States history textbooks post-1900 and their

depiction of black Americans in selected instances. A further consideration of this research was whether, with the passage of time, and in reaction to particular events, authors change their presentations. This research began with the assumption that contact with a given group of facts may be a catalyst for the modification of attitudes, and possibly, behavior in a situation. If students are made aware of certain facts, it may foster the development of a questioning attitude, which in turn stimulates the search for more information. This research sought to discover whether authors do distinguish between fact and opinion in the amount of bias that influences the writing of American history.

All of the previous discussion takes on major importance because black Americans have been an integral part of the life and history of the United States from the Colonial period to the present. The presentation of black Americans in college level textbooks has been partly affected by the attitudes held by textbook writers toward this minority group or their perceptions of how the buying public may react to controversial material.

On the topic of Reconstruction, in the earliest textbooks surveyed, authors presented selected facts on Reconstruction to support their particular presentation, and often marred the image of black Americans. Most prominently expressed in the texts of the late 1890s and

early 1900s was the idea that responsibility for the freedmen should have been entrusted to the South's white citizens. The portrait of Reconstruction as painted in the textbooks of that era was dominated by carpetbaggers and ignorant or misguided blacks, both of which made poor lawmakers. This justified the methods devised to keep blacks from the polls, and thus, preclude their participation in politics. These early textbooks did vary in their depiction of blacks. However, the black population as a whole was most frequently depicted as ignorant, idle wanderers who were vicious and unwilling to work. Blacks during the Reconstruction era were shown to be receiving an education and becoming hard-working citizens, though not expecting social equality. Thus, the student of the early 1900s through the World War I period was not always provided with a concrete idea of the role of blacks in American life in the era of Reconstruction. In comparison with the texts of later eras, one discovers that there were omissions that detracted from the veracity of some early texts, while other texts presented half-truths and mis-statements.

In the period between the two world wars, textbook authors demonstrated a conciliatory mood toward the white South and its problems of Reconstruction. Blacks, during Reconstruction, were considered to be the cause of the South's ruin. Several authors mirrored David Seville Muzzey's contention that the South's humiliation came as a result of

"Negro domination." The main themes found in Reconstruction were that the inexperienced blacks were exploited by northern whites, as well as some unscrupulous white southerners. This caused southern misrule. Additional depictions point out that the South had a problem on its hands with the presence of a large number of free, irresponsible blacks.

In 1954, with legal decisions handed down in support of personal equality, textbooks made a re-assessment on the role of blacks in American history. There emerged a great diversity of opinion on topics relating to blacks, particularly Reconstruction. The moral consciousness and social awareness which emerged in the 1950s remained a prominent feature of college level United States history textbooks throughout the 1960s and early 1970s. These attitudes extended not only to contemporary issues, but also to topics in the past, particularly Reconstruction. The survey textbooks of the 1970s, when discussing Reconstruction, demonstrated one of the theses of this research. They reflected, to a great degree, the period in which they were written. Authors such as Rebecca Brooks Gruver applied their social consciousness to every issue concerning race, particularly Reconstruction.

As the textbooks of the 1980s make their appearance, traditional topics such as Reconstruction have remained a focal point with textbook authors. However, their presentations have been greatly limited as far as space and

number of words allotted. Several topics have suffered curtailment or complete deletion. This, however, supports this researcher's contention that textbooks do reflect the era in which they are produced. All indicators suggest a lessening of social consciousness and interest in minority groups in America. Additionally, textbooks, because of the economics of the era, have limited their coverage of many topics.

The authors of survey texts in the 20th century have shown varying degrees of awareness of blacks in America as one of the nation's problems to be pointed out to students. However, there has been little recognition of what discrimination has meant to blacks themselves. An indisputable fact is that textbooks are written from the author's perspective. By the 1880s, social scientists in America had acquiesced to the perspective of the Social Darwinists. Textbook authors of survey level United States history textbooks written in the early 1900s wrote primarily for an audience of Anglo-Saxon students more conservative than those of today. When considering non-Anglo-Saxons, authors pointed out that these people were "different." Often, non-Anglo-Saxons were referred to as "them."

In the period following World War I, the application of Social Darwinistic principles in survey level United States history textbooks often was manifested in the implication that non-Anglo Saxon people were the root of race

problems in the United States or would themselves experience race problems in the United States. American authors also fell under the influence of Englishman Rudyard Kipling and his writings concerning the "the white man's burden." A third factor influencing Social Darwinistic presentations during this period was identified by Richard Hofstadter in textbooks of the early 1900s. Hofstadter pointed out that the attempts to develop a science comparable to the biological sciences was a highly significant factor influencing textbook authorship.

In the years between World Wars I and II, the implication of Social Darwinistic thinking in survey level texts whenever they dealt with topics related to race were crucial. William H. Mayes questioned the degree of civilization attained by non-Anglo-Saxons. Charles A. Beard cited race as an important consideration in economics in judging all matters. Another characteristic of Social Darwinistic presentation in the years between the wars was that non-Anglo-Saxons were presented with no verity and no virtues discernible to whites.

By the 1940s, authors began a pattern of quoting from other's interpretations when reporting on matters that related to Social Darwinistic viewpoints in textbooks. Allen Nevins and Henry Steele Commager felt comfortable in quoting from Kipling's ideas on race. Frank Owsley, Oliver Chitwood and H. C. Nixon quoted from the semi-official

Sherman Report of an earlier era. From this report, students were informed that one group of non-whites [Filipinos] were not capable of handling the responsibilities of independence.

The reporting of the comments of others, or the citing of general interpretations does not constitute coverage of a controversial issue. The lack of sufficient treatment of some topics in history, according to Howard J. Beale, in a 1936 American Historical Association report entitled "Are American Teachers Free?" may be because of the fact that they are controversial issues. One can only question, however, the likely effect of studying from history texts which avoid controversy. By the mid-1950s, there appeared several serious attempts to analyze the American racial situation from the perspective of Social Darwinism. Richard Hofstadter, William Miller, and Daniel Aaron, in the late 1950s, all studied the effects of Social Darwinism in the United States. They took notice of the fact that American minority groups, particularly blacks, were less silent and less patient of discrimination, than had been the case when Social Darwinism was in vogue.

Textbooks of the 1960s demonstrated a degree of maturity on the issue of Social Darwinistic theory in America. Hicks, Mowry, and Burke felt compelled to tell students that in the South from the 1890s till the World War I era, blacks had no social status. The textbooks of the 1960s also showed maturity by no longer subjecting



the students to presentations concerning the uncivilized and barbarous acts of non-Anglo-Saxon imperialized peoples in the pre-World War I era.

This research noted that the expansion of authorship of survey level texts in the 1970s was a factor which had a degree of influence in material presented for students. Rebecca Brooks Gruver challenged the traditional view of religious motivation for American imperialism. Expanded social consciousness was also a prominent feature of this diversified authorship.

Brevity and limitation of topics has reduced the presentation on several areas as textbooks of the 1980s make their appearance. One area to suffer limitation has been the discussion of Social Darwinistic theory as it interprets the plight of black Americans. Textbooks do in fact reflect the interests of the era in which they were written.

With the discussion of the Great Depression, Franklin Roosevelt, and black Americans, textbooks attempted a better rounded treatment of interest. They included more information on the history of the people and their problems in contrast to emphasizing how the government had faced and met its problems with the minority group. In the late 1930s, a part of the black population expressed opinions concerning the status of blacks and the New Deal through political and non-political organizations. However, the great

majority of blacks were indifferent or fearful of acting on questions of their own treatment. United States history textbooks of the New Deal era and the late 1940s said little or nothing about the New Deal and its relationships with black Americans.

It was not until 1959 that the first major interpretation of what the New Deal meant to blacks appeared in a survey level college textbook. Miller, Hofstadter, and Aaron presented the facts which led them to conclude that New Deal agencies were both segregated and practiced discrimination. The students were presented with the facts of the racial situation during the New Deal era. There was no change in interpretation of blacks and the New Deal between the late 1950s and 1960s. When John D. Hicks, in his major revised text, concluded that in spite of the reform measures, in the New Deal the economic status of blacks was far less satisfactory than that of whites.

By the 1970s, the topics of F. D. R., the New Deal and blacks, like other topics, suffered severe limitations. In a 1965 lengthy presentation, however, Peter d'A. Jones concluded that black Americans were only a peripheral interest to Roosevelt and his administration, and that no overt civil rights or anti-lynch legislation was proposed during their tenure. Another interesting trend of texts during the late 1970s and early 1980s is the inclusion of a presentation on blacks and the New Deal being included

under the caption "Political Analysis." Rebecca Brooks Gruver pointed out that in the 1932 political campaign, black voters shifted to F. D. R. and the Democratic Party. Gruver, like Thomas A. Bailey, offered little of a controversial nature regarding Roosevelt and blacks.

It must be questioned whether or not controversial topics can be ignored or bypassed in textbooks when they are often vitally important to a student's comprehension of the multi-racial composition of the United States. Over forty years ago, Tyler Kepner, in a study for the National Council for Social Scientists, concluded that in the educational system of America so much dependence is placed on textbooks that, in the main, their content is a fair indication of what has been taught, as well as one source of pupil and adult opinion on social issues.

Although this research has been selective, enough of the history of black Americans has been included to indicate that their influence on America has been great. Likewise, it can be concluded that America has powerfully influenced the physical and social environment of blacks. If history was correctly interpreted in survey level texts, then it should follow that there would be a more intelligent understanding of the problems of black Americans and their search for status in contemporary America. The survey level classroom teacher has responsibility for relevant teaching, even on controversial issues such as race relations. As

education demands more penetrating information on minorities, particularly blacks, survey level textbooks need not be restricted to traditional topics and treatments on black Americans. Authors and historians can draw more freely on relevant factual information on blacks in order to develop a well-balanced treatment for textbooks designed for classroom use. It is hoped that this approach in textbooks will have a desirable influence on the American college population and that that influence will carry over into every phase of American life.

#### Application to Classroom Teaching

Knowledge gained from this research may be utilized by the classroom teacher to aid students in understanding what has caused different interpretations of the same events that have appeared in history texts. Teachers can discuss factors which have precipitated different interpretations of events involving black Americans, thereby inviting students to do some critical thinking on this issue.

This research found that the prevailing view of race in the United States during the period in which the text was written significantly influenced the content of the text. A second factor likely to influence the author's perception of events, and therefore what the students read, was the author's background, the region in which he was educated, and his place of residence at the time during which he completed his text. The factor of the author's

place of residence, or audience, takes on greater significance when the topic under consideration is one of both regional and racial interest.

The topic of Reconstruction encompasses all of the aforementioned considerations. The era during which the textbook was written takes on primary importance when one realizes that a student would have great difficulty recognizing the same topic was under discussion if he were to first read Waddy Thompson's presentation written in the early 1900s on the Civil War in the South, and then John A. Garraty's 1980 offering on the same period.

When examining early twentieth century presentations on Reconstruction, it is evident that in the early part of the era the most prominent identification for black Americans was the racial group identification of "Negro." In several of the survey textbooks, the word "Negro" is spelled with a small "n". Certain implications can be drawn from the capitalization (or lack) of the word "Negro." However, it would be wise for the classroom teacher to instruct students that until the mid-1970s it was perfectly acceptable and correct to refer to black Americans as "Negroes." This is an excellent example of how the era during which the text was written can influence the presentation of the material.

When discussing the topic of Reconstruction, students should be alerted to the fact that in many textbooks written

until the 1960s, blacks were presented as passive characters not able to act in their own behalf. Teachers have the responsibility of instructing students that blacks were active for their race and in their nation's behalf. All blacks were indirectly affected by Reconstruction, but not all were directly affected. None of the textbooks surveyed, until those of the 1940s, mentioned the fact that not all blacks lived in the South, or that not all southern blacks were slaves. Additionally, in earlier texts where there were presentations of the activities of blacks during Reconstruction, most emphasized the evil aspects of politics when blacks participated as voters or legislators. In the past, and presently, if objective presentations are to be made on the Reconstruction era, textbook writers and classroom teachers need to give balanced attention to inform students that there was good done by the legislatures in which blacks participated, as in other spheres of southern life in which blacks were involved after the Civil War.

An additional factor revealed by this research concerning the nature of the passive characters in history of which classroom teachers must be cognizant is that, until the 1960s, blacks were not the only passive characters in history texts. All non-Anglo-Saxons were seen as passive characters in history not able to act in their own behalf. In the chapter on the application of Social Darwinistic principles evident in survey level texts, when discussing

the era of imperialism, the peoples of the Pacific were always presented as passive characters. In the majority of the textbooks surveyed written in the early twentieth century, students were usually informed of the attempts by the United States to provide civilization and government to imperialized people, and the problems they caused for the United States. However, textbook authors and teachers have a responsibility to raise the question with students of the monumental problem of culture shock and the other problems caused for the inhabitants by imperialism. There was also a strong tendency in the majority of textbooks written until the mid-1950s to describe the peoples of the islands as uncivilized and barbarians.

Teachers of the past and present have a responsibility to examine textbooks to discover if they contain statements which are unfair to and biased against any group of people. Several pieces of research written within the last twenty years have supported the thesis that the bulk of available United States history texts present a biased and inaccurate view of minority groups in America (Bone, 1966; Katz, 1973; Sobel, 1973; Stamp et al, 1964). With the attention paid to integration of college classrooms since the mid-1950s, the audience for survey level textbooks has greatly diversified. The classroom teacher must be cognizant of the fact that texts which voice explicit or implied bias with racial consideration are of no value in

providing blacks a realistic understanding of their heritage necessary for a healthy self-image. Nor can they aid in dispelling complacency or assumptions of superiority of whites because of ignorance concerning the vital role of blacks in building America.

All of the major presentations surveyed in the research on the topic of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the New Deal, and its relationship with black Americans were written after 1954 and the monumental Brown Decision. All available research indicates that underlying the Brown Decision was the Supreme Court's recognition of the tremendous power wielded by the educational administration. Textbooks have the power to influence, and can demand the attention of the student. When Considering F. D. R., the New Deal, and its relationship to blacks, students discovered that there was no real New Deal for blacks. Teachers can point out to the students that textbooks written in the era of the 1960s were prone to be blatantly honest on matters of race. In the 1960s, authors were most often willing to point out instances of racial discrimination. This is characteristic of the era of the late 1960s and 1970s. Students may be questioned by their teachers concerning changes in the economic status of blacks brought about by the New Deal. Nineteen-sixties authors, on the New Deal and blacks, in several instances provided a type of thought-provoking presentations when they pointed out that,



in spite of the relief efforts of the New Deal, blacks continued to lag behind whites. Students may also be questioned concerning whether there was a program of relief for blacks, or did they simply receive the residual benefits of the New Deal. The issues of whether the New Deal actually affected the lives of black Americans should also be examined.

On the topics surveyed, teachers might make a strong learning presentation on the fact that economic considerations are an important influence on what appears in survey level history texts. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, economic circumstances, coupled with changes in publishing policies, led to a reduction of coverage or outright deletion of many subjects related to black Americans. Only traditional topics such as Reconstruction remained in some form in all survey textbooks. Many of the usual presentations on the political aspects of Reconstruction now also included a discussion of its economic aspects. Some few of the presentations were limited to the economic aspect, which reflects present interest. All recent presentations, however, have been shortened. In these briefer, usually paperback textbooks, presentations on Social Darwinism's effect on black Americans have become more difficult to identify. If authors are not interested in the era of the late 1880s-1890s, information on Social Darwinism may escape presentation completely. If the teacher deems presentations on such matter necessary, they must find alternative ways of

accomplishing this end without the use of textbooks. This also may be necessary on several topics related to black Americans. One important caution to come out of this research, however, is that classroom teachers must be quite cautious in instructing students to use just any survey textbooks, unfamiliar textbooks, or textbooks from another era who present blacks in such a way that their deleterious effects outweighed their potential benefits.

### Conclusion

This research has also revealed that in all topics related to black Americans classroom teachers must often direct students to readings from supplemental sources to obtain a balanced view of black Americans. A content analysis of selected United States history textbooks pointed out that blacks were generally excluded from the textbooks for survey level United States history students. The few topics that were regularly and generally included (Reconstruction, the New Deal, and the Civil Rights era) were often subject to fallacy and flights of misinterpretation. The problems of limitation and an attempt at re-interpretation were not widespread until the mid-1960s.

Teachers must endeavor to help students realize that the legal and actual status of black Americans did not always coincide and realize that, because of this, the historical conclusions presented should be based on varied sources in order to obtain a balanced picture. A

survey of other relevant literature to discover the temper of the time during which the textbook was written is also essential. An attempt to discover whether the milieu of the era when the textbook was written affects the authors writing about the past is of relevance to both teachers and students. Teachers should point out the significance of social forces which were outside the control of black Americans, such as segregation and discrimination.

This research supported the importance of surveying certain historical theses and their influence on lower level textbooks. Such an approach is invaluable in assessing the perspective and probable impact of a text. As all of the previous research on the significance of textbooks to classroom teaching has concluded, the textbook is second only to the teacher in facilitating effective teaching and a successful learning experience. On topics related to black Americans as well as all factual material, textbooks must endeavor to present the truth. Though being contained within a text does not guarantee the student will: (1) read it, and (2) perceive it as meant to be, or (3) receive a positive picture of the event from the teacher, it is certainly better to include it in a text than take the chance that a student will never read it at all.

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