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DEMOCRACY IN COLONIAL AMERICA: A STUDY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ITS TREATMENT IN HISTORIOGRAPHIC SOURCE MATERIALS, AND TO ITS EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Arthur Wallace Toby Williams

A Dissertation presented to the
Graduate Faculty of Middle Tennessee State University
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for the degree Doctor of Arts

August, 1975

DEMOCRACY IN COLONIAL AMERICA: A STUDY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ITS TREATMENT IN HISTORIOGRAPHIC SOURCE MATERIALS, AND TO ITS EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

DEMOCRACY IN COLONIAL AMERICA: A STUDY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO ITS TREATMENT IN HISTORIOGRAPHIC SOURCE MATERIALS, AND TO ITS EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

by Arthur Wallace Toby Williams

The study addresses itself to certain basic educational problems occasioned by the increased interest in the nature of American democracy and especially in its roots in colonial America. Specifically, the study is concerned with the nature of the treatment of the theme and concepts of democracy in colonial America in high school and college textbooks. Also of concern is the interrelationships between treatment of colonial democracy in primary and secondary sources and its treatment in various schools of historical interpretation in the wider academic historical literature.

The study proceeded from an abstract definition of democracy to operational definitions and examples of practical democracy. A study of colonial American source materials concerning democracy was made followed by a critical review of a representative range of historical literature. Finally a detailed critical analysis was made of, respectively, seven high school and five college texts officially adopted for use in the State of Tennessee.

Arthur Wallace Toby Williams

The basic findings of the study were that democracy was practiced in colonial America; that there was a differentiation in the treatment of democracy in colonial America in the texts examined, both in terms of coverage given and in actual treatment of the topic; that there were linkages between the nature of that coverage and the five schools of historical interpretation discerned from a survey of the literature, although such links were tenuous rather than explicit; that there was little differentiation between the high school and college texts examined; that there was room for substantial improvement in the treatment of the topic of democracy in colonial America. The study concluded with recommendations for further research and for possible changes in the teaching of the topic of democracy in colonial America in the light of the findings of the dissertation, with particular reference to the teaching of college survey courses in American history.

In the main, the recommendations that concluded the study centered on the need to reassess the entire subject of the teaching of democracy at both the high school and college levels. Contemporary student and educational needs were cited as indicating the appropriateness of expanding and improving textbook treatments of the nation's democratic beginnings, particularly with reference to the earliest years of the colonial period. Broad textbook coverage was recommended as a concomitant to introduction of a more critical approach based

in sensitivity of the people of the colonial period, and to the differing views of historians. Fuller treatment that might lead to deeper understanding of colonial democracy was seen as especially appropriate in texts prepared for the use of college students.

CONTENTS

Chapter Page

I. INTRODUCTION. 1

Statement of the Problem
Purpose of the Study
Need for the Study
Scope of the Study
Definitions

II. A SURVEY OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY. 23

III. A SURVEY OF HISTORICAL LITERATURE CONCERNING EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY. 48

Historical Interpretations
The Whig School
The Imperial School
The School of Progressive and Economic Determinists
The School of Mid-Century Neo-Conservatism
Varying Interpretations and the Question of Democracy in Colonial America

IV. THE HIGH SCHOOL TEXTS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS. . . 78

Bailey: The American Pageant
Feder: Viewpoints, USA
Frost and Associates: A History of the United States
Graff and Krout: The Adventures of the American People
Kownslar and Frizzel: Discovering American History
Wade, Wilder, and Wade: A History of the United States
Williams and Wolf: Our American Nation
Findings: A Preliminary Overview

V. THE COLLEGE TEXTS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS. 115

Blum and Associates: The National Experience
Current, Williams, and Freidel: American History: A Survey

Garraty: The American Nation
Gruver: An American History
Findings: A Preliminary Overview

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. 140

Conclusions
Recommendations

BIBLIOGRAPHY. 154

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> To use the word democracy is to raise, but not, I think to solve a problem of definition . . . the discussion has such a strong tendency to slide from what we *do* mean to what we *ought* to mean that for purposes of definition it seems to be applicable only in the broadest sense.[1]
>
> J. R. Pole

To paraphrase Ben Franklin's weather classic: everyone talks about democracy; no one ever does anything about it, or better, no one agrees what it means. Civilization was already old when democracy made its first notable appearance among the small city states of ancient Greece, where it flourished brilliantly for a brief century or two and then disappeared. At about the same time something that might be called democracy appeared in Rome and other Italian cities. Even in Rome democracy did not survive the conquest of the world by the Roman Republic, except as a form of local administration in the cities of the empire. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries certain favorably placed medieval cities enjoyed a measure of

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[1]J. R. Pole, "Historians and the Problem of Early American Democracy," *American Historical Review* 67 (April 1962): 627. The emphasis is in the original.

self-government, but in most instances it was soon replaced by the dictatorship of military conquerors, the oligarchic control of a few families, or the encroaching power of autocratic kings. The oldest democracy of modern times is the Swiss Confederation, the next oldest is the Dutch Republic. In seventeenth century England, the most democratic group was the Levelers, and they were generally despised by the well born. The directors of the British Commonwealth appear to have been more theocratic than democratic and their intellectual kin in the colonies were notoriously undemocratic to non-church members. How democratic was the English Bill of Rights of 1689 and the philosophy of John Locke, which became so popular in the Atlantic Seaboard Colonies? Emphasis on the natural rights of life, liberty and property did promote the growth of democratic institutions but may have impeded the growth of the democratic ideals of equality and fraternity. The English concept of virtual representation in Parliament was held as undemocratic by many English and Colonial taxpayers. The colonists built their own institutions, emphasizing the democratic side of the English tradition. The dominant organ of the colonial government turned out to be the assemblies. These legislative bodies became both remarkably democratic and independent. It was the strength of these assemblies that habituated the colonists to behave

more like democratic citizens than the colonial subjects of a king. Like much else in the colonial political arrangements, the assemblies had their origin in the charters on the basis of which the colonies had been founded. The charters are important first of all because each in some way resembled a written constitution. The Mayflower Compact and the Connecticut and Rhode Island charters are particularly interesting. In the Mayflower Compact (1620) the settlers, going beyond the original charter, themselves undertook to spell out the terms by which they agreed to be governed. This introduced a distinctly democratic element into the charter process. The Mayflower Compact is the most famous statement of democracy in the seventeenth century colonial experience. The Connecticut (1622) and Rhode Island (1663) charters were wholly written by the settlers themselves and moreover established substantially democratic forms of governments. Consequently, in the 1780s, when the new states in America were writing constitutions, both Connecticut and Rhode Island simply converted their original colonial charters into state constitutions.

During the eighteenth century the democratic spirit of the colonial assemblies were influenced by the Enlightenment, agricultural and industrial evolution, the opening of the western frontier, Deism, the Methodist movement, the decline of natural philosophy and the beginning of philosophy and the beginning of philosophical idealism. The

colonies and their assemblies were also influenced by the Navigation Acts, the Albany Plan of Union (1754), the French and Indian War (1756), the Sugar Act (1764), the Stamp Act (1765), the Currency Act (1765), the Townshend Acts (1767), the Intolerable Acts (1774), the Continental Congresses (1775), and the Articles of Confederation (1776). Combined with these influences was the fact that the eighteenth century was the moment in history when men first fully realized the engaging implications of the modern doctrine of progress: the idea that, by deliberate intention and rational direction, men can set the terms and improve the conditions of their mundane existence. At all times political thought must accommodate itself in some fashion to the prevailing world view, and liberal-democratic political thought, especially in the American colonies, readily accommodated itself to this change in the world view. The voice of the people was now identified with the voice of God, and authority was now derived from it. In the colonies, the people elected their representatives to the lower houses of the assemblies. The people made it known that the first task of the assemblies was to define the rights of the citizen, the second to devise a form of government suited to guarantee those rights. The imprescriptible rights of man were easily defined, since, for many, they were self-evident: "All men are created equal, [and] are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which

are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." It was the achievement of a considerable amount of political and economic independence, the union of political and economic purpose and ability which elevated these English subjects from colonists to Americans and made any threat to their established rights a vital challenge. It was this national liberal-democratic spirit, temporarily elevated in the face of a common danger, which found dramatic expression in Patrick Henry's remark in 1765 that he was no longer just a Virginian but an American as well. It was this fundamental conception of themselves as a nation which made meaningful the various theoritical claims of the colonists against the English and gave them a will to resist even to the point of revolution. It was this commonality of will that led the American colonists to subordinate local differences to join in a common purpose. Thus it was, to paraphrase John Adams, the revolution was effected before the war commenced. The revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people.

Historians still dispute important aspects of the colonial period. Were the major differences between colonies and mother country economic, political, religious, or a combination of many things? What was the influence of governors, decisions made by Kings, Queens, and Parliament, and the assemblies? How much impact upon the political and economic development came from the western frontier,

John Locke, and Thomas Paine? Was there any evidence of democracy within the colonies during the colonial experience? The last question is our major concern at this point.

Whatever else has transpired over the nearly 200 years of national development, two basic developments have occurred in the world of scholarship and of education generally. The first is that this long period has seen the rise, fall, and interaction of a host of explanations and controversies by historians. These explanations have been offered in an attempt to discover the nature of those forces that lighted that first "sacred fire of liberty" referred to by George Washington.[2] Much of the debate has centered on the question of what, specifically, the concept of democracy--now taken for granted as the foundation stone of national life--meant to the peoples of colonial America.

A second basic development has been the rising importance of education in the life of the nation, and, in particular, the attempt to make education available at public expense to all children. The inculcation of democratic values necessarily occupies a major role in that educational process.

As this nation's bicentennial approaches, it is incumbent upon thinking educators to turn again to the

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[2]George Washington, "First Inaugural Address in the City of New York," in U. S. Congress, House of Representatives, Inaugural Addresses of the Presidents of the United States, H. Doc. 91-142, 91st Cong., 1st sess., 1969, p.3.

fundamental question of democracy in colonial America. In the years ahead, the present younger generation will, no doubt, show an especial interest in the circumstances that led to the nation's founding. There will also be interest as to the part played in those stirring events by the ideal of democracy. If the nation's educators plan to help today's youth, and future generations, understand colonial American democracy they must examine the texts treating the topic. The concerned educator must also turn to the wealth of past and present historical and historiographical literature that treats the same topic at the higher, more scholarly level. In sum, the educational implications of democracy in colonial America are in need of examination; the present study represents one attempt to answer that need.

Statement of the Problem

One prominent historian, Robert E. Brown, maintains that given the unsettled conditions of the world today it behooves Americans to reexamine the American Revolution as they approach the nation's 200th anniversary. "The people of this country," he says, "must weigh carefully the role of the past in shaping the future of democratic government . . . above all, Americans should be well-grounded in their own history before they choose among the

alternatives that are offered on the menu for tomorrow's world. . . ."[3]

When the topic of democracy in colonial America is considered with the specific reference to its educational implications, it is apparent that problems arise both from the meaning of democracy today, and from the varied historical interpretations of colonial democracy. As the bicentennial of the United States approaches, added attention will doubtless be given to this topic.

Even a cursory examination of a sampling of historical writing, old and new, on the topic of democracy in the colonial period a American society reveals a wide and often mutually contradictory range of opinions and interpretations. The general context of this process is well expressed by Bernard Bailyn. He claims that the background of the American Revolution has been studied by more people over a longer period of time than any other topic in American history. "But old historical problems do not preclude new solutions," Bailyn reminds his readers. In fact, it is Bailyn's opinion that old historical problems require new solutions, "for historical explanations are delicate

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[3]Robert E. Brown, <u>Carl Becker on History and the American Revolution</u> (East Lansing, Mich.: The Spartan Press, 1970), Preface, v.

contrivances, capable of being fundamentally upset by small bits of information and transformed by shifts in historians' angles of vision."[4]

This multiplicty of historical explanations concerning the democratic aspects of the origins of the American Revolution is easily illustrated. Roy N. Lokken notes that in their discussions of the political institutions, social system, and intellectual outlook of colonial America, some historians have cautioned their readers "that democracy as such did not exist in the colonies but that the seeds of democracy were nevertheless planted there." Other historians, he continues, "assert that full-blown democracy flourished in at least some of the colonies long before the Declaration of Independence. . . ."[5]

The same point is emphasized by Richard Buel, who maintains that American historians have never been famous for agreement. But in one respect, he admits, "they seem curiously united." Most have tried to measure the significance of the American Revolution in relation to the development of American democracy. However, "beyond the limits of

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[4]Bernard Bailyn, The Origins of American Politics (New York: Knopf, 1969), p. 3.

[5]Roy N. Lokken, "The Concept of Democracy in Colonial Political Thought," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 16 (October 1959): 568-69.

this initial premise," Buel contends, "their unity dissolves into rich multiplicity of interpretation. . . ."[6]

Interpretation it should be noted, has bordered on the acerbic in the case of some historians. For example, Charles M. Andrews once observed, concerning the economic determinist's interpretation; "these can be maintained only by a system of clever, ingenious, and seemingly plausible but really superficial manipulations of fact and logic . . . by generalizations based on . . . statements frequently unfortified by proof and sometimes demonstrably untrue. . . ."[7]

Writing from a differing viewpoint, Herbert Aptheker had similar harsh words for other historians' interpretations. Thus, in reference to the work of Robert Brown, he concluded that in affirming the "middle-class democratic" character of colonial America, Brown exaggerates to the point of absurdity.[8]

The debate among historians continues--as indeed it should in a democracy--and additional examples in proof of debate need not be adduced. The question arises, however,

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[6]Richard V. W. Buel, Jr., "Democracy and the American Revolution: A Frame of Reference," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 21 (April 1964): 165

[7]Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History, vol. 4: England's Commerical and Colonial Policy (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1938), p. 425, footnote.

[8]Herbert Aptheker, The American Revolution, 1763-1783 (New York: International, 1969), p. 11.

for the thinking educator; How is this diverse range of interpretation and controversy presented in high school and college text books that treat the topic of democracy in colonial America? In such texts, the topic is, of course, given some emphasis. For example, John Blum, Bruce Catton, Edmund S. Morgan, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Kenneth Stampp, and C. Vann Woodward, co-authors of a college text, observed that Englishmen brought with them to the New World the political ideas that still give English and American governments some resemblance. "But Americans," they claim, "very early developed conceptions of representative government that differed from those prevailing in England during the colonial period. . . ."[9]

Allan O. Kownslar and Donald B. Frizzle, in introducing their high school text, theorized specifically that "one possible hypothesis on the colonial period in American history could be 'America's present values have their roots deep in the colonial experience'. . . ."[10]

The authors of both these texts necessarily imply one or another kind of interpretation of the concept of democracy as applied to colonial America. Examples could be multiplied from other standard high school and college

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[9]John M. Blum, *et al.*, *The National Experience: A History of the United States* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1963), p. 59.

[10]Allan O. Kownslar and Donald B. Frizzle, *Discovering American History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967), p. xiii.

texts. A basic problem is clearly apparent: given the varied interpretations of the topic of democracy in colonial America, on the part of historians, how best is the present generation of young Americans to receive knowledge of the concept and practice of democracy in colonial America? Do the standard high school and college texts they encounter offer an adequate coverage of the topic? Where it is treated, what theories current--or once current--in the larger world of academic scholarship are selected for presentation? Is the treatment given adequate in light of the most recent scholarship, especially as related to the thinking of the eighteenth-century Americans? Further, is it adequate in the light of modern educational methods, or does it need revision or improvement? Finally, should our college curriculum be extended to include a specific course wherein American democratic principles and ideals would be taught? It is to these problems, specifically, that the present study is addressed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is to present the results of an investigation of the concept of democracy as understood and practiced in colonial America, with particular reference to the treatment of this topic in three groups of historiographical source materials.

The first group of materials consists of a sampling of original sources from the eighteenth-century. If one attempts to investigate colonial American democracy he must begin with the concepts held by the people of that era.

The second group of materials consists of a broad sampling of published works by past and present historians and other scholars in related disciplines. These writers have, directly or indirectly, dealt with the topic of democracy in colonial America and presented their varied analyses on that subject. The controversy concerning what democracy meant to colonials as well as what it meant to historians since colonial times will form a vital part of the criteria for examining the historical literature.

The third group consists of both high school and college text books selected from the official high school texts for the state of Tennessee, and college texts adopted by the universities in the State University and Community College System of Tennessee, Vanderbilt University, University of Tennessee at Nashville, University of Tennessee at Martin, and Fisk University. A critical analysis of both groups is to be presented.

The study will also attempt to analyze such related questions as those pertaining to the essential characteristics of democracy, to its overall importance in human affairs. Finally, the study speaks to the question of how colonial

American democracy is to be presented by educators, specifically to college American history survey classes.

Need for the Study

A number of considerations, taken together, provide the rationale for the present study. It may be noted that in each of the specific areas, the historical literature and the designated text books, there has been to date, a lack of detailed examination within the boundaries described herein.

More generally, it may be noted that the study derives its impetus from the continued central importance of the democratic spirit to the American republic and its people--especially its young people--as the national bicentennial approaches. It is hoped that the present study will be of particular value to American educators as they examine and reexamine the material at their disposal and attempt to improve the presentation of democratic values in their curricula and classrooms.

It is also anticipated that the present study will fill a need among educational professionals generally, and in particular among those who are engaged in the study of the problems associated with the introduction of basic requirements for citizenship. More specifically, the study is intended to fill a need for those who desire to update their knowledge of the roots of the American democratic experience, in the wider educational milieu. This category of educators

will include, among others, educational researchers in the fields of history, social science, and political science. It could, perhaps, have some value for those administrators concerned with practical implementation of educational policies.

Further, there is a desire that the study will speak to the needs of those concerned with the professional training of teachers. It should be of some help to teachers and students since it examines sundry methodological and practical aspects in an important area of educational training and philosophy. For example, it speaks to the problem of the training of teachers to transmit to students perceived value systems central to the national experience.

There is hope, too, that the study will help meet the needs of educators conducting similar studies in other specific regions and localities where standard texts are utilized in high schools and colleges. Perhaps some of the texts would be the same in other areas, but there are some that have not been included in this study; on both the high school and college levels.

It is anticipated that the study will, by its contribution, speak to some of the needs of the academic historian who is concerned with the practical application of various scholarly theories related to the background seeds of the American republic.

Scope of the Study

As has been indicated, the study will be limited in scope to a particular illustrative case study of democracy in colonial America. The specific parameters of that case study may now be made explicit.

The study will be centered on relevant portions of high school texts used as official texts in Tennessee high schools,[11] and college texts adopted by the universities in the State University and Community College System of Tennessee, Vanderbilt University, the University of Tennessee at Nashville and Martin, and Fisk University.[12] It is recognized

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[11]The high school texts adopted for use in 1974, are: Thomas A. Bailey, The American Pageant: A History of the Republic, 3rd ed. (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1966, also used as a college textbook; Bernard Feder, (ed.), Viewpoints: USA (New York: American Book Co., 1967); James A. Frost, et al., A History of the United States: The Evolution of a Free People (Chicago: Follett Educational Corporation, 1969); Henry F. Graff and John A. Krout, The Adventure of the American People (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968); Allan O. Kownslar and Donald B. Frizzle, Discovering American History (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967); Richard C. Wade: Howard B. Wilder; and Louise C. Wade, A History of the United States (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968); and, T. Harry Williams and Hazel C. Wolf, Our American Nation (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1969).

[12]The college texts, adopted for 1974 are: Thomas A. Bailey, The American Pageant: A History of the Republic, 3rd edition (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1966); John M. Blum, et al., The National Experience: A History of the United States (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1963); Richard N. Current; T. Harry Williams; and Frank Freidel, American History: A Survey (New York: Knopf, 1971); John A. Garraty, The American Nation: A History of the United States (New York: Harper and Row, 1968); and, Rebecca Brooks Gruver, An American History (New York: Appleton, Century, Crofts, 1972).

that it would be an overly ambitious task to attempt to make a broad national study within the described methodological and theoretical parameters. It would be an impossible task to attempt a full scholarly explanation of the ramifications and implications of the democratic experience of colonial America. It nevertheless seems clear that a carefully selected case study of the kind described does have a sound theoretical and practical justification. Such a case study forms the basis of the present study.

In order that a comprehensive assessment of the scholarly ideas concerning the concepts of democracy in the selected texts may be obtained, the study is also designed to include an extensive review of the pertinent scholarly literature--mainly, but not exclusively, in the historical area.

A further limitation of the study may be mentioned. It should be emphasized that the focus of the study is on eighteenth century democracy in relation to the thirteen British colonies. In order to limit the scope, no attempt has been made to survey the rich multilingual literature concerning French and Spanish colonial settlements.

Definitions

As used in the present study, the term "colonial America" will be understood to refer to the thirteen English colonies that became the United States of America. The main focus of the study embraces the concept of colonial democracy

as understood in the thirteen colonies. Occasional reference may, howeve: , be made to context prior to 1607 or later than 1776.

The term "democracy" is one of the most ambiguous terms in the whole vocabulary of modern political criticism and historical enquiry. One could insist upon reserving the term for a special set of institutions, or for a special type of political constitution. But we could recognize as democratic any and every constitution and state in which a certain spirit of political action and interpretation generally prevails. What then, would be the spirit which prevails in those polities which we might recognize as democratic? The most comprehensive statements, perhaps, to be derived from the modern history comes from the old French motto: "Liberty, Fraternity, Equality," and the English; "Life, Liberty and Property," and the American; "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of happiness."

In America, the emphasis appears to have been on liberty and property, little attention being paid to fraternity. It is however, difficult, if not impractical, to separate these three qualities of the democratic spirit. It seems easier to recognize liberty, fraternity and equality as the spirit, or ideal of democracy and more profitable to study its manifold expression rather than attempt to define its essence. Democracy is not an isolable, dead component in the composition of political, economic, and social

humanity. It is a living spirit. It is a spirit which involves not only a philosophy but a value system.

The American value system is characterized by conflict between competing values. For example, the conflict between equality and liberty, or competition between the individual and the state. The key to these conflicts appears to be the development of a modified individualism. The demand by citizens that they have both equality and liberty became a colonial American dilemma. The conflicts of values demanded that both equality and liberty be reasonably satisfied. A compromise solution seems to have been the most acceptable answer. Since promotion of the individual tended to work in direct opposition to equality for all, opportunity for the individual became the compromise that produced reasonable satisfaction to the majority of the citizens. Modified individualism became tempered with ideas of equality and social justice. Emphasis on the self-reliant individual, so necessary in settling the new world, became most effectively satisfied on the frontiers.

Another dilemma, another conflict of values in colonial American life was the demand to have security and freedom. Americans demanded both security and freedom, which often appeared to have been in conflict with each other. The colonial experience appears to have led the citizens into attitudes of distrust for authority.

Democray is not only a fact we must recognize, it is a living movement which can be advanced, diverted, directed, or even opposed. It has been felt to have been such by historians and political theorists for more than two centuries, and in their writings the developing attitude of democracy is open to our criticism and examination.

The abstract term "democracy" will be used frequently in the present study. This dissertation will, of course, be concerned in no small way with the analysis of democracy as it has been expressed and exemplified in operational as well as in abstract terms within the selected historiographic source materials. Simply defined, "democracy" is popular government; government by the people, either directly or through elected representatives. Its hallmarks are maximum participation, majority rule, and equal voter representation. Maximum participation, tempered with diversity, controversy and debate, will be further operationalized through examples of civil liberties, civil rights, and political liberties, as well as through questions such as, who had the franchise? and who made use of it? Civil liberties will be concerned with matters such as freedom of religion, speech, the press, and actions. Civil rights will be examined under such operations as exemption from involuntary servitude, equal treatment of all people with respect to enjoyment of life, liberty, property, and due process of law. Political liberties will be

extended to studies of the right to participate in the form of government to be established, selection of representation, making laws, charters, and constitutions, and in the carrying on of the functions of government. Majority rule will seek for answers to such questions as: Did the majority of the people have equal rights to the franchise? Did the majority of the people participate in voting? Did elected representatives represent the majority of the citizens? Was the majority of the populace satisfied with their representation? On the other hand, equal voter representation will be seeking answers to such questions as; Were all the people guaranteed the right to vote? and, Did all the people have the equal right to participate in political offices? An examination of operational definitions and concepts of democracy, and examples of the same, will form a major part of the entire dissertation.

Methodology

The methodological parameters of this study relate to two areas: the collection of data and the treatment of that data. The procedures for collecting the data investigated during the present study may be described as the comprehensive reading research required in an indepth critical case study of specific historiographic and education sources. An extensive bibliography, providing essential background for the study, includes a representative yet comprehensive range

of books, articles, scholarly papers, and other source material in addition to the high school and college text books previously specified.

The study has been structured logically to make possible full and adequate treatment of the topic. Following the present chapter outlining the nature, background, and purpose of the dissertation, a second chapter will reveal a broad sampling of original source materials concerning the concept of democracy as discussed by eighteenth century writers. The third chapter will identify and analyze the major historiographic schools relating to the treatment of democracy in colonial America. A fourth chapter will comprise detailed analyses of the appropriate high school text books, concerning their treatment of colonial democracy and the employment of opinions concerning colonial American democracy, followed by a fifth chapter similarily analyzing the college texts. A sixth chapter will make recommendations for presenting the topic of colonial democracy in the classroom as well as state the final conclusions an recommendations of the dissertation.

CHAPTER II

A SURVEY OF EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY

> We shall not understand why there was a Revolution until we suspend disbelief and listen with care to what the Revolutionaries themselves said was the reason there was a revolution.[1]
>
> Richard V. W. Buel, Jr.

We proudly call our government a democracy; yet ordinarily many of us have but a vague idea of what the word democracy means. Among scholars, students and the general citizenry, the more frequent the use of the word, the less uniform is its sense.

Unfortunate as our confusion appears to be, it is certainly not beyond understanding. In the twenty-five centuries since the word democracy first entered common speech, it has been used to describe an enormous array of institutions, many of which have more resemblances than differences. It has also been used to convey a variety of abstract ideas drawn from different philosophies, based on different premises, and existing in different cultures. Among the early Greeks, the word came to mean a way of life as well

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[1]Richard V. W. Buel, Jr., "Democracy and the American Revolution: A Frame of Reference," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 21 (April, 1964): 165.

as a type of government. That way of life was both despised and admired. In subsequent cultures even its spiritual reference has been equally ambivalent. Each new application to institutions or ideas, has left a mark upon its meaning so that today its real sense is almost covered up.

The word has now far more popularity than meaning. Its confused meaning, complicated enough from mere age, is now compounded many times over by the deliberate distortion of many who shout it constantly. Consequently, some modern day writers, disgusted with the apparently increasing complications of the word, have suggested that it be abandoned altogether. Disgustedly, T. S. Eliot wrote: "When a term has become so universally sanctified as 'democracy' now is, I begin to wonder whether it means anything, in meaning too many things: it has arrived perhaps at the position of a Merovingian Emperor, and whenever it is invoked, one begins to look for the Mayor of the Palace."[2]

However, complete abandonment of any word that is supposed to mean so much as democracy is too great a price for pedantic precision. So, if the word is indespensable, yet its meaning utterly confused, the first task of its user is one of definition. But definition is an extremely difficult matter. One would not be stretching the point in

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[2]T. S. Eliot, The Idea of a Christian Society, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1940), pp. 11-12.

saying that the definition of words like deomcracy, words of indefinite reference which describe the interrelations of men, is the most persistent and difficult problem of philosophy.

The problem of definition boils down to this: a central strand must be untangled out of a knot of confused meanings. Once the essentials are stretched out, the hidden logic which tangled them and which tied on the short strands of side-issues, will be obvious enough for all to see. But how shall we distinguish these essentials?

If we select some of the more accepted examples of the idea of democracy, and extract from them elements that seem indispensable and that are implicit in all of the examples, perhaps we can discern the central meaning. At least the definition might be accurate to the degree that democrats have understood what they have believed in. Having done that it is possible, perhaps, to measure the degree of democracy in any given period of history, e.g. the degree of democracy in colonial America.

There are at least five documents that are customarily called an exposition of democratic ideals, though only one actually uses the word democracy.[3] Each of these

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[3]All of these documents can be found in William H. Riker, <u>Democracy in the United States</u> (New York: The Macmillam Co., 1953), pp. 369-382. Pericles' "Funeral Oration" is the only one of the five documents employing the word democracy.

documents is usually regarded as an epitome of the ideals of the society which produced it. Among them they represent most of the major democratic movements of history. The five major documents are: from the fifth century B.C., Pericles' "Funeral Oration;" from 1648, England's "The Agreement of the people;" from 1776, the American "Declaration of Independence;" from 1789, the French "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen;" and from 1863, America's "The Gettysburg Address." Studied historically, these documents have very little in common, except their roots in Western Civilization. But in content there are two ideas discernable in a comparable form in almost all of them. One is an ideal; the other is a means of realizing that ideal.

What is that ideal? None of the documents straightforwardly defines its ideal, which is assumed to be democracy. All of them do, however, make comments on democratic theory and list attributes of the democratic ideal. Therefore, to find an acceptable statement of the ideal itself one needs to compare the attributes found in all the documents.

For purposes of this dissertation five major attributes, involving popular government, maximum participation, majority rule, and elements of accountability, have been extracted from the five documents: government by the people and for their own interests; liberty, freedom, or natural

rights; equality of the citizenry; tolerance; and, finally obedience.

We find in eighteenth century literature, references and operational definitions to these ideals, which in turn gives us some indication concerning democracy in colonial America. Even then we may find it impossible to give an adequate definition of colonial democracy. But perhaps it will be possible to evaluate the evidence and determine whether there were or were not some degrees of the democratic ideal operating within the colonial American society.

John Locke (1632-1704), though basically a seventeenth century English political theorist, had a lasting influence upon American political thought. Basing his system upon the doctrine of natural rights, Locke attributed the origin of government to a voluntary association of men hitherto living in a state of natural liberty and equality. For the purpose of protection of their natural rights of life, liberty, and property, men had delegated some of their own rights to punish violators of these natural rights to government. They were under no obligation to any other; and if the government failed to protect them, the people had not only the right but the obligation to replace it, by force if necessary. According to Locke, "The great end of men's entering into society is the enjoyment of their properties in peace and safety. . . . that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or

possesions."[4] Thus the chief function of government is the protection of the people and their property.

To the politically minded eighteenth century American, Locke's ideas coincided exactly with their idea that government itself rested solidly upon a property determined franchise. The American colonists had also begun very early in their history to believe in, and actually to practice, the compact theory of government. In fact, many of the colonists looked upon their charters as written constitutions. They had had occasion to exercise their right of resistance at the time of the 1688-89 English Revolution, and they had built their government upon the ownership of property.

Further, Locke recommended that the best, and most honorable business to all concerned, required that full power should be granted to the rulers coupled with complete responsibility. Government by the consent and with the good-will of the governed was the simplest formula of this sort of democracy. In a word, to Locke, the historical solution to democratic government has been representation. Operationalized, the colonial concepts of responsibility, accountability, and elected representation are exemplafied in the House of Burgesses, the House of Delegates, the General Court, and the Declaration of Independence.

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[4]John Locke, Of Civil Government (New York: Everyman's Library, 1924), pp. 110-119.

Inevitably, the extraordinary events in England during Locke's day would affect the lives of Englishmen living in America. The changing basis of fundamental belief had found expression in the Puritan fortress of Massachusetts and in the political discussions of the Whig revolution and its antecedent events in colonial America. It was not surprising to find early in the eighteenth century a Massachusetts clergyman defending the organizational arrangement of his church on the basis of natural rights and the contract theory, elements of accountability. Such was the impact of the new learning upon many of the thoughtful of that day. Thus it is important for us to note the uses of this political thought and determine whether or not the operationalization of the democratic ideal is evident in colonial America's citizenry.

John Wise (1652-1725), a Congregational minister at Ipswich, was one of the first, if not the first, American colonist to write extensively on the contract theory, especially as it expressed rights, liberty, and equality. In that respect he was a century before his time.

Following the contract theory approach, Wise found that man possessed three great "immunities."[5] The first of

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[5]John Wise, A Vindication of the Government of New England Churches (Boston: John Boyles, 1772), pp. 23-27, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 15596, (Chicago, Ill.: Library Resources Inc., Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

these was that man was forever "most properly the subject of the law of nature." As a subject of natural law, man, possessed of reason, was capable of discovering the principles of morality; such as tolerance. He observed: "every man as far as in him lies, do maintain a sociableness with others, agreeable with the main end and disposition of human nature in general."[6]

Man's second great "immunity" Wise found to be liberty, the "original liberty instampt upon his rational nature."[7] This was, for Wise at least, the liberty of rational human beings living under the law of nature to order their own affairs in accordance with the dictates of their own decisions and judgment. This condition of liberty led to man's third great "immunity," the equality of men. Since no one, by nature, had authority over any other, then it stands to reason that all men must be considered as equals. After all, Wise pointed out, "we all owe our existence to the same method of propogation."[8]

Like Locke, Wise held that "the first human subject and original of civil power is the people," and that all political authority must rest upon this popular foundation.[9] When Wise considered the several forms of government he made it rather clear that his preference was democracy. A

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[6]*Ibid.*, p. 24. [7]*Ibid.*, p. 25. [8]*Ibid.*, p. 27.

[9]*Ibid.*, pp. 28-30.

democratic government, he argued, was most likely to "cultivate Humanity, and Promote the happiness of all, and the good of every man in Rights, his Life, Liberty, Estate, Honour. . . without injury or abuse done to any."[10]

Although we can now see that the operational concepts of democracy in the American colonies and the mother country had several similarities, the political thought of eighteenth century America must be considered under two headings. First, it may be viewed as a problem involving imperial organization; the British constitution and the rights of all Englishmen. In the second instance, it must be considered as an expression of a political philosophy involving both the contract theory and the natural rights of man. When these two became fused into one, the argument bolstered the rights of Englishmen, but when the philosophical argument was considered alone it justified the natural rights of all men, whether under the protection of the English constitution or not. There was, of course, an inevitable overlap in the constitutional and philosophic arguments, and some of the eighteenth century writers used both to bolster their positions.

The question of imperial organization was essentially a legal problem. It involved the nature of constitutions, colonial charters, relationships of Parliament to the

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[10] _Ibid._, p. 42.

colonial legislatures, and the traditional rights of Englishmen. Were, for instance, Englishmen in America inferior in their rights to Englishmen in England? Would Parliament tax Englishmen who were not represented in that legislative body? Was it legal to subject Englishmen to laws not of their own making? These were the main questions which arose over the issue of imperial organization.

The conflicting claims of colonists and mother country were given expression in the discussions surrounding Benjamin Franklin's (1706-1790) Albany Plan of Union in 1754. The essential issue was how to finance the colonial defense against the French and the Indians. The British proposed taxation by Parliament to defray the cost. Franklin objected on the grounds that the problem was one most suited for colonial consideration. The colonists should have a voice in determining what funds were needed for their defense. He was demanding that colonist be granted the same political liberties of participation exercised by citizens in the mother country. Franklin contended that it was contrary to the basic rights of Englishmen to be taxed in the manner proposed by the British. He contended that it was "an undoubted right of Englishmen not to be taxed but by their own consent, given through their representatives."[11] Here we find Franklin

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[11]Benjamin Franklin, The Works of Benjamin Franklin, vol. 3, p. 50, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 16850. (Chicago, Ill.: Library Resources Inc., Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

calling for two of the attributes of the democratic ideal to be operationalized: the voice of the people, and the rights of participation by the citizens.

During his second mission to England, Franklin sought to inform the people of England that what the Englishmen of America desired was justice, equality, and representation. Writing in late 1772 he explained that the colonists

> think it hard that a parliament in which they have no representation, should make a merit to itself by granting their money to the crown without asking their consent, and deprive them of the privilege of granting it themselves, which they have always enjoyed, never abused, and are always ready and willing to exercise . . . This is the sole point that has been in dispute. . . .[12]

It is perceptible, without going into more detail, that Benjamin Franklin had some concept of the operation of democratic ideal.

Another eighteenth century American who had been thinking and writing about equal rights, an operational definition of democracy, was Stephen Hopkins. Hopkins, Governor of Rhode Island, and later one of the signatories of the Declaration of Independence, called for the King, ministers, and Parliament to give all the Americans equal rights with the citizens residing in England. He related that the ancient Corinthians, according to Thucydides, set up new colonies and that all who entered the new colony had equal and like

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[12]Ibid., p. 91. Emphasis is in the original

privileges with those people who stayed at home. Hopkins went on to point out to his English kinsmen that in America the Spanish and the French were enjoying equal freedom (such as it was under a Monarch) with their Spanish and French homeland countrymen.[13] Hopkins summed up the major grievance of the Americans when he wrote: ". . . the British colonies are not in every way justly and fully entitled to equal liberty and freedom with their fellow subjects in Europe. . . ."[14]

These three English colonists, Wise, Frnaklin, and Hopkins, were recognized in their day as men who championed the fight for rights, freedom, representation, and the American cause. One should not be surprised to find operational definitions and criteria for the democratic ideal scattered throughout their writings. But what about those people who were loyal British citizens? We must not think that all Americans were ready to take up the flag of rebellion and independence. It was Sam Adams who reminded his friends that "whenever the royal standard shall be set up, there will be such flocking to it, as will astonish the most obdurate."[15]

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[13]Stephen Hopkins, Grievances of American Colonies (London: J. Almon, 1766), p. 11, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 40062. (Chicago, Ill.: Library Resources Inc., Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

[14]Ibid., p. 15.

[15]Daniel Leonard, The Origins of the American Contest With Great Britain (New York: James Rivington, 1775), p. 145, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 40063. (Chicago, Ill.: Library Resources Inc., Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

One such Loyalist was Thomas Hutchinson (1711-1780), governor of Massachusetts. In reading through his correspondence one can find this colonist calling for an abridgment of what was designated as English liberties. He recognized liberty, justice, and freedom, but could not see how colonies three thousand miles from the parent state might enjoy the same privileges of the parent state. In February of 1769 Hutchinson wrote a letter to a friend in England, in which he lamented:

> I never think of the measures necessary for the peace and good order of the colonies without pain. There must be an abridgment of what are called English liberties. I relieve myself by considering that in a remove from the state of nature to the most perfect state of government there must be a great restraint of natural liberty . . . I wish the good of the colony when I wish to see some further restraints of liberty rather than the connection with the parent state should be broken; for I am sure such a breach must prove the ruin of the colony. Pardon me this excursion, it really proceeds from the state of mind into which our perplexed affaris often throws me.[16]

Even though Hutchinson was a Loyalist, representing the Crown, he was an American, speaking of liberties; one of the criteria for measuring the American colonial democratic ideal. However, even among the Englishmen in their homeland one can find comments about representation, popular government, freedom and rights of the people.

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[16]Thomas Hutchinson, Copy of Letters Sent to Great Britain (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1773), p. 16, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 40062. (Chicago, Ill.: Library Resources Inc., Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

Allan Ramsey (1713-1784), political writer and portrait painter, writing to his English audience, said that the matter of taxing the American colonies "is of all questions the most important that was ever debated in this country." "The truth is," he asserted, "that having heard them so often repeat that they were Englishmen, entitled to all the rights of Englishmen, by their own consent: I was misled to believe that they wanted to be represented, like other Englishmen, in the British Parliament."[17] It was Ramsey's contention that this was not the meaning behind what the colonists were saying. "One moment," he noted, "they desire no more than what belongs to every British subject; the next they refuse to be taxed like other British subjects, and each colony requires a parliament of its own."[18] Obviously we have here an Englishman, in England, making references to some of the democratic ideals operative in America: the people; representation; equality; and rights of the people.

Some comments from one more Englishman should help to identify some of the basic criteria for the democratic principle as recognized in eighteenth century colonial America. Thomas Paine (1737-1809) lived and wrote in both America and

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[17]Allan Ramsay, Thoughts on the Origin and Nature of Government, 1766 (London: T. Becker, 1867), p. 46, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 40062. (Chicago, Ill.: Library Resources Inc., Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

[18]Ibid., pp. 46-50.

England. In "To The People of America," written January 10, 1776, Paine stated:

> I consider the war of America against Britain as the country's war, the people's war, or the war of the people in their natural rights, and the protection of their own property. It is not the war of congress, the war of the assemblies, or the war of government in any line whatever. The country first . . . resolved to defend their rights and maintain their independence, at the hazzard of their lives and fortunes; they elected their representatives . . . and said, act you for us, and we will support you. This is the true ground and principle of the war on the part of America, and, consequently, there remains nothing to do, but for everyone to fulfill his obligation.[19]

Once again we have an eighteenth century thinker verifying operation democracy; "the people," "natural rights," "property," "representation in government," and "loyalty."

Ethan Allen (1738-1789), incarcerated in England, took time to speak to a group of citizens during one of his walks in the prison parade grounds.[20] He said that this seemed a most appropriate time to speak of two of his favorite themes--freedom and liberty. Referring to his talk with the people gathered around him on the parade grounds he claimed: "I expatiated on American freedom."[21]

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[19]Thomas Paine, Writings, edited by Moncure Daniel Conway (New York: Putnam, c1894-96), p. 334, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 20232 vol. 1. (Chicago, Ill.: Library Resources Inc., Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

[20]Ethan Allen, leader of the Greenmountain Boys was captured trying to make a surprise advance on Montreal, Canada.

[21]Ethan Allen, A Narrative of Colonel Ethan Allen's Captivity (Walpole, New Hampshire: Charter and Hale, 1807), p. 62, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 15693. (Chicago, Ill.: Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

Later, during the conversation, when confronted with George Washington's retreat across the Delaware, Allen turned to the topic of liberty. He stated:

> . . . this scene of adverse fortune did not discourage Washington: The illustrious American hero remained immoveable. In liberty's cause he took up his consolation in the day of his humiliation. . . . There triumph only roused his indignation; and the important cause of his country, which lay near his heart, moved him to cross the Delaware again . . . from which time the arm of American liberty hath prevailed.[22]

One criterion of democracy, obedience, had very little attention in the eighteenth century or later. Daniel Leonard (1740-1829) spoke of the American situation during the 1700's as "bad policy" on the part of a popular party. Leonard gave a good example of obedience in action within colonial life. He claimed the colonies united against the Stamp Act, but that "at first we did not dream of denying the *authority* of Parliament to tax us, much less to legislate against us." He went on to explain that the colonists "were happy in our subordination; but in an evil hour, under the influence of some malignant planet, the design was formed of opposing the stamp-act, by a denial of the right of Parliament to make it."[23]

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[22]*Ibid.*, p. 116.

[23]Daniel Leonard, *The Origins of the American Contest*, pp. 14-15. Emphasis is in the original. Leonard, a Massachusetts lawyer presented the Loyalist argument in a series of letters which inspired John Adams to reply in his famous *Novanglus*.

James Wilson (1742-1798) was even more explicit. He wrote: "allegiance to the king and obedience to the Parliament are founded on very different principles. The former is founded on protection; the latter on representation."[24]

Having looked at the concept of democracy as an ideal, we can now turn to the other concept of democracy prevalent in the writings of the eighteenth century thinkers; the means of realizing the ideal, with further operationalizing abstract concepts of democracy. Democracy is also a method. Democratic practices are nothing more, and nothing less, than government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Therefore, essential to democracy is the electoral responsibility in government.

All five of the documents used to define democracy placed electoral responsibility at the very center of their democratic system. The "Funeral Oration" was not very definite about responsible government. Nevertheless, there would have been no difficulty understanding what Pericles was picturing when he exclaimed in section 37: "Our constitution is named a democracy, because it is in the hands of not a few but of the many."[25] The Athenians would have had no trouble

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[24]James Dewitt Andrews, (ed.), The Works of James Wilson (Chicago: Callahan and Co., 1896), vols 2, pp. 529-39. James Wilson studied law under John Dickinson. Wilson championed the legalistic defense of colonial jurisdiction.

[25]William H. Riker, Democracy in the United States (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1953), p. 370.

believing that Pericles used "the rule of the many" to mean the election of both the jury and officials.

The "Agreement of the People," a formal constitution, is the most definite of the five documents on the subject of the power to elect.

> We declare . . . that the people do, of course, choose themselves a Parliament once in two years . . . That the power of this, and all future Representatives of this Nation, is inferior only to theirs who choose them. . . .[26]

Although the "Declaration of Independence" does not set forth in detail the construction of democratic government, nearly half of its specific complaints concern King George's alleged denial of responsible government. Most of all, the basic philosophy of the document is summarized in the key statement: "That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."[27]

The "Declaration of Rights" is almost as specific as the "Agreement" in stressing the power of the people to elect their own government. The third article in the "Declaration of Rights" states: "The source of all sovereignty is essentially in the nation; no body, no individual can exercise authority that does not proceed from it in plain terms." Even more significantly are the statements found scattered

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[26]*Ibid.*, p. 375.

[27]*Ibid.*, p. 377.

throughout the remaining lines: "Law is the expression of the general will. . . . All citizens have the right to ascertain . . . the necessity of the public tax . . . determine the quota . . . and the duration of it."[28]

It appears fruitless to argue over the precise words in the "Gettysburg Address;" "government of . . . by . . . for the people."[29] Obviously Abraham Lincoln was speaking of the ruler's responsibility to the ruled.

All the documents place electoral responsibility at the very center of the democratic system. Many writers in eighteenth century America also stressed electoral responsibility.

John Wise, in his pamphlet, A Vindication, reminded his readers that for the people to "bring themselves together into a politic body, they must needs enter into divers covenants . . . by a public vote . . . to set up some particular species of government over them. . . ."[30] So it was the people who would "set up" or elect, their own form of government, which no doubt would include the representatives of the people. But did the representatives represent the majority of the people?

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[28]Ibid., p. 380-81.

[29]Ibid., p. 382.

[30]John Wise, A Vindication, pp. 30-31.

In 1769 Allan Ramsay published a book in which he noted that "Each colony . . . has a parliament of its own, though we have hiterto called them only assemblies; each has its house of commons chosen by the people. . . . ."[31] He recognized the partial accomplishment of what John Wise had much earlier proposed as operational democracy.

Stephen Hopkins, arguing about taxes being levied on Americans by the English Parliament, recognized the evidence of a representative government, electoral responsibility, and elements of accountability operating in the colonies. He stated: "The people's private interest will be concerned, and will govern them; they will have such, and only such representatives as will act agreeable to their own interest."[32] He went on to say that the colonists demanded that their representatives be of their own election. This was of course the basic argument between the British theory of direct representation.

As early as 1775 Daniel Leonard, a Massachusetts lawyer and Loyalist, was aware of the cost for establishing a colonial electorate government. In his admonishments he recommended that the people "enquire what kind of offense it is for a number of men to assemble armed . . . even prevent the King's court from being held . . . for a body of

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[31]Allan Ramsey, Thoughts, p. 49

[32]Stephen Hopkins, Grievances, p. 33.

men to assemble without being called by authority and to pass govermental acts . . . or to raise men and appoint officers for public office."[33] It was Leonard's opinion that the people's rights were better preserved under a mixed government in the British constitution than under a provincial congress elected by the people. Nevertheless, Leonard presented evidence of the concept of an electoral responsibility being thought of in colonial America.

Late in 1776, Thomas Hutchinson made an attack on several statements found in the American Declaration of Independence, seeking to prove that the colonists were not deprived of their civil rights, political rights, religious freedom, or natural rights. One such statement was the reference to the King dismissing the American representatives in their assemblies. Hutchinson claimed that there was only one such incident of the people's representatives having been dismissed. In 1786, Hutchinson recalled, the house of representatives in Massachusetts Bay was dismissed because they sent out to other colonies the plan of independence. It was Hutchinson's opinion that prior to 1776, except in Massachusetts, no other colony ever presumed "to convene an assembly . . . by mere act of the people."[34]

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[33]Daniel Leonard, The Origins, p. 49.

[34]Thomas Hutchinson, Strictures Upon the Declaration of the Congress at Philadelphia (London: 1776), p. 15, in "The Microbook Library of American Civilization," LAC 40062 (Chicago, Ill.: Encyclopedia Britannica Co., 1970).

He continued, noting that in less than three months after the Massachusetts Bay Assembly was dismissed: "The town, without delay chose their former members, whom they call a Committee, instead of Representatives; and they sent circular letters to all the other towns in the Province inviting them to choose Committees also." More important: "all the Committees met in what they called a Convention, and chose the speaker of the last house their Chairman. Here was a House of Representatives in everything but name."[35] Furthermore, here was democracy in action.

Hutchinson also admitted that in two of the four New England colonies, "both Governor and Council are annually elected by the body of the people."[36] Another example of maximum participation. There can be but little doubt that Hutchinson presented an eighteenth century understanding of the operational concept of electoral representation. Furthermore, it seems that one could conclude that the people to whom he had been writing were aware of the same concept.

One further example of democracy in action can be seen in the writing of John Adams (1753-1826). Adams, believing that there was no hope for colonial representation in the British Parliament said: "it is impracticable, we all

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[35]*Ibid.*

[36]*Ibid.*, p. 25.

agree; but the consequence is, that we must have a representation in our supreme legislatures here."[37]

Democracy, then, was recognized in the eighteenth century as both an ideal, and method, and a way of life. But did those early colonists relate electoral responsibility to democracy? Did they understand that they were in fact operationalizing the democratic ideal?

Electoral responsibility promoted self-direction through participation in making public policy, since the basic decision on policy was always the choice of the policy-makers. It also promoted liberty. Perhaps this was not as evident in colonial America as later, but it did develop far enough to demonstrate that the long-run tendency of democratic politics is toward democratic freedom.

Then too, given time, electoral responsibility proved that with higher degrees of equal voting, more equality of manhood was achieved. Very early the American politician learned that the vote demanded a degree of tolerance . Intolerance created enemies, enemies who fought to remove the intolerant from public office. Furthermore, the demands of equal voting rights and liberty created a dilemma. Individualism tended to work in opposition to equality. Consequently, opportunity became the satisfying solution for the majority of the citizens.

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[37]C. F. Adams, (ed.), The Works of John Adams (Boston: C. C. Little and James Brown, 1851), vol. 4, p. 119.

Finally, as the early modern democrats often proclaimed, electoral responsibility promoted obedience. The actual process of democratic consent is not simple, but the indispensable ingredient of consent and obedience is responsibility of the governors to the governed. Still, in spite of its early imperfection, colonial American political thought assumed that the democratic method of responsible rulers greatly affected the democratic ideal. It was understood, then, that the amount of democracy engendered in some rough way related to the degrees of responsibility between the rulers and the ruled.

Colonial American society did not produce a single master ideologist. The political thought was expressed by a small, articulate revolutionary elite, none of whose members are really comparable to John Locke. The political thought of that revolutionary elite touched upon such fundamental problems as the nature of sovereignty and the locus of power in imperial organization. It also touched the nature of liberty, the relationship between liberty and power, equality and justice, security and freedom, and contractual relationships between rulers and the ruled. Considered also was the effect of the moral corruption of the people upon the integrity of their political institutions, the justification of popular insurrection against constituted political authority, and the institutionalization of power so as to guarantee

liberty and freedom against the excessive exercise of governmental power. Historical studies of the colonial generation's treatment of such fundamental problems of political thought have produced a variety of changing interpretations.

It seems to be fair to conclude that while the colonial American seldom had a good word to say about the abstract term "democracy" the implementation of operational or practical democracy--in terms of freedom, liberty, rights, obedience, and self-government--was approved of, practiced, and confirmed through their literature. Democracy, as defined herein, was prevalent within the American colonies during the pre-Independence years.

CHAPTER III

A SURVEY OF HISTORICAL LITERATURE CONCERNING EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY

> American historians have never been famous for agreement, but in one respect they seem curiously united. All have tried to measure the significance of the Revolution to the development of American democracy.[1]
>
> Richard V. W. Buel, Jr.

There is an immense wealth of historical source material dealing with the American Revolution and its antecedents in the colonial period. Anyone facing and attempting to assess this huge amount of material is in a position analagous to an explorer facing a great geographical expanse of new territory. At the outset, the territory appears as an overwhelming and undifferentiated mass. Closer examination reveals significant factors lending overall character to the differing elements of the landscape. Similarly, critical analysis of the sources reveals a succession of terms and schools of thought rather like a succession of mountain ranges and individual peaks rising from a great land mass. Because of persistent basic interrelationships, categorical

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[1]Richard V. W. Buel, Jr., "Democracy and the American Revolution: A Frame of Reference," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d series, 21 (April 1964): 165.

divisions of the secondary source material on colonial America and the roots of its Revolution must always be tentative. These persistent interrelationships evolve from the fact that all historians, in some fashion, are conscious of, and react against, or reaffirm, the interpretations of their predecessors. Tentative as the categorical divisions are, they must nevertheless be attempted if a coherent overall analysis is to be achieved.

Historical Interpretations

For the purpose of the present study five basic divisions of historical interpretations are presented. The five divisions are chronologically: the Whig School, the imperial school, the progressives and economic determinists, the neo-conservatives, and the school of contemporary interpretations.

The Whig School

The earliest school of major importance in the interpretation of colonial America is that characterized as the Whig School. An early start in this direction was made by David Ramsay (1749-1815). His thoughtful assessment of events he had lived through was published in 1789 under the title, *History of the American Revolution*. Ramsay emphasized the basic conflict in colonial America as being between those who desired freedom and those who were connected with

the oppressive mechanisms that were associated with the mother country.[2]

In his characterization, Ramsay pointed the way to the prevailing Whig historical spirit of the ensuing nineteenth century. That spirit took particular pride in emphasizing the basic theme of colonial life as the conflict between freedom-loving Americans and oppressive British rulers. This view reached its peak in the work of George Bancroft.[3]

Bancroft, a nationalistic liberal, espoused typical nineteenth century idealist views. Further, he theorized within a rigid ideological framework that held that human destiny remained firmly in the hands of Providence.[4] Like other Whig historians, Bancroft saw a real conflict between the liberties of the Americans and the tyranny of the British. For him, the Republic was a triumph of freedom and democracy over the evils of the world, namely England and the monarchy. His views represent general nineteenth century interpretations better than most historians.

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[2]A representative extract from David Ramsay's work is reprinted in Edmund S. Morgan, (ed.). The American Revolution: Two Centuries of Interpretation (Englewood Cliffs, N. J. : Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 5-19.

[3]George Bancroft, History of the United States from the Discovery to the Adoption of the Constitution: The Author's Last Revision, 6 vols. (New York: Appleton, 1883-85), especially vols. 1, 2, and 3.

[4]Ibid., vol. 2, p. 268.

It may be noted that the Whig school was not limited to the Americans. The British Whig historians gave parallel accounts of the causes of the Revolution. In fact the term Whig for the American school was an import. George Otto Trevelyan should be consulted for the British Whig viewpoint of both colonial America and the Revolution.[5]

The Imperial School

At the turn of the twentieth century, Trevelyan was turning his attention to the American Revolution, a new school of historians was emerging. As the United States began to sense the pull of imperialistic sentiments about the turn of the twentieth century, a new school of historians began to consider the imperial aspects of the Revolution and its roots. Associated with the names of George L. Beer, Charles M. Andrews, and Lawrence Henry Gipson, this school is fittingly characterized as the imperial school of historians. Beer, for example, considering colonial America from the viewpoint of the imperial center in London, reexamined the commercial policies of the mother country and concluded that the mercantile system had actually enhanced the economic growth of the colonies. Since his focus of interest was the British Empire, rather than the rise of America, there were very few references concerning American democracy.

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[5]George Otto Trevelyan, The American Revolution, 4 vols. (New York: Longmans, 1903).

Beer did, however, write about Ben Franklin's Albany Plan of Union, and how a "Grand Council" was "to be elected by the various assemblies." He also had references to "no taxation without representation."[6] So it was evident that there were some operational concepts of the democratic process. Nevertheless, Beer's book, British Colonial Policy 1754-1765, was a portrayal of British policy, a study in imperial history.[7]

Andrews, in his extensive studies, had as his major concern the constitutional aspects of the imperial context of the struggle between Americans and Englishmen. His work emphasized the parallels between American desires for unfettered colonial growth and British desires to impose tighter controls on their empire. It was his opinion that "the American Revolution was a political and constitutional movement and only secondarily one that was either financial, commercial, or social."[8] Andrews was to maintain that basic emphasis throughout his work. Nevertheless, he held that "ther was no struggle for 'democracy' . . . in colonial times. . . ."[9]

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[6]George L. Beer, British Colonial Policy 1754-1765 (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1958), pp. 18-46.

[7]George L. Beer, British Colonial Policy 1754-1765 (New York: Macmillan, 1907).

[8]Charles M. Andrews, "The American Revolution: An Interpretation," American Historical Review 31 (January 1926): 230.

[9]Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period of American History (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938), p. 423n.

Gipson essayed a sustained analysis, following the same basic theme inaugurated by Beer. However, Gipson disagreed with those historians who held that the issue was taxation without representation. He concluded that "the evidence is overwhelming that American colonials revolted . . . to free themselves from interference by the government of Great Britain."[10] In some instances he defended the British policies as not only justified, but necessary.[11]

In light of these comments, it seems safe to conclude that the imperial school had nothing to offer the twentieth century educator seeking explanation of the operational concepts of democracy in colonial America. The major emphases of the imperial school appears to be England, with the American colonies having only secondary roles in the overall development of the British Empire.

Even while the imperial school was busy expounding their views another school of historical interpretation had risen--the school of progressives and economic determinists. Andrews noted the phenomenon with disapproval, commenting that the new arrivals were seeking "a place in the historical sunshine."[12]

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[10]Lawrence Henry Gipson, The Triumphant Empire (New York: Knopf, 1967), p. 215.

[11]Lawrence Henry Gipson, "The American Revolution as an Aftermath of the Great War for the Empire, 1754-1763," Political Science Quarterly, 65, no. 1, (March 1950): 92-101.

[12]Charles M. Andrews, The Colonial Period, p. 438n.

The School of Progressives and Economic Determinists

The imperial school of interpretation, acting as it did to place the colonial period in what was at least partially an economic context, opened the door to subsequent interpretations of the roots of the American Revolution. The revolution was seen as springing from the soil of economic and class conflict--between competing groups of colonists, and between those same groups and the mother country. In addition to this theoretical opening, the political environment of the first half of the twentieth century gave impetus to the development of an economically based theory. Events such as the Progressive Movement, World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution, and the Great Depression, tended to motivate historians toward some variety of progressive or economic determinist interpretation.

A number of names may be put forward as representative of the progressive and economic determinist school. They include Emory R. Johnson, J. Franklin Jameson, Carl L. Becker, Charles A. Beard, Edward Channing, Louis M. Hacker, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., and Merrill Jensen. It must be made clear that not all of those named espoused the progressive or deterministic viewpoint throughout their careers. Furthermore, many held differing emphases within what was a broad interpretation.

As early as 1915, Johnson emphasized the roots of the Revolution as lying in the desire to secure commercial and industrial freedom through the establishment of political liberty. That political freedom, for Johnson, was supported, after the attainment of home rule, by the levying of an independent tax base.[13]

In a major study published in 1926, J. Franklin Jameson was to come to a similar conclusion:

> The men of our Revolution . . . were neither levellers nor theorists. Their aims were distinctly political, not social. They fought for their own concrete rights as Englishmen, not for the abstract rights of man, nor for liberty, equality, and fraternity. . . . He sought for political freedom, but he had no mind to allow revolution to extend itself beyond that limited sphere. . . . Many economic desires, many social aspirations were set free by the political struggle, many aspects of colonial society profoundly altered by the forces thus let loose.[14]

The works of Channing emphasized further the domestic struggles among Americans, and their international equivalents, during the colonial period.[15] Similar interpretations were put forward in celebrated works by Beard and Hacker,

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[13]Emory R. Johnson, History of Domestic and Foreign Commerce of the United States, 2 vols. (Washington, D. C. : Carnegie Institute, 1915), especially vol. 1.

[14]J. Franklin Jameson, "The Revolution and the Status of Persons," in Morgan, The American Revolution, p. 101; reprinted from J. F. Jameson, The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1926).

[15]Edward Channing, A History of the United States, 6 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1905-25), vol. 3, p. 1.

as well as by Schlesinger.[16] The case of Carl Becker is interesting if only because this eminent historian's viewpoint has been thoroughly assessed by a historian of the contemporary generation: Robert Brown. As Brown sums up the earlier part of Becker's rather erratic career: "Becker placed the American Revolution in the city rather than on the frontier with class conflict between disfranchised lower classes and propertied upper classes the major issue."[17] Becker himself provided the most succinct characterization of his class-struggle theories in perhaps the most quoted single observation by any American historian on the colonial period: ". . . The first was the question of home rule; the second was the question of who should rule at home."[18] His concern was the development of maximum participation and majority rule.

Louis Hacker agreed that the causes of the Revolution were predominantly economic: "The struggle was not over

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[16]Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, The Rise of American Civilization (New York: Macmillan, 1936); Louis M. Hacker, The Triumph of American Capitalism (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1940); Arthur M. Schlesinger, The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763-1776 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1918).

[17]Robert E. Brown, Carl Becker on History and The American Revolution (East Lansing, Mich.: The Spartan Press, 1970), p. 22.

[18]Carl L. Becker, The History of Political Parties in the Province of New York, 1760-1776 (Madison, Wisc.: Wisconsin University Press, 1909), p. 22.

high-sounding political or constitutional concepts; . . . but over colonial manufacturing, wild lands and furs, sugar, wine, tea and currency. ... ."[19] Meanwhile, Arthur Schlesinger, Sr. stressed economic and geographic causes, but cited religious differences as well: "A complicating factor in the Revolutionary movement was supplied by the religious condition existing in the colonies . . . religious antagonisms were of chief importance in accentuating differences between the colonies and the mother country that already existed because of economic and geographic reasons. . . ."[20]

Whatever the merits or defects of the progressive and economic determinist interpretation both sides would agree that their school had a decreased interest in colonial democracy. Furthermore, where democracy was treated by the progressives or economic determinists, contradictions frequently appeared within their ranks.

The School of Midcentury Neo-Conservatism

The emergence of the United States as a major world power after World War II, and the domestic exigencies arising from the Cold War period, led to a more conservative

[19] Louis Hacker, "The First American Revolution," Columbia University Quarterly, no. 3, Part I, 37 (September 1935).

[20] Arthur Schlesinger, Sr., New Viewpoints In American History (New York: Macmillan, 1922), p. 170.

interpretation of colonial life. In this connection, the names of Daniel Boorstin, Clinton Rossiter, and Robert E. Brown may be particularly mentioned. Boorstin attempted a careful case study of facets of life in colonial America. The essence of his study was to establish a cautious viewpoint that the Revolution was "conservative." He viewed the colonial era and the Revolution as such in that they were concerned with the conservation of the rights of Americans, rather than with a forward thrusting revolution.[21] Similar sentiments became apparent at the outset of Clinton Rossiter's major work.[22] A similar detailed attempt to identify the roots of the democratic experience in the slow process of colonial life was made by Robert E. Brown in his seminal work on middle class democracy in Massachusetts. Brown was persuaded that, far from being generally undemocratic, Massachusetts was in fact generally democratic. "Economic opportunity, or economic democracy," he stated, "in turn contributed to political democracy."[23]

Brown's work stimulated much debate concerning the meaning of democracy and its operational concepts in the

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[21]Daniel J. Boorstin, _The Americans: The Colonial Experience_ (New York: Random House, 1958), p. 122.

[22]Clinton Rossiter, _Seedtime of the Republic: The Origin of the American Tradition of Political Liberty_ (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1953), Introduction, p. 1.

[23]Robert E. Brown, _Middle-Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691-1780_ (New York: Cornell University Press, 1955), p. 408.

colonial period. This debate continues in the periodical literature. With the waning of perhaps artificial tranquility of the 1950's, newer, more eclectic interpretations of the colonial period again began to appear. It is these theories that, by and large, retain contemporary currency.

Schools of Contemporary Interpretation

The economic determinist school ran into heavy criticism in the changed political enviornment of the post-World War II period. Yet one historian, Merrill Jensen, managed to bridge the gap until the decade of the 1960's, when renewed emphasis on more radical interpretations of colonial life became more popular. In his address to the 1957 Conference on Early American History at the Henry E. Huntington Library, Jensen concluded: ". . . the American Revolution was a democratic movement, not in origin, but in result."[24] Herbert Aptheker, now considered in the New Left School, produced two major works continuing the emphasis on econonmic and class struggle already described.[25] It is noteworthy that Aptheker also emphasized the democratic role of the American Negro in the colonial period in his standard documentary

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[24]Merrill Jensen, "Democracy and the American Revolution," Huntington Library Quarterly 20, no. 4, (1956-1957).

[25]Herbert Aptheker, The Colonial Era, 2nd ed. (New York: International, 1966); and The American Revolution: 1763-1783, 3rd ed. (New York: International, 1969).

work on Black History.[26] Further, the radical critique of the colonial period has been continued, in perhaps less pointed form, by contemporary historian Staughton Lynd.[27]

The schools--for it is difficult to speak of one single school--of contemporary interpretations may perhaps be categorized as sheltering under the rather extensive umbrella provided by a common interest in the patency of ideas and economics. The ideas are viewed as explicators of the motive forces of events in the colonial period. A brief overview of the situation may profitably be conducted by considering some of the writings of one of the leading interpreters of the viewpoint: Bernard Bailyn.

A major factor in colonial period existence, pointed to by Bailyn, has been the existence of strong ideological currents as vivifying the institutional forms of the time. Bailyn has produced a convincing documentary collection supportive of this idea.[28] Furthermore, in the Forward to his revised edition of The Ideological Origins of the American

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[26]Herbert Aptheker, (ed.), A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States (New York: Citadel, 1951).

[27]Staughton Lynd, Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism (New York: Random House, 1968); and "Who Should Rule at Home? Dutchess County, New York, in the American Revolution," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 18 (July 1961): 330-359.

[28]Bernard Bailyn, Pamphlets of the American Revolution, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965).

Revolution, Bailyn gave a thorough explanation of the emphasis on ideological currents that has been his distinctive contribution to colonial period studies. This scholarly work adis students of the colonial period to evaluate the success of that venture which introduced the words "consent" and "equality" to the American political process.[29]

Bailyn's emphasis on ideological forces as a cohesive factor influencing and structuring life in the colonial period have led to similar studies that still contine. John R. Howe, Jr.'s, Role of Ideology in the American Revolution includes many recent ideological interpretations.[30] It is clear that a new school of interpretation has emerged.

Other historians took different points of view. Elisha P. Douglass, a prominent neo-conservative, in Rebels and Democrats, declard that the Revolution was not fought to achieve democracy, but rather to win political independence.[31] Gordon S. Wood insists that the Revolution was more than a

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[29]Bernard Bailyn, The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967).

[30]John R. Howe, Jr., (ed.), The Role of Ideology in The American Revolution (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1970).

[31]Elisha P. Douglass, Rebels and Democrats: The Struggle for Equal Political Rights and Majority Rule During the American Revolution (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina, 1955).

question of home rule and builds his thesis on an elitits rather than on a democratic society.[32]

Another group, looking for similarities rather than differences among early Americans, developed under an umbrella of ideas. According to the consensus viewpoint, posited by such historians as Louis B. Hartz, Robert E. Brown, and Richard Hofstadter, Americans agreed on the fundamentals of private property and political democracy virtually from the beginning.[33]

By 1970 some historians were well on their way to constructing a version of American history that was influenced by their deep conviction of the country's recent failings. The beginning of this version, the New Left, can be traced to the works of William Appleman Williams and his students at the University of Wisconsin.[34] They emphasized the past to improve the present, and stressed the underdog and suppression, as well as conflicts. New Left views of

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[32]Gordon Wood, "Rhetoric and Reality in the American Revolution," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 23 (October 1966): 3-32.

[33]Louis B. Bartz, "American Political Thought and the American Revolution," American Political Science Review 46 (June 1952): 321-342. Robert E. Brown, "Democracy in Colonial Massachusetts," New England Quarterly 25 (September 1952): 291-313. Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It (New York: Random House, 1948).

[34]William A. Williams, The Contours of American History (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1966).

the colonial period are expressed by Jessee Lemisch, Staughton Lynd, Herbert Aptheker, and Eugene D. Genovese.[35]

Viewpoints have changed, and it is perhaps helpful to regard them as having contributed to a changing, yet cumulative picture of the national roots. Historians themselves are sensitive to the forces making for interpretative change. As Bailyn put it: ". . . old historical problems do not preclude new solutions: indeed they require them, for historical explanations are delicate contrivances, capable of being fundamentally upset by small bits of information and transformed by shifts in historian's angles of vision."[36]

From the examples cited, it is clear that several schools of interpretation of the American Revolution, the preceeding colonial period, and the developing democratic ideal and process, have appeared in the historical literature in the nearly two hundred years since the founding of the nation. A case can be made, it seems, for regarding each school as having something to contribute to the study of the concepts and operational definitions of democracy, and of all the life of the colonial period. As Chalres M. Andrews

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[35]Jesse Lemisch, "Jack Tar in the Streets: Merchant Seamen in the Politics of Revolutionary America," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 5, no. 25 (July 1968): 371-407. Staughton Lynd, Intellectual Origins of American Radicalism (New York: Random House 1968).

[36]Bernard Bailyn, The Origins of American Politics (New York: Knopf, 1969), p. 3.

observed: ". . . no matter how familiar a subject may be, it can always be re-examined with profit and viewed . . . from fresh point of vantage. . . ."[37]

Varying Interpretations and the Question of Democracy in Colonial America

Having established the broad outlines of the various schools that have offered interpretations of the colonial period of American life, it is now possible to focus more sharply on the question of democracy in that epoch as viewed by the historians concerned. Also, it is possible to investigate what critical conclusions may generally be drawn from the appropriate literature in the area.

Since historians first considered the question of the roots of the American Revolution, there has been, it seems fair to conclude, a general tendency toward greater critical use of sources and less reliance on unsupported generalizations. This tendency, a natural product of the growth of modern historical writing, has, of course, been buttressed by the simple fact of the cumulative nature of the historical interpretations involved. If five historically sequential schools of interpretation are involved, then adherents of the fifth school must necessarily cope with the work of their predecessors, extending the depth and critical dimensions of

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[37]Andrews, "The American Revolution: An Interpretation," p. 219.

their work. Further, it so happens that some of the latest interpretations by historians have been particularly concerned with the question of democracy in the colonial period. The net result of these factors is a "weighting" towards the most recent end of the scale of historical writing in regard to the aims of the present study.

In the light of these comments, it may be concluded that the Whig school of interpretation has little to offer the contemporary educator seeking elucidation of the topic of democracy in the colonial period. The writings of Bancroft and Fiske, for example, were vitiated by their reliance on a transcendental notion of freedom that has little to offer to the twentieth century, as later research has amply demonstrated. The verdict of Michael D. Clarke seems therefore an appropriate one:

> The intellectual climate of nineteenth century America allowed Bancroft and Fiske to assume that the freedom of which they granted the reality was a significant--perhaps the only significant--kind of freedom. At the end of their century, and increasingly in the twentieth, this particular nineteenth century solution to the problem of freedom would seem less adequate. . . .[38]

Nevertheless, whatever the ideological difficulties involved, Bancroft must, it seems, be granted his proper place:

> Recent studies of the politics and political institutions of several English colonies in North America before the Revolution reaffirm the basic assumption, whose first

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[38]Michael D. Clarke, "The Meaning of Freedom for George Bancroft and John Fiske," Mid-Continent American Studies Journal 6 (Spring 1969): 73.

important exponent was George Bancroft, that democracy existed in seventeenth and eighteenth century America.[39]

The contribution of the imperial school of historians toward the question of democracy is a rather negative one. The school, by and large, sought to deny the full reality and existence of colonial democracy even while concentrating on wide constitutional issues. Charles M. Andrews said quite emphatically on the subject:

> Self-government during our colonial period was not incompatible with dependence and in no sense implied "democracy," if by that evasive and much misunderstood term is meant something akin to political equality, universal suffrage, the right of the majority to rule, and popular sovereignty or government by consent of the governed. There was no struggle for "democracy" in that sense of the word in colonial times. . . .[40]

The economic determinist and progressive school of interpretation, widening the study of the colonial period to consider matters of economic interest and class conflict and struggle took almost of necessity, a much broader view of the era. To the strict determinist it matters little what participants in history _think_ they are doing; it is what they are _actually_ doing that counts. The economic interpretation went further. It asserted that the institutional structures, procedures, and claims of a time are merely surface

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[39]Roy N. Lokken, "The Concept of Democracy in Colonial Political Thought," _The William and Mary Quarterly_, 3d ser., 16 (October 1959): 568.

[40]Charles M. Andrews, _The Colonial Period of American History_, vol. 4: _England's Commercial and Colonial Policy_, p. 423n.

manifestations. There are actually deeper, hidden conflicts relating to the simple facts of ownership of the means of production and the like. Charles A. and Mary Beard argued that since only the upper classes were represented in the assemblies there was little democracy in the colonies: "Although it is sometimes imagined, on the basis of school-book fictions, that the colonies were local democracies formed on the pure principles of a New World philosophy and founded on substantial economic equality, the facts of the case lend little color to that view. . . ."[41] Whatever the merits or defects of this approach--and arguments on this matter have often been intense--both sides would agree that the net result is a diminished interest in democratic manifestations *per se*. Moreover, where the topic is treated, contradictions appear despite the acceptance of contradiction as a necessary part of history by determinist historians. Robert E. Brown, for example, was quick to seize on this point in his analysis of the early work of Carl Becker:

> . . . Becker went on to say that Andrews' discussion about whether the people really wanted democracy in 1776 struck Becker as futile because it missed the point that democracy and aristocracy, like war, were not objects in themelves which people want or do not want. Yet the . . . thesis was based on the very assumption that

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[41]Charles A. Beard and Mary Beard. *The Rise of American Civilization* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1961), vol. 1, p. 126.

> democracy was exactly what the people wanted in 1776, a fact which made the Revolution primarily an internal class conflict.[42]

In their concern for rejection of what they regarded as an undue denial of the role of democracy in the colonial period, the neo-conservative school of interpretation naturally placed heavy emphasis on the early development of democracy in America. Thus Rossiter, in considering the importance of the frontier in early American colonial society, was able to point to its influence on the development of democracy:

> The wilderness did not of itself create democracy; indeed it often encouraged the growth of ideas and institutions hostile to it. But it did help produce some of the raw materials of American democracy--self-reliance, social fluidity, simplicity, equality, dislike of privilege, optimism, and devotion to liberty. . . .[43]

It was Robert E. Brown, however, who really initiated a thorough discussion of democracy in colonial America--a debate that continues within the contemporary school of ideological emphasis. Roy Lokken, for example, refers to Brown's work on middle-class democracy in Massachusetts as "the most formidable recent argument for the existence of a fully

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[42]Robert E. Brown, Carl Becker on History and The American Revolution (East Lansing, Mich.: The Spartan Press, 1970), pp. 140-41.

[43]Clinton Rossiter, Seedtime of the Republic: The Origin of the Am ican Tradition of Political Liberty (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1953), p. 10.

developed democracy in the colonial period."[44] Brown's work has already been discussed. In essence, it developed the thesis that democracy did indeed exist in colonial America--at least insofar as utilization of certain elements of the suffrage in Massachusetts communities was concerned. He concluded:

> Economic opportunity, or economic democracy, in turn contributed to political democracy. . . . the amount of property required for the franchise was very small and . . . the great majority of men could easily meet the requirements . . . when Hutchinson said that anything that looked like a man was a voter and that policy in general was dictated by the lower classes, he was certainly using the term "democracy" as we mean it now. Hutchinson might deplore the view that government existed for the benefit of the people . . . but this is the democratic idea. . . .[45]

Other scholars have taken up the theme with related case studies. Thus Charles S. Grant examined democracy in Connecticut. He made the following observation:

> Kent is manifestly an exception to prevailing interpretations concerning eighteenth-century settlements. Although the town conforms somewhat to established versions of social democracy, it deviates notably in the areas of economic and political democracy. This history of an "exceptional town" on the New England frontier may provide some counterbalance to those radical communities which historians have found plagued with internal and external class rivalries.[46]

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[44] Lokken, "The Concept of Democracy": 569.

[45] Robert E. Brown, Middle-Class Democracy and the Revolution in Massachusetts, 1691-1780 (New York: Cornell University Press, 1955), pp. 401-408.

[46] Charles S. Grant, Democracy in the Connecticut Frontier Town of Kent (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 173.

Two papers by B. Katherine Brown, wife of Robert E. Brown, offer the results of another investigation. She concluded: "Massachusetts was not as aristocratic, as undemocratic, as we have been led to believe."[47] Two other studies may be mentioned by way of further illustration of the growing concern with what might be termed the grass roots of democracy in the colonial period. Robert E. Wall, for example, studied Cambridge, Massachusetts. His concluding remarks confirm the democratic nature of life in that city in the colonial period--but with some qualification:

> The discovery of the wide distribution of the franchise in Cambridge--if it can be shown to be true of other Massachusetts towns--is of the utmost importance, for it will alter many prevailing ideas concerning Massachusetts Bay. But enthusiasm for this discovery must be tempered by the realization that Massachusetts Bay was governed by a political elite which drew its members from one social class.[48]

Similar observations are to be found in the paper by Richard Simmons, which presents the results of a case study of Watertown, Massachusetts, and concludes that democracy was more widespread than hitherto acknowledged.[49]

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[47] B. Katherine Brown, "Freemanship in Puritan Massachusetts," American Historical Review 59 (July 1954): 883. See also her article, "Puritan Democracy: A Case Study," Mississippi Valley Historical Review 50 (December 1963):376.

[48] Robert Emmet Wall, Jr., "A New Look at Cambridge," Journal of American History 52 (December 1965): 605.

[49] Richard C. Simmons, "Freemanship in Early Massachusetts: Some Suggestions and a Case Study," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 19 (July 1962): 422-28.

The situation with regard to the flood of case studies on democracy in the colonial period toward the end of the 1960's is well summarized in a paper by Michael Zuckerman. This author felt that, while many studies have been made, progress regarding the concepts of democracy in the colonial period had not advanced at a similar pace. He summarized his argument:

> For at least a decade now, a debate has passed through these pages on the extent of democracy in the old New England town. It began, of course, with Robert E. Brown, and it did not begin badly: Brown's work was a breath of fresh air in a stale discussion . . . but what was begun decently has degenerated since, and findings that should have provoked larger questions have only produced quibbles and counter-quibbles over methodology and quantification . . . We are, ultimately, as far from agreement as we ever were about whether eighteenth-century Massachusetts was democratic . . . the discussion seems to have stopped conceptually where Brown started . . . on both sides the discussion . . . has assumed that the franchise is a satisfactory index of democracy, and the recourse to the seeming solidity to the voting statistics has depended, if only implicitly, upon that dubious premise. . . .[50]

Zuckerman himself thus opened the door to fresh consideration of the topic of democracy in the colonial period--that of considering democracy, if it existed, in the context of the time. The net result of his long article is to cast some doubts on the question as to whether the society in question was indeed as democratic as had been maintained by the Browns.

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[50]Michael Zuckerman, "The Social Context of Democracy in Massachusetts," The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., 25 (November 1968): 523-24.

Perhaps bearing these undercurrents in mind, other historians have attempted to consider such meaningful questions as those dealing with what people of the time actually had in mind when they talked of democracy. "We shall not understand why there was a Revolution," Bailyn concluded, "until we suspend disbelief and listen with care to what the Revolutionaries themselves said was the reason there was a revolution."[51] The latest of the interpretations of the democratic aspects of the colonial period is basically ideological. Bailyn claimed that his study of the more than seventy pamphlets "confirmed my rather old fashioned belief that the American Revolution was above all else an ideological, constitutional, political struggle and not primarily a controversy between social groups undertaken to force changes in the organization of the society or the economy."[52] "Democracy," this was the point, wrote Bailyn. "'Republic' and 'democracy' were words closely associated in the colonists' minds; often they were used synonymously. . . . " "Americans of 1776," he continued, "still referred to the crown, the aristocracy, and the democracy as social categories basic to politics and to observe that each had its own fundamental principle or spirit in government: for monarchy, fear; for

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[51]Bailyn, The Origins of American Politics, p. 11.

[52]Bernard Bailyn, The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), Foreword, pp. vi-vii.

aristocracy, honor; for democracy, virtue."[53] Bailyn's emphasis on ideological forces as a cohesive factor in influencing and structuring life in the colonial period has led to other, similar studies.

One such study was offered by Elisha P. Douglass. Douglass was of the opinion that the struggle for equal political rights and majority rule during the colonial era and the Revolution was not fought to achieve democracy. It was fought to win political independence.[54] A similar study was conducted by Gordon S. Wood. Like some of the Progressive thinkers Wood insisted that the Revolution was more than a question of home rule. He built his thesis on an elitist rather than a democratic society.[55]

Three further papers illustrative of the ideological approach may be briefly considered. Roy Lokken, after assessing Robert Brown's contribution to the study of the democratic theme, assailed that author for conceptual poverty. He wrote:

> He bases his definition partly . . . on several twentieth century notions about democracy, among them "an opportunity to participate in the material benefits of the

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[53]Bernard Bailyn, "The Revolution and a Changing Political Culture," in _Politics and Society in Colonial America_, ed. M. G. Kammen (N. Y.: Winston, 1967), p. 95.

[54]Douglass, _Rebels and Democrats_.

[55]Gordon S. Wood, _The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787_ (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969).

> community" . . . a thesis which is so controversial as in any case to be of little value as a standard.[56]

Lokken went on to observe that a definition of democracy is a necessity if investigation is to be adequate, but that controversy over modern definitions of the term renders the task difficult. "A more convincing definition of the term 'democracy,' applicable to a study of colonial political institutions and behavior," he maintains, "can be arrived at by examining the concept of democracy current in colonial America and colonial attitudes toward it."[57] After examining the colonists' attitudes to democracy, Lokken reported that they understood the term in a non-controversial, classical, sense. He therefore observed:

> The assumption that there was democracy in the colonies prior to the American Revolution, therefore, is correct only in the sense that the assemblies, as the colonial counterpart of the House of Commons in England, were the democratic part of a mixed constitution embodying the three, or at least two of the three, known forms of government--monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy.[58]

Lokken concluded that, although there was much talk of a "republic" and a "democracy" among the colonists as the historic rupture approached, no one seriously thought it would be a pure democracy. Further, Lokken suggested that a pure democracy was to take many years to develop, and perhaps is still developing.

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[56]Lokken, "The Concept of Democracy", p. 569.

[57]*Ibid.*, p. 570.

[58]*Ibid.*, p. 577.

J. R. Pole has also considered the question of a definition of democracy. In a manner similar to Lokken, though perhaps not in such meticulous detail and with such succinct observations, Pole made the excellent point that "there is so little agreement about what is meant by 'democracy' and the discussion has such a strong tendency to slide noiselessly from what we do mean to what we ought to mean. . . . "[59] After making a broad survey of the colonial period, he noted further:

> The historian who insists that this system was a model of democracy may find that the advance of the economy, a tendency already affecting America in many ways, leaves him holding a very undemocratic-looking baby. . . .[60]

In fact, in his collection of essays, Pole held the view that the leaders of the American colonies represented a society that did not regard itself as democratic.[61] These observations by Pole implied that not only must the colonial concept of democracy be explored, but that the colonial experience was constantly changing the operational definition of the term. These factors inevitably change the perspective from which the democratic context was--and is--viewed.

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[59]J. R. Pole, "Historians and the Problem of Early American Democracy," American Historical Review 67 (April 1962): 627.

[60]Ibid., p. 643.

[61]J. R. Pole, (ed.), The Advance of Democracy (New York: Harper and Row, 1967).

Finally, it may be noted that Richard Buel, in an excellent analysis, also made the interrelated points that one must define democracy and that a good way to do so is to see what the alleged "democrats" of the colonial period actually felt about the concept. Buel commenced his article by noting:

> American historians have never been famous for agreement, but in one respect they seem curiously united. All have tried to measure the significance of the Revolution in relation to the development of American democracy. However, beyond the limits of this initial premise their unity dissolves into a rich multiplicity of interpretations. . . .[62]

He concluded:

> The complex model of assumptions about the people's power with which Americans entered the imperial crisis bore little relation to American democracy as it is popularly conceived today. What power the people did possess was not designed to facilitate the expression of their will in politics, but to defend them from oppression. Nor were such ideas easily abandoned. They lingered on . . . even into the nineteenth century, helping to account for the many "undemocratic' features of the state constitutions.[63]

With the modern emphasis on clarity of definition and on placement of the colonial democratic experience in context, the path of historical investigation, as revealed in the literature, comes to an end--at least until a new scheme of interpretation is devised. It may be fairly concluded, however, that differing interpretations of the topic have

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[62]Richard Buel, "Democracy and the American Revolution:" 165.

[63]*Ibid.*, p. 189.

existed, that all have had something to contribute, and that the most recent appear to contribute most of all. Having outlined the facts of these many different interpretations--at least insofar as a representative sampling of the literature within the overall context of the present dissertation will admit--it is now possible to turn to the educational implications of these varying interpretations. We turn specifically to the question of how, if at all, the selected text books handled the various interpretations of democracy in colonial America.

CHAPTER IV

THE HIGH SCHOOL TEXTS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The two previous chapters examined the basic historiography relating to colonial democracy. The discussion took note of eighteenth century concepts of democracy and the existence of five major schools offering differing interpretations of the American colonial experience. It also described some of the implications conveyed by those five schools in relation to the important topic of democracy in colonial America--how historians have perceived it, how it functioned, and how the peoples of the time regarded the matter. The two chapters, therefore, provide the conceptual framework for a more specific examination of textual treatment of colonial America and its democratic component. In line with the aims of this study, coverage will be limited to the treatment given to that topic in a selection of seven high school texts and five basic college texts devoted to the American historical experience. The present chapter is devoted to a critical examination of the seven high school texts as indicated in the introductory chapter. These are the texts currently authorized for use in the state of Tennessee.

This critical analysis will proceed by considering the texts *seriatim*. For each text, an attempt will be made to make an overall characterization of the nature of the text in order to place the portion of the text dealing with colonial America in perspective. There will also be an examination of the specific treatment of democracy in colonial America: to determine which contemporary colonial opinions of democracy may be reflected, and to ascertain whether or not the views of any particular school of historical interpretation are being espoused. Of major concern will be the manner in which the texts related an abstract definition of democracy to operational terms such as liberty, freedom, rights, obedience, and self-government. Particular attemtion will be paid to bringing out the unique contribution of the individual text under consideration as it relates to the concepts of democracy in colonial America.

Bailey: The American Pageant

The first text to be considered is that authored by Thomas A. Bailey and entitled *The American Pageant: A History of the Republic*.[1] A massive book--998 pages of text exclusive of such appendices as the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the like--

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[1]Thomas A. Bailey, *The American Pageant: A History of the Republic*, 3rd ed. (Boston: D. C. Heath, 1966).

work is written in a dense, fact-packed narrative style, with a large number of helpful diagrams and illustrations. As such, it is obviously intended for upper-level high school students, and more commonly, for college students.

The first 103 pages, or 10.3% of the entire text, dealt with the period of American history up to Independence. This section of the book was divided into five chapters: "New World Beginnings" (starting on page 3); "The Completion of English Colonization" (from page 22); "The Duel for North America" (from page 44); "Colonial Life on the Eve of Revolt" (from page 64); and "The Road to Revolution" (from page 84 to page 103). Obviously within such framework the treatment of democracy in colonial America would receive different emphases according to the chapter involved. It must be pointed out, however, that only 96 pages, or 9.6% of the total text, was directly related to the present study of democracy in colonial America.

It is significant that the theme of democracy was emphasized from the outset. Facing the first page of the first chapter was a well-known quotation from Walt Whitman, with--at least in the light of the present study--the not inappropriate opening lines: "Sail, sail thy best, ship of Democracy, Of Value is thy freight, 'tis not the Present only, The past is also stored in the . . ."[2] Further, the

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[2] Ibid., p. 2.

opening page of the first chapter not only continued the emphasis on democracy, but placed its roots in the pre-Independence era.

> The two new continents eventually brought forth a score of sovereign states. The most influential of this brood--the United States of America--was born a pygmy and developed into a giant. It was destined to leave a mighty imprint on the rest of the world as a result of its refreshingly liberal ideals, its revoluntionary democratic experiment, and its boundless opportunities for the oppressed and underprivileged of foreign lands . . . yet . . . the roots of the United States reach back into the subsoil of the colonial years more deeply than is commonly supposed.[3]

The rest of the first chapter sketched in the broad picture of New World colonization, and placed a firm emphasis on the importance of democratic roots in Virginia--however tenuous.

> The charter of the Virginia Company . . . guaranteed to overseas settlers the same rights of Englishmen that they would have enjoyed if they had stayed at home. This precious boon was gradually extended to other English colonies, and soon became a foundation stone of American liberties. . . . Representative self-government was also born in Virginia, ironically in the same cradle with slavery and the same year--1619 . . . an assembly known as the House of Burgesses . . . met for five days. . . . A momentous precedent was thus feebly established, for this assemblage was the first of many miniature parliaments to mushroom for the soils of America.[4]

At the end of his first chapter, summing up life in the plantation colonies of the late 1670's, Bailey noted that all "were agitated by a large underprivileged back-country element, which was seeking a larger voice in government," but immediately qualified this by stating that "This was less true of North Carolina, which from the beginning had

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[3]*Ibid.*, p. 3. [4]*Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

embraced a poorer class of people" while "all the plantation colonies permitted some religious toleration."[5]

The following chapter completed the picture of English colonization by presenting a similarly rounded portrait of the Northern and Middle Colonies. Again, early stirrings of democratic sentiments were noted: apropos the New England Confederation of 1643, Bailey wrote, for example: "The rank and file colonists, for their part, received valuable experience in delegating their votes to properly chosen representatives. . . ."[6] Turning to the New England Puritans the author noted that "democracy in Congregational Church government carried over into political government. The Town meeting . . . revealed democracy in its purest form."[7] He went on to remind the reader that "the impact of New England on the rest of the nation has been incalculable. . . . They cross-fertilized innumerable other communities with their ideals and democratic practices." Then, speaking of the Middle Colonies again, Bailey maintained: ". . . the Middle Colonies, which in some ways were the most American part of America, could claim certain distinctions in their own right . . . a considerable amount of economic and solicial democracy prevailed, though not conspicuously in aristocratic New York."[9] Bailey concluded the chapter by stating that "Long before 1760 . . . the thirteen colonies . . .

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[5]*Ibid.*, p. 21. [6]*Ibid.*, p. 30. [7]*Ibid.*, p. 35

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 36. [9]*Ibid.*, p. 43.

all possessed some measure of self-government, though by no means complete democracy."[10] Bailey's following chapter--"The Duel for North America"--was largely concerned with the wider imperial struggles for the continent. By the 1760's, he concluded, the net result was that the Americans "were in no mood to be hobbled," and the British "were in no mood for back talk . . . the stage was set for a violent family quarrel."[11]

Chapter four dealt with colonial life on the eve of the Revolution. The author provided a useful "pyramid" diagram of the social structure and concluded: "But yeasty democratic forces were working significant changes."[12] One of those changes concerned popular government. By 1775, Bailey concluded, two of the colonies " . . . elected their own governors under self-governing charters," and "practically every colony utilized a two house legislative body. . . . The lower house . . . was elected by the people. . . ."[13] A section entitled "The Political Animal" gave a summary of political developments in the colonies. It noted in conclusion:

> By 1775 America was not yet a true democracy--socially, economically, or politically. But it was far more democratic than England and Europe. Colonial institutions were given freer reign to the democratic ideals. . . . And these democratic seeds, planted in rich soil, were to bring forth a lush harvest in later years.[14]

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[10]<u>Ibid</u>. [11]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 63. [12]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 68.

[13]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 80. [14]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 83.

Similar observations were found woven into the narrative of Bailey's final pre-Independence chapter, but with no concrete definition of democracy.

In sum, Bailey's work may be characterized as being sophisticated and careful to cover a wide range of material, including that relating to colonial democracy and its place in the wider society. Although the book gave no abstract definition of democracy it did present several examples of operational definitions of the term. There were references, for example, to political rights, political liberty, civil rights, and civil liberties. The author was cognizant of Robert E. Brown's work, recommending it in the bibliography to the chapter with the annotation, "democracy is upgraded." Perhaps he had Brown's work in mind when he stated: ". . . the middle-class, the backbone of the colonies."[15] Yet he was also careful to give full weight to economic factors. In terms of utilization of the work of any particular school, it must be concluded that Bailey's work is of sufficient complexity and sophistication to allow for a full range of viewpoints. It seems that historians of several modern schools would approve of the emphasis given in at least significant parts of this comprehensive textbook. The New Left school would probably take serious issue with the presentation, and it appears a little too sophisticated for full Whig approval.

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[15] Ibid., p. 68.

Feder: Viewpoints: USA

The second high school text to be considered provided quite a contrast to the first text: it was edited by Bernard Feder, and entitled Viewpoints: USA.[16] The title of the text, and a quotation from Abelard at the beginning of the Introduction--"The first key to wisdom is the constant and frequent questioning"[17]--gave an indication of the basic philosophy of the book: to present briefly annotated excerpts of original and secondary material while encouraging the student to judge the evidence and pursue further research. As the editor stated in an introductory statement:

> In a sense, we are the jury, since it is the public, in a democracy, that makes the final decisions on contemporary issues, using much the same techniques in determining the truth that the historian uses. . . . The job of the instructor, in the study of historical problems, is really that of the judge . . . but the decisions and the verdict must be yours, as they will be throughout your lives as citizens of a democracy.[18]

This same view of historical interpretation in the educational context was presented in somewhat more sophisticated language in an Appendix addressed to the classroom instructor.[19]

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[16]Bernard Feder, (ed.), Viewpoints: USA, Teacher's edition (New York: American Book Co., 1967).

[17]Ibid., p. ix. [18]Ibid., p. xvi.

[19]Ibid., Appendix, G 1-11.

The basic portion of Feder's text was 352 pages long. Of that total, the first 33 pages--only 9.3%--were devoted to the colonial period. However, the two chapters on the colonial period, "How Did Democracy Develop in Colonial America?" (pp. 2-17) and "What Were the Causes of the American Revolution?" (pp. 18-33) are both quite pertinent to the study of colonial democracy.

Chapter I began by operationalizing democracy:

> Most historians see the development of democracy in America as a continuous process, with its beginnings in England. The English, who came to dominate the North American continent, brought with them a tradition of representative government and civil liberty. This tradition was reflected in the establishment of colonial representative assemblies and in the jealous protection of the "rights of Englishmen"--trial by jury, free speech, and freedom from unreasonable arrest and imprisonment.[20]

The first portion of the chapter in question was given over to extracts from such documents as the Magna Carta; the Habeas Corpus Act of 1697; the Bill of Rights of 1689, and a quotation from John Locke.[21] A second set of extracts similarly attempted to provide help in answering the question, "Did Democracy Expand in the English Colonies?" and included material from the Virginia Company Charter of 1609, from the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut of 1639, from a town meeting regulation, and from the Zenger trial of 1735. In each case, critical questions concerning the degrees of democracy actually achieved were posed.[22]

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[20] Ibid., p. 2. [21] Ibid., pp. 3-5. [22] Ibid., pp. 5-10.

The final portion of the chapter was given over to a selection of views from various historians, posing possible answers to the question, "Do Historians See the Roots of Democracy in Colonial America?" Thus a quotation from Carl Degler on Puritan democracy is balanced by a contrasting quote from Charles Andrews pointing to Puritan intolerance; another quotation from Degler on colonial economic opportunity as a key to democratic development was balanced by one from Frederick Jackson Turner on the role of the frontier in this respect. Oscar Handlin"s view that English disinterest forced the colonists to develop self-government was contrasted with the view of Daniel Boorstin that policies made in London impeded self-government tendencies. The view of Charles and Mary Beard concerning the limitations of democracy in colonial America in terms of class was contrasted with, among others, the views of Robert E. Brown on the extent of democracy, and the comments by Charles Andrews that democracy was limited to post-Independence developments.[23] The views presented were thus fairly representative of at least the imperial, determinists, and neo-conservative schools, although the total lack of references to Blacks throughout the book was somewhat surprising. There was a general statement regarding a slave class of people, but merely noted that they were crowded out of the elections "held in the open air in country towns. . . ."[24] However, there

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[23]Ibid., pp. 10-14. [24]Ibid., p. 13.

certainly was insufficient material on the lower classes of people to bring any applause from the New Left school. In related annotations, students were encouraged to make critical examination of the evidence themselves regarding the development of democracy. A suggested research project, for example, was to "Prepare a brief chapter for an imaginary textbook . . . on 'The Roots of Democracy in Colonial America.'"[25] Bibliographic annotations were generally apt, but where the work of Andrews was hailed as "The classic study of colonial development," Brown's work on middle-class democracy in Massachusetts was somewhat guardedly introduced with the statement, ". . . claims the basis for political democracy was well established."[26] In the guide for the teacher, caution and critical analysis were again urged; "The individual historian's frame of reference should be emphasized."[27]

The ensuing chapter on the causes of the Revolution followed a similar approach. After a presentation of original documents, the views of such historians as Lawrence H. Gipson, Louis Hacker, Charles M. Andrews, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., James Truslow Adams, and J. Franklin Jameson were presented briefly. One glaring omission was the name

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[25] Ibid., p. 16.

[26] Ibid., p. 15.

[27] Ibid., Appendix, G 13.

Bernard Bailyn, whose works were totally ignored. In suggested research questions, the role of democracy was emphasized: "To what extent did the democratic slogans based on the natural rights philosophy represent the real political feelings of the leaders. . . . What evidence can you submit to support either point of view?"[28]

In sum, Feder has attempted to grapple with the problems of definition and varying interpretations by encouraging a critical attitude toward the work of historians who have viewed democratic development. He has, however, been limited by considerations of space to very brief extracts, and the lack of treatment of minorities is striking.

Frost and Associates: A History of The United States

The next text to be considered is twice the size of Feder's slim but innovative volume. James Frost and his fellow authors; Ralph A. Browns, David M. Ellis, and William B. Fink, have taken pains in their History of the United States to present a thorough treatment.[29] The main text of the work was divided into ten units, each covering a discrete historical period, and containing, in all, 32 chapters with a total of 664 pages. At the end of each unit was a

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[28] Ibid., p. 31.

[29] James A. Frost, et al., A History of the United States: The Evolution of a Free People (Chicago: Follett Educational Corporation, 1969).

special "Focus on . . . " section presenting an in-depth general essay on, among other topics, the minority contributions of Indians, Jews, and Blacks. Also at the end of each unit, a section entitled, "At the Feet of Herodotus" presented such problems and questions as "Did Pocahontas Save John Smith?" as a method of inducing critical consideration of sources in the student. There are also copious maps and illustrations throughout.

Two units, totaling in all 110 pages--or 16.5% of the whole--treat the pre-Independence periods. The first unit was entitled, "Europeans Discover and Settle the New World, 1492-1750" and included three separate chapters: the Spanish Empire; the breakup of the Spanish Empire; and--most pertinently for purposes of the present study--the expansion of the English colonies.[30] It must be pointed out that this unit had an unusually complete coverage of the Spanish in America, for an American history textbook. Perhaps this was a reaction to the new-found importance of the Hispanic-American. Unit 2 was entitled, "The Colonists Strive for Self-Rule and Independence, 1750-1783" and again contained three chapters dealing, respectively, with the prosperity of the colonies within the British Empire; the colonial challenge to the British rule; and the actual winning of Independence.[31]

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[30] Ibid., pp. 2-14; 15-32; and 33-34, respectively.

[31] Ibid., pp. 50-66; 67-86; and 87-104, respectively.

Actually, however, only 68 pages--10.2% of the text--were especially related to the present dissertation.

In their introduction to Unit I, the authors specifically stated that "the largest number of settlers were drawn to the British colonies by the wider opportunities for economic success, the greater political freedom, and the more tolerant religious atmosphere. . . ."[32] The introduction to the second unit stated that the Revolution "was but one incident in the much older evolution of our free nation."[33] Within the overall context of the book, therefore, strong emphasis should be given to the colonial roots of the democratic experience. The Index to the text, under the heading "Democracy" and the sub-heading "Colonial" gave four page references: pages 19, 23, 25, and 26.[34] Treatment of the topic at those four points in the text may therefore briefly be examined by way of illustration of operational definitions of democracy.

The first reference, on page 19, appeared in connection with the Virginia Company Charter of 1606. The essential facts of the charter were presented, followed by the interpretative comment: "Today, we would not think the British colonies especially democratic, but they were far more democratic than were most European nations and often more so

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[32]*Ibid.*, p. 1. [33]*Ibid.*, p. 49.

[34]*Ibid.*, p. 674.

than was England itself at the time."[35] The reference to democracy on page 23 was included in connection with a similar observation concerning the Mayflower Compact, which is a prime example of colonists exercising political liberty by participation in the form of government being established. After narrating the essential facts of the matter, the authors commented: "The Mayflower Compact is important because it contains an essential principle of democracy--that the government should be controlled by the people."[36] After a consideration of early New England life, the same point was re-emphasized: "The Mayflower Compact and the Congregational form of church management were early steps toward a democratic form of government."[37] The point was made yet again on the next page: "The Puritan Church was a powerful force for democracy in colonial New England."[38] The roots of the democratic experience were noted on the same page through reference to the early town meetings as fostering democracy. The assertion was made that "the widespread suffrage and the frequent lively debate in local meetings made the town good training schools for politicians and gave the people experience in practicing democracy."[39]

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[35] Ibid., p. 19.

[36] Ibid., p. 23.

[37] Ibid., p. 25.

[38] Ibid., p. 26. [39] Ibid.

The chapter in the first unit of the text dealing with the expansion of the English colonies was notable as well because it counterpointed the more traditional emphasis on civil liberties, civil rights, and freedom-seeking immigrants with adequate coverage of the involuntary immigration of slaves as well as relationships between Indians and colonists.[40] The rest of the chapter presented a summary of the development of the three groups of colonies--North, Middle, and South--and the narrative pointed out that freedoms were often available only to parts of the communities concerned. It should be noted however that of the historians discussed in chapter two of this present study, only Merrill Jensen, Louis B. Wright, Louis M. Hacker, and Charles M. Andrews were referred to in Frost *et al.*'s text.

The second unit presented a thorough narrative of the events leading up to Independence and the development of an independent spirit. Following a full reproduction of the Declaration of Independence--another illustration of democracy in terms of the political liberty of the right to participate in determining the form of government to be established--the authors offered a convenient summary of colonial development.

It should be stated, finally, that througout the text surveyed, there was no indication whatsoever that differing interpretations may be offered regarding the democratic quality of colonial life and the roots of Independence.

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[40]*Ibid.*, pp. 33-34.

Though it is difficult to make an overall judgement, it appears that a rather conservative "conventional wisdom" approach was being adopted. Little attempt was made to probe the real controversial roots of democracy beyond a constant emphasis on the facts of the existence of democracy (with somewhat token insertions making qualifications in the case of minorities). It appears that the concensus school exercised considerable influence in this particular text. The emphasis on minorities--slaves, Indians, and Jews--may be an evidence that the New Left was also somewhat influential. The text stands, therefore, in rather marked contrast, in this respect, to the work by Feder, previously considered.

Graff and Krout: The Adventure of the American People

The Adventure of the American People[41] was a well-illustrated, fact-filled work totaling 788 pages of narrative, exclusive of appendices. In addition, the annotations on virtually every page of the Teacher Edition, printed in differently colored ink, provided an added dimension of clarification and explanation, as did the Introduction written mainly for teachers. That Introduction set out the authors' views on what students should expect from a textbook:

> Students ought reasonable to expect that a textbook on the history of their own nation will be not only replete

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[41]Henry F. Graff and John A. Krout, The Adventure of the American People (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968).

> with excitement and color but also believable--faithful to the canons of good scholarship as well as to the narrative art. We have written . . . with an awareness that these standards of scholarship and narrative are constantly being changed. . . . Young people expect more than a one-tract interpretation of history. . . . [42]

The text proper was divided into seven major parts, each further subdivided into chapters. The first part, entitled "Europe Transplanted," and continuing from pages 1 to 104--13% of the whole--was germane to this dissertation. It was subdivided into five chapters, dealing, respectively, with "The Opening of a New World;" "The Arrival of the English;" "Old Rivalries and New Colonies;" "England's Triumph and Troubles;" and "America's Successful Revolt."[43] Actually, only 56 pages--or 7% of the entire text--were directly related to democracy and the American colonies: pages 23-77 and 99-100. Under the entry "Democracy" in the Index to the whole work, there were 28 references, but only two of them--to pages 40 and 84-85--were directed to the section of the text under consideration. Those citations may be examined as illustrative of democracy in operation, although no abstract definition of democracy was offered.

The first reference, on page 40, occured in a broad discussion headed, "Emigrants from Europe and Africa Adjust to the New World"--a summary of how both European and African

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[42] Ibid., p. 2.

[43] Ibid., pp. 4-21; 22-41; 42-57; 58-79; and 80-104.

peoples adjusted, in their own ways, to American life. The inclusion of the treatment of African peoples--a goodly proportion of colonial America's people--was instructive. The reference to democracy occured in the following quotation:

> The Englishman, unlike the Spaniard or the Frenchman, brought to the New World the organizing principle of representative government, which he had come to practice in his mother country. This was the principle on which he was able to build in later generations a democratic way of life.[44]

It is clear, therefore, that the authors did not regard democratic life as having taken root as of the time about which they were writing--roughly the mid-to-late seventeenth century. It must be pointed out that the first use of the term "democracy," though not indexed, appeared in an inserted annotation on page 35. The text advised the teacher to have a class discussion on the meaning of democracy. Several characteristics of democracy were listed for possible discussion topics: respect for the individual, self-government, equality of rights, and privileges.

The second indexed reference to democracy on pages 84 and 85 appeared in a chapter that, chronologically, dealt with post=1776 events under the general heading, "The Era of Liberty Opens for Americans." The same section looked at the colonial period and thus falls at least partially within the

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[44]*Ibid*., p. 40.

scope of the present investigation. Thus, early in the section, the following statement was offered:

> The conflict in America was not only between the states and the mother country. A struggle went on also inside the states themselves, where movements were afoot to write state constitutions, which eventually provided legal foundations for the independent states. In every state there were radical and conservative factions, each striving to gain control of affairs. The conservatives, in general, lacked faith in the people's capacity to rule themselves. . . .[45]

An inserted annotation for the teacher at this juncture stated: "Since people in a democracy must have such faith, the conservatives were undemocratic."[46] Under subheading, "Foundations of Modern Democracy," however, the following explicit statement appeared:

> While they were learning the difficult art of forging a government, Americans of the late 1700's made a number of changes which permanently affected their lives and ours. These changes may be considered foundation stones of modern democracy.[47]

It seems clear, therefore, that the authors considered the development of democracy *per se* to be a post-Independence growth. Yet, some emphasis on at least a general development of freedom, if not specifically of democracy, was given earlier in the same chapter, where the following statement appeared after a quotation from Michel de Crevecoeur, known

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[45] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

also as John Hector St. John:

> Even before their break with England, Americans were aware of the effect that living in the New World was having on them. The traditional frustrations of the European seemed to vanish in America, and a "new man," freer than any in the past was developing. (On the other hand, the difficulties of the transplanted Africans were multiplied.)[48]

There thus seems to have been a certain ambiguity, if not contradiction, in the approach of these authors to the question of democracy in colonial America--a difficulty perhaps compounded by their conscientious attempts to point to the differing experience of Americans of African origins. Perhaps the authors' Index was at fault--there were in fact earlier references to democracy, as well as examples of operational definitions, as a single quotation makes clear: "Although Massachusetts displayed many autocratic characteristics, the creation there of the town, or township, system was a notable contribution to the development of more democracy in government. . . ."[49]

Finally, it may be pointed out that no attempt was made to present varying interpretations on the part of historians concerning democracy in colonial America, and that the bibliography for the part of the text under consideration did not include any of the major works by those historians

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[48] Ibid., p. 81.

[49] Ibid., p. 36.

examined for the purpose of the present study.[50] Nevertheless, it was not difficult to discern that the economic determinists have had considerable influence on this section of the book. Conceptual clarity, therefore, cannot reasonably be considered as these authors' strongest point.

Kownslar and Frizzle: Discovering American History

Another text, Allan O. Kownslar and Donald B. Frizzle Discovering American History, probably ranks as a major academic contribution.[51] The overall aim of the authors is distinctive. In a prefatory "Note to the Student," the authors themselves provided an admirably clear statement on this point:

> This is not the kind of textbook you are accustomed to reading . . . in that it is designed to find out what you think. . . . As you read this book, you will be introduced to some of the important themes in American history. . . . Sometimes you will be asked to compare two such interpretations and to determine the validity of each. . . . One of the main reasons for studying history inductively is that it prepares you to assume the responsibilities of citizenship. . . .[52]

As an aid to this end, the authors based their discussion on the work of various historians.

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[50] Ibid., p. 101.

[51] Allan O. Kownslar and Donald B. Frizzle, Discovering American History (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1967).

[52] Ibid., pp. xii-xiv.

Given this overall aim, the text was divided into nine units, each of which was subdivided into chapters. For the purposes of the present study, four chapters appear germane: Chapters VI and VII, of Unit I; "The People of North America," and "The People of the Thirteen Colonies," respectively; and Chapters I and V, of Unit II, "Causes of the Revolution: American Views," and "Causes of the Revolution: British Views," respectively. These sections comprise 99 pages, or 12.8% of the entire text. The Index to this single volume text contained thirty citations under the entry "Democracy"--but none of them related to any page earlier than 324 in the text, where consideration of the Jacksonian era commenced. It should be emphasized that this is rather unusual for almost half of the text book was concerned with the pre-Jackson period. Given these constraints, however, a critical assessment may nevertheless be undertaken.

Section 21 of the text, entitled "A Closer Look at the English Colonies," consisted of a four page annotated extract from the work of Charles M. Andrews. That author, as was indicated in a previous chapter of the present study, belongs to the imperial school of historians, and felt that democracy was a post-revolutionary phenomena.[53] A subsequent section employed various source materials to bring out the main themes of life at the time. Thus the Mayflower Compact,

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[53]*Ibid.*, pp. 50-54.

the Puritans, Roger Williams, the trial of Peter Zenger, the writings of Benjamin Franklin, Slavery, Bacon's Rebellion, and Patrick Henry were all dealt with through use of primary source extracts (annotated) or extracts taken primarily from nineteenth century narrative historians. This certainly dated the volume and revealed some tendency to lean toward a Whig interpretation of history. Although the text made no suggestion of these documents being examples of the democratic process, each in its own way provided an illustration of democracy in operation during the colonial era. In search for freedom of worship and political liberty a group of Separatists, later called Pilgrims, moved to the New World. Having been blown off their course the Pilgrims landed near Cape Cod. Since they had no authorized charter to establish a colony on that particular territory, the Pilgrims drew up their own charter--the Mayflower Compact. Although the text did not relate this compact to democracy it is in fact an outstanding example of one of the operational definitions of democracy. It exemplified maximum participation--the political liberty of citizen participation in determining the desired form of government. It also exemplified majority rule and the right to vote, since all the passengers cast a vote in favor of the compact. The document discussing the Puritans in the Massachusetts Bay Colony illustrated several operational definitions of democracy. The Puritans came to the New World in

hopes of being allowed to worship as they so desired. According to the text they did not grant the same right to other new settlers. It was also pointed out that maximum participation, majority rule, and equal voter representation were not guaranteed to all the people of the colony. However, there were examples of limited rights being exercised within the colony, such as elected representatives to the General Court or legislative assembly. But in answering the question, who had the right to vote? the text made it clear that in 1670, when the population of the colony was 25,000, only 1,000 freemen were guaranteed the right to vote. By 1691, the text pointed out, the colony replaced its old religious qualifications for voting to a property qualification. Roger Williams was studied as one example of colonists who opposed the form of government established by the Puritans in Massachusetts. Although the text made no reference to this being an operation of democracy, it was in fact an example of government accountability to the people. Puritan government was a challenge to due process of law, the right to select government officials, the right to vote, and the right to organize and petition government for redress of greviences. Furthermore, Roger Williams is one of the champions of freedom of worship without government interference. He also should be studied in light of the American value system, in that man's actions are determined by his beliefs. The document on Peter Zenger

related his trial on charges of seditious libel. Zenger was a writer for the New York Weekly Journal who was being tried on charges of having written statements that excited discontent against the government by exposing government officials to public ridicule. Zenger was defended in court by Alexander Hamilton, whose fame was greatly enhanced by winning the case. The text made no reference to the Zenger case exemplifying democracy in operation, but it does show that individuals were guaranteed due process before law as well as freedom of the press. Ben Franklin's Albany Plan exemplified several democratic operations in action. It expressed the rule by majority, the right to vote, representation, and the right of the people to determine the form of government they would live under. The document concerning slavery proved that democracy was not equally applicable to all people. This section made it clear that the slave, whether a Negro, mulatto, mestizo, or Indian, had virtually no rights, freedoms, civil or political liberties, and no representation in government. The entire institution of slavery raises serious questions about liberty, freedom, and justice during the colonial period. The extract concerning Bacon's Rebellion offered several operational definitions of democracy. Mention was made of the House of Burgesses, an example of political liberties and government accountability to the people. The colonists wanted the government to be more responsive to the

will of the majority. A revolt resulted. That revolt, led by Bacon, served as an example of the right to act against bad government, the right of action. Another document, concerning Patrick Henry, also served as an example of democracy in operation. From the document given in the text it was clear that Patrick Henry exercised the right to organize and petition the government for redress of grievences, and the right to free speech. Henry presented his case in opposition to the Stamp Act before the House of Burgesses and won by a single vote. Again, majority rule--democracy in action--was exemplified. The plan of the authors to invite the development of interpretations and definitions by the student obviated any direct expression of the authors' own treatment of the governmental and democratic themes as applied to colonial America. However, the questions posed at the end of this chapter were instructive.

> How do you explain the attitudes toward the "common man" which you see emerging? . . . Might colonial ideas about government or conditions in the new world have had any influence on their actions? ["Their" refers to Patrick Henry, the Zenger jury, and Bacon.] [54]

On the next page, another statement provided an even more explicit invitation to consider the roots of democracy in the colonial era:

> One possible hypothesis on the colonial period in American history could be; "America's present values

[54] *Ibid.*, p. 91.

> have their roots deep in the colonial experience." Determine what value you consider important in the United States today. Then review the values that seem to be emerging in the colonial period just studied. Is there sufficient evidence to defend this hypothesis? . . .[55]

A second unit employed a similar methodology in treating the different interpretations of the origins of the Revolution itself. After including some of the documents of the Revolution, the authors presented an account from a nineteenth century American history textbook, an interview with a veteran of the Revolution, and, *inter alia*, various views by historians, American and British.

The overall thrust of the text appeared to be more toward elucidation of a critical approach to sources than toward presentation of any particular historical interpretation. The nature of the work--while challenging pedagogically--is somewhat nebulous when judged according to standard historical criteria. The book, distinctive though it may be, was thus difficult to summarize and categorize concerning its presentation of colonial democracy.

Wade, Wilder, and Wade: *A History of the United States*

The text authored by Richard C. Wade, Howard B. Wilder, and Louise C. Wade, and entitled *A History of the United*

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[55] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

States, represents another massive effort.[56] The book contained 836 pages of main textual material. Of this total, the first of eleven units dealt with the period leading up to the Revolution. The entire first unit, 115 pages, occupied 13.8% of the total text. However, only 75 pages, or 8% of the entire text were especially germane to the present investigation. The Index to this work had but two entries under the heading of "Democracy"--one to page 32, in reference to the town meetings, and the other to a later discussion of the Jacksonian Era. Compared to the plethora of such references in earlier works examined, this fact is quite noteworthy. The reference on page 32 stated, apropos of democracy in Massachusetts:

> The government of the Massachusetts Bay Colony was not democratic. . . . In spite of the undemocratic government of the colony as a whole, a democratic form of town government developed. . . . In these Puritan town meetings, authority rested with the assembled group.[57]

Chapter three of Unit I--dealing with the development of a distinctive colonial style of living--opened with the statement:

> Though the immigrants followed different patterns of living all were striving to make a better life for themselves. One of the striking characteristics of Colonial America was that so many of them succeeded in this goal.[58]

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[56]Richard C. Wade, Howard B. Wilder, and Louise C. Wade, A History of the United States (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968).

[57]Ibid., p. 32. [58]Ibid., p. 46.

Some readers may think of democracy as a part of a better life, but apparently the authors of this text do not. In fact, no reference to any of the concepts of democracy were mentioned until the final three pages of the chapter, where the colonial assemblies were discussed. It should also be pointed out that the above quotation was obviously intended to apply to Americans of European, rather than African, origin. This would certainly not bring applause from the New Left historians. The rest of the chapter consisted of demographic, economic, and other materials related to this initial premise, and a generally well-rounded picture of colonial life was finally achieved, if perhaps in a rather pedestrian and stylistically conservative fashion. The sub-heading, on page 54, that "The middle classes form the bulk of the population" might well be challenged by many historians, but it does indicate some influence from Robert Brown. The general absence of treatment of Negro life is striking. There were only four references to Negroes in the English colonies cited in the Index, along with only two references to slaves in the colonial period. At the end of the chapter the authors developed a detailed narrative examination of colonial government. Concerning voting qualifications and who actually exercised the right to vote, for example, they gave the following summary:

> These restrictions on voting sound severe today; but in comparison with suffrage in England or elsewhere in

> Europe at that time, they are quite liberal. The surprising thing is that so few people took advantage of the opportunity to vote. Historians estimate that only about 25 per cent of the qualified voters cast their ballots in colonial elections. . . .[59]

This statement gives an indication that concensus school interpretations have been somewhat influential. Finally, it may be noted that on page 92, just before a chapter dealing with the actual winning of Independence, the following quotation appeared:

> Some historians feel that the break between the American Colonies and Great Britain was bound to come. . . . "New soil," wrote the scholar Charles M. Andrews, "had produced new wants, new desires, new points of view, and the colonists demanding the right to live their own lives in their own way. . . .[60]

It is striking that not only were the views of other historians entirely neglected, but that the views of Andrews were presented with no small measure of approval, as the discussion following the above quotation made clear. Even more striking was the absence of a concrete definition of democracy and the operation of democratic principles within colonial society. Once again, therefore, an older, and somewhat dated, historical interpretation appeared with little qualification.

Williams and Wolf: Our American Nation

The last high school text, authored by T. Harry Williams and Hazel C. Wolf, and entitled, Our American

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[59] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 92.

Nation,[61] opened with an amitious statement:

> The authors have tried to answer the question "why?" that is so often encountered in the classroom. As a means of answering the question, the authors have delineated the broad trends of American history that are often buried under masses of factual material.[62]

It will obviously be appropriate to consider this conceptual aim in the light of the interest of this present dissertation.

Excluding large numbers of inserts--among them a survey of American art in its development--the main text of this work covered 803 pages. It was divided into nine units, of which the first two were of interest for present purposes. Entitled, respectively, "How the New World Became a Haven and a Home:" and "How the Seeds of Revolution Were Planted and Bore Fruit," they occupied 158 pages in all--or 19.7% of the whole work. Both units were subdivided into appropriate chapters.[63] Especially germane to the present study were 101 pages--12.5% of the text--which began with the Thirteen English Colonies and continued through the Declaration of Independence. The last two chapters of the five in the first unit dealt with the thirteen colonies and the birth of an American civilization and thus deserve more specific examination. The Index had six references under the heading of "Democracy," but only one related to the colonial period--

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[61]T. Harry Williams and Hazel C. Wolf, Our American Nation (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1969).

[62]Ibid., Preface, p. v.

[63]Ibid., pp. 1-94 and 95-158.

pages 69-70, which made up a portion of the unit under consideration.

The passage indexed appeared near the end of a thorough examination of colonial government in a section which dealt both with institutional differences in governmental forms and with sectional differences spread geographically through the thirteen colonies. After a description of the town governments of New England, the authors observed: "Some historians have called the New England town meeting the purest form of democracy ever to exist in the New World."[64] Such an assertion may raise more questions in the mind of the perceptive student than it answered. The use of the phrase "some historians" might be taken to indicate that a controversy exists or existed on the matter of democracy in colonial America, yet the text did not give the implied contrary opinions, namely, that "some historians" might dispute that statement. Further, the grounds for the statement, or the grounds for challenging it, were not developed. It may be noted that it was only on page 71 that the exclusion of Americans of African origin from the constitutional process was given any extended treatment, and then the reference was ancillary to a consideration of the Southern economy.

The conceptual approach of the text on the whole may be regarded as rather cautious, and perhaps as not having

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[64] _Ibid._, p. 69.

lived up to the full promise of the cited statement in the Preface. However, although treatment of the theme and definition of democracy in colonial America remained all but totally ignored, it must be acknowledged that the authors have made an earnest attempt to present a wide range of basic factual information. The emphasis on a developing and generally freedom-loving American way of life was exemplified by the concluding sentence of the first unit: "By the mid-eighteenth century, Americans had indeed built a civilization of their own in the New World. Moreover their strong sense of independence was beginning to grow."[65]

Williams and Wolfe's second unit proceeded in similarly detailed manner, with relatively heavy emphasis on economic factors as precipitators of the Revolution. This reveals some Progressive influence. There is also evidence that the imperial school was somewhat influential. It may be no accident, therefore, that the bibliography at the end of the second unit cited the work of Andrews on the colonial period as including the "standard sources on the causes of the Revolution"--an assertion that might perhaps be challenged in the light of the date of publication (1969) of the textbook.[66] The work of Carl Becker, hardly the most up-to-date source material, was described as "readable, but detailed."[67]

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[65]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 89. [66]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 156. [67]<u>Ibid</u>.

In general, therefore, this text appears somewhat dated in its approach. Yet several obvious attempts have been made to superimpose appropriate references to the roles of minorities. Generally, the style is rather pedestrian and fact-laden, and only minor attention has been given to the task of encouraging independent thinking on matters that have engaged the differing viewpoints of historians, including democracy in colonial America.

Findings: A Preliminary Overview

As stated at the beginning of the present chapter, full discussion of the conclusions that emerge from the above detailed examination of seven high school texts will be deferred until later in the present dissertation. Some tentative summary observations may nevertheless be introduced briefly at this juncture. Without entering into detailed discussion, it seems that the following points can be made:

1. There was great variation in the treatment offered by the seven texts selected, concerning democracy in the colonial period.

2. This variation was based on differing conceptual approaches to the teaching of history.

3. Basically, these approaches may be described as (a) authoritative and unilineal interpretations of history on the one hand, and (b) multi-lineal, critical, thought-inducing methodological efforts on the other.

4. The overall lengths of the texts vary, as do the proportions of the texts devoted to the pre-Revolutionary period. In the cases examined the space devoted to Anglo-Saxon colonial life ranged from a minimum of 7% to a maximum of 12.8% of the total text matter.

5. There was wide variation in the treatment of the theme of democracy in colonial America. Not only was there variation in the light of the bifurcating conceptual approaches mentioned in item 3 above, but the Index to any text--to cite but one gauge--may contain only one or ten references to "democracy" as appertaining to colonial America. In the larger context of United States history, democracy may be implicitly or explicitly taken back to the very roots of New World settlement, or it may be viewed as having developed only in the post-Revolutionary period.

6. The limitations on democracy, particularly in its application to Americans of African descent, were given widely varying interpretations.

7. Insofar as the citation of the works of historians was concerned, there was wide variation ranging from virtually no indication that the facts presented may stem from the work of specific historians to a full presentation of differing interpretations. Further, documentation ranges from none to many.

8. Generally, there is a tendency for the works of later scholars--particularly the current represented by Brown

and Bailyn, and certainly the New Left--to be underrepresented while the works of the imperial school tend to be overpresented. Economic determinist school authors received occasional mention while the neo-conservatives are somewhat underrepresented by comparison with the imperial historians. In short, as far as modern scholarship--particularly insofar as scholarship concerning democracy in colonial America is concerned--the texts are basically out of date, despite publication dates in the late 1960's.

CHAPTER V

THE COLLEGE TEXTS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

As in the previous chapter of this study, an attempt will be made in the present chapter to make a brief overall characterization of the four college texts under study. Thomas A. Bailey's The American Pageant, previously examined is used far more often as a college text than as a high school text. In fact, only advanced high school students could be expected to adequately use Bailey's text. These five texts were selected from the college textbooks adopted by the universities in the State University and Community College System of Tennessee, Vanderbilt University, University of Tennessee at Nashville, University of Tennessee at Martin, and Fisk University. The portions of the texts dealing with colonial America will be placed in perspective and the several treatments of the theme of democracy within each portion of the text will be examined. Special concern will be given to the manner in which each text defined and operationalized the abstract term "democracy." An attempt will again be made to determine the viewpoint of any particular school of historical interpretation being followed. The critical examination will be flexible enough, however, to allow treatment of the unique features of any one text.

Finally, the chapter will conclude with a brief summary of the main findings of the critical survey; detailed discussion of findings and conclusions will be deferred until an appropriate juncture later in the study.

Blum and Associates: The National Experience

The first text to be considered is that authored by John M. Blue, Bruce Catton, Edmund S. Morgan, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Kenneth M. Stampp, and C. Vann Woodward, and entitled The National Experience: A History of the United States.[1] The text, exclusive of appendices, contained 809 closely written and finely reasoned pages. The overall purpose of the authors may best be expressed by quotation of a pertinent portion of their own Preface:

> The authors of this book believe that a history emphasizing public policy . . . reveals the fabric and experience of the past more completely than does any other kind of history. They believe, too, that an emphasis on questions of public policy provides the most useful introduction to the history of the United States. . . . The authors have elected, furthermore, to confine their work to one volume so as to permit instructors to make generous supplementary assignments from the abundance of excellent monographs, biographies, and "problem" books so readily and inexpensively available. Just as there are clear interpretations of the past in those books, so are there in this, for the authors without

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[1]John M. Blum, Bruce Catton, Edmund S. Morgan, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Kenneth M. Stampp, and C. Vann Woodward, The National Experience: A History of the United States (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1963).

> exception find meaning in history and feel obliged to say what they see; the truth cannot lie halfway between right and wrong. . . .[2]

Evidently, since no definition of democracy was given, the reader was to presume that operational definitions of democracy would be recognized as public policy was illustrated. The authors devoted the first four of the thirty-three chapters of their book to the pre-Independence era of American history. The chapters were entitled "Making Use of a New World," "The Pattern of Empire," "The First American Way of Life," and "The Second Discovery of America."[3] The total of 102 pages involved represented 12.6% of the whole. While all the chapters mentioned were at least partially pertinent to the present investigation, the chapter entitled "The First American Way of Life" obviously had especial importance. Actually germane to this dissertation were 90 pages--or 11.9% of the total text. It may be noted that the Index to the work as a whole offered but two references under the heading "Democracy" that related to the pre-Independence period. The scant attention given to the topic of democracy in the whole of the work, as reflected in its Index, is shown by the fact that there are only five other references therein in addition to the two already mentioned, making

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[2]*Ibid.*, Preface, pp. v-vi.

[3]*Ibid.*, pp. 3-28; 29-48; 49-75; and 76-102, respectively.

seven in all. The two colonial "Democracy" references cited may be examined for purposes of illustration.

The first passage, on pages 59 and 60, dealt with "Responsible Representative Government." Here the authors stated:

> Englishmen brought with them to the New World the political ideas that still give English and American government a close resemblance. But Americans very early developed conceptions of representative government that differed from those prevailing in England during the colonial period. . . .[4]

The authors then proceeded to delineate some of those differing conceptions. For example, they wrote:

> Colonial assemblies were far more representative than the House of Commons. Although every colony had property qualifications for voting, probably the great majority of adult white males owned enough land to meet them. In apportioning representation, New England colonies gave every town the right to send delegates to the assembly . . . in New England, where town meetings could be called any time, people often gathered to tell their delegate how to vote on a particular issue. . . .[5]

Throughout the discussion, however, no mention of the word "democracy" occured, and there was no hint of the recent controversies among historians concerning the extent of democracy in the New England towns and elsewhere. More seriously, no effort was made to relate representation, voting, majority rule, town meetings or the assemblies, to the operation of democracy.

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[4]*Ibid.*, p. 59.

[5]*Ibid.*

The second Index reference to "Democracy" led the reader to pages 87 and 88. There, the following discussion appeared under the subheading "Colonial Conviction:"

> Like other Englishmen the colonist regarded the representative nature of English government as the most important guarantee of continued protection. They rejoiced in Parliament's supremacy in England and in the supremacy of their own assemblies in America. In each the elected representatives of the people guarded the rights of Englishmen, and the most precious right they guarded was the right of property, without which neither life or liberty could be secure.[6]

Again, no mention was made of the term "Democracy." Although the concepts--self government, rights, liberty--of democracy were illustrated, the glaring omission of relating the terms to democracy throughout the entire section on the colonial period cannot be overlooked.

Some clues to the preferences of the historians who have written this text, in terms of the writings of other historians may be gleaned from the bibliographies appended to the chapters in the pre-Independence section of the work. After a somewhat exculpatory opening phrase, the authors commenced the bibliography in chapter 3 with words of praise for the Whig and Progressive schools:

> In many ways the most challenging problem of American history has been to discover in colonial America those institutions, attitudes, and events that found fruition in the later American way of life. George Bancroft first made the attempt on a large scale . . . [seeing] . . . divine providence guiding the colonists toward independence. . . . These men [the reference is to

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[6]*Ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

> Turner, Bancroft, and Parrington] were giants, and their works are too lightly dismissed today.[7]

The works of historians of the neo-conservative school--for example, of writers such as Clinton Rossiter and Daniel Boorstin--were recommended, and due weight was given to recent works by Robert Brown. Thus the authors wrote: "R. E. Brown . . . argues convincingly that most adult males in colonial Massachusetts had the right to vote and that all districts of the state were equitably represented. . . ."[8] Continuing, they referred to work by Bernard Bailyn, one of the most recent interpretative historians.[9] The works of authors of the imperial school did not, by and large, appear at this juncture, although it must be noted that the bibliography at the end of Chapter 2 placed heavy emphasis on the work of George Beer, Charles Andrews, and Lawrence Gipson.[10] The works of the economic determinists, however, were conspicuously absent--thus no quotation from Charles A. Beard appears until a discussion of the pre-Civil War period, on page 304. The bibliographic citations of these authors, though somewhat weighted towards older historical schools, was far better than the treatment given in the high school texts; only the New Left was not mentioned.

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[7]*Ibid.*, p. 74.

[8]*Ibid.*, p. 75.

[9]*Ibid.*

[10]*Ibid.*, p. 48.

Current, Williams, and Freidel: American History: A Survey

The next work to be considered is that authored by Richard N. Current, T. Harry Williams, and Frank Freidel.[11] This text had 828 pages of text exclusive of appendices. The first four of the thirty chapters comprising the entire volume treated the pre-Independence period, and were entitled "From the Old World to the New," "Transplanted Englishmen," "Provincial Americans," and "An Empire Under Strain."[12] In all, those chapters comprised 111 pages, or 14.6% of the whole book. More specifically, only 86 pages--or 10.4% of the entire text--were devoted to the British colonies, up to the Declaration of Independence. In addition, and importantly, the authors in their preface to this edition took note of the addition of some new features--and of one in particular:

> Besides drastically revising our textbook, we have added some wholly new features to it. One of these is a series of brief simplified historiographical essays with the heading "Where Historians Disagree." These are intended to introduce the student to some of the most important conflicts of historical interpretation and thus help him understand that the study of history involves far more than merely collecting and memorizing "facts."[13]

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[11]Richard N. Current, T. Harry Williams, and Frank Freidel, American History: A Survey, 3rd ed. (New York: Knopf, 1971).

[12]Ibid., pp. 4-29; 30-53; 53-82; and 83-111.

[13]Ibid., Preface, p. vii.

The first of such inserts, occurring on page 119, concerned historical interpretations of the origins of the American Revolution, and was pertinent to the present study, although appearing slightly later in the text than the limit described above.

It should be pointed out that the Index to the work gave seven citations to the texts under the heading "Democracy," but none appeared earlier than page 249, during a discussion of the Jacksonian era.

The third chapter was of greatest interest for the purpose of this dissertation. It dealt with the life of provincial Americans, as the authors characterized the colonials. As the authors explained, in introducing the chapter:

> The seventeenth-century colonists remained essentially transplanted Englishmen, though even the first arrivals had begun to depart from many of their accustomed ways. As new generations grew up in America, they developed a more and more distinctive character. In the course of the eighteenth century they became provincial "Americans" --a term that had been applied to them even before 1700, but did not come into general use until after 1750.[14]

Although no definition of democracy was presented, the "distinctive character" was later illustrated, and one could observe implications of democracy, or the absence of it's operation.

A considerable portion of the earlier part of this chapter was devoted to an analysis of the economic bases

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[14] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

of colonial life, but by page 69 the authors were ready to consider wider "Aspects of Society," as their subheading expressed it. The authors did not hesitate to consider the class aspect of American society at this juncture:

> In provincial America the generous economic basis of life supported a society in which the benefits of physical well-being were more widely diffused than anywhere else in the world. It was a comparatively open society, in which people had more opportunity than elsewhere to rise in economic and social status. Yet it was also a society of great inequalities, one that offered only hardship and poverty to many of its members and especially to those of African descent.[15]

The authors then proceeded to a detailed examination of the various social strata that developed in the colonial period, emphasizing the unique nature of American developments *vis-a-vis* English society of the period. The authors concluded that "Class consciousness and class distinction came to be quite noticeable in provincial America."[16] They completed their description of the society of the time with a detailed account of Negro revolts of the eighteenth century--a topic conspicuously absent in most other texts examined. After several pages of detailed narrative concerning cultural and religious life, the authors devoted a scant half page to "Concepts of Law," as their subheading on page 80 indicated.

> As with social and intellectual life, the legal and political institutions inherited from England also were more or less modified in their transmission to the colonies. . . . Legal philosophy itself was changed as the colonists came to think of law as a reflection of

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[15]*Ibid.*, p. 69. [16]*Ibid.*, p. 70.

> the divine will or the natural order, not as an expression of the power of an earthly sovereign.[17]

The text did not, however, develop the analysis of governmental institutions further, nor did it do so in the ensuing chapter, which detailed the events leading up to Independence. Matters of representation were, nevertheless, treated <u>inter alia</u> in the preceding second chapter of the text. Three examples pertinent to the present study should sufficiently illustrate both democracy and representative government within the chapter. The text made it clear that at the insistence of the Maryland settlers, "the propritor agreed (1635) to the calling of a representative assembly--the House of Delegates, as it came to be known. . . .."[18] Just three pages later it was declared that ". . . the Virginia government had been remarkably democratic. When the first burgesses were elected in 1619, all men aged seventeen and older were entitled to vote."[19] Inadvertently perhaps, the authors have given several excellent illustrations of democracy in operation. Finally, the closing lines of chapter 2 summed up the self-government concept as it related to the colonists and the Glorious Revolution:

> In this large measure of self-government the colonists were to find with good cause for remembering the Revolution as a glorious one and, by remembering it, fresh and potent defenses for their rights of self-government.[20]

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[17]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 70. [18]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 37. [19]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 40.

[20]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 52.

If the actual text narrative is deficient as regards thorough discussion of democracy in colonial America, the insertion previously alluded to on page 118, entitled "Where Historians Disagree," made up for the omission insofar as the viewpoints of differing historians are concerned. The differing interpretations were given a remarkably adequate, if necessarily concise, exposition in the space of a scant two-thirds of a page.

In their summary, the authors dismissed the older historians of the Whig and imperial schools in a brief introductory characterization.

> In their accounts of the American Revolution, historians at one time concentrated on the Patriot aim of autonomy within the British Empire and then complete independence from it. These historians differed among themselves in regard to revolutionary motivation; . . . But all of them took as their central theme the struggle between the American colonies and the British government.[21]

The text went on to discuss the ideas of Carl Becker and J. Franklin Jameson as representative of the more progressive school of historians. Before quoting from the works of each of those historians, the authors stated:

> Eventually a number of writers began calling attention to struggles within the colonies as well. These writers maintain that the Revolution involved not only the question of home rule but also the question of who should rule at home [an obvious allusion to Carl Becker]. It was, according to them, a movement toward both independence and democracy.[22]

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[21]*Ibid.*, p. 119.

[22]*Ibid.*

The insertion continued by "jumping over," as it were, the earlier neo-conservatives and going straight on to the work of Robert Brown:

> This view long prevailed, but recently it has been sharply challenged. The most forceful attack on it comes from Robert E. Brown, who . . . argues that, at least in Massachusetts and probably also in other colonies, the aim of the Revolutionary leaders was to preserve the democratic liberties that already existed.[23]

The authors soon cut short their brief excursion into controversy, but not before they made the final, important point to the reader: "The debate goes on, with no final decision on points of interpretation, but the net result is greatly to broaden our knowledge of the Revolutionary period."[24] This text, therefore, does introduce the student directly to the idea of controversy by means of this interpolated summation of various historical interpretations, truncated as it is. However, the work of Bernard Bailyn is not mentioned, nor is that of the New Left. Finally, no definition of democracy was offered so that the reader could readily relate operational definitions to the concrete term.

Garraty: The American Nation

The third college text selected for scrutiny was the volume authored by John A. Garraty, *The American Nation*.[25]

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[23]*Ibid*. [24]*Ibid*.

[25]John A. Garraty, *The American Nation: A History of the United States*. New York: Harper and Row, 1968.

The basic philosophy of the work was well expressed in an elegant Introduction by Roger Butterfield and in a Preface by the author. In his opening words Butterfiled gave expression to a philosophy of history that pointed to the roots of the American democratic experience:

> "Never teach a people history," Napoleon warned. "It teaches them to think." Napoleon was right: a genuine interest in history stimulated independent thinking, not just about what happened in the past, but about the crucial events of the present. That is why it is so valuable to have, for general readers as well as for students, this big, new, thoroughly modern history of the United States, which brings together in a single volume all phases of the nation's development and points up the perplexities of its role as the world's most powerful democracy.[26]

Thus one would expect to find in this text considerable material on colonial democracy. Garraty himself was modestly conscious of the historian's difficulties and responsibilities:

> It is the job of the historian to supply answers to the historical questions that contemporary events bring to mind. At the same time, books and articles about the Revolution and about countless other events constantly appear which amplify and refine our knowledge of American history. . . . The historian must strive for profundity and completeness; he cannot safely take refuge in shallow over-simplifications. I hope this book records the story of the American past clearly and intelligibly, but also with adequate attention to the complexities and subleties of its immense subject.[27]

To that end, the author has produced a work of 879 pages, exclusive of appendices. The text was replete with

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[26] _Ibid_., Introduction, p. 5.

[27] _Ibid_., Preface, pp. 8-10.

illustrations and charts offering a broad spectrum of information. The first three chapters, entitled "The Age of Discovery and Settlement," "The Colonial World," and "America and the British Empire," focused on the pre-Independence period, totaling in all 113 pages--12.8% of the total text. A note on the last pages of the book under the heading, "A Search for Meaning," was also germane to the present study, offering as it did a brief survey of changing interpretation of American history by historians.[28] Also, the text went all the way to page 119 before stating that the Declaration of Independence was adopted. The presnet analysis was concerned with 83 pages of the narrative--9.3% of the total text.

Surprisingly, however, the Index to the work offered no entry under the heading "Democracy," although there are references to de Tocqueville's Democracy in America (three) and the "Democratic Republic of Vietnam" (one). The Index reference to "Colonies," with sixteen references, also omitted all mention of democracy. This necessitated close examination of the chapter entitled "The Colonial World," to explore the author's treatment of the democratic theme in the colonies.

This chapter may perhaps be characterized as an attempt to answer the question posed at the outset by the writer:

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[28]Ibid., pp. 13-36; 37-62; and 63-119 (including an inserted Portfolio concerning Benjamin Franklin), respectively; "A Search for Meaning" appeared on pages 877-78.

"Why then did America become something more than another Europe? Why, for example, was New England not merely a new England?"[29] The author took note of most of the major reasons adduced for this transformation, from enviornment to economic development, with due weight given to regional differences within the colonies. A detailed portrait of colonial America thus emerged, but constitutional and political developments were not accorded a separate section. Functional operations of democracy emerged here and there during the long discussion of the social and economic roots of society, but with no indication that they were examples of democracy in action. The exposition of the township system of New England, under the general subheading, "Land and Labor in the North," may be cited as illustrative in this respect:

> Men of wealth and political influence could obtain whole towns or shares in several towns. . . . Nevertheless, the township way of life was essentially democratic. Local issues were settled by majority vote in town meeting, while the towns, in turn, sent representatives to the colonial legislature, thus insuring a roughly equal distribution of political power in the larger community. . . . Although gradations of wealth and personal influence existed in every community and men were acutely conscious of the difference, say, between a "gentleman" and a "goodman" and between the latter and a mere servant, the beckoning frontier precluded the growth of an underprivileged class. . . .[30]

The author, having thus characterized town life as "essentially democratic," was therefore at some pains to indicate

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[29] Ibid., p. 37.

[30] Ibid., pp. 50-51.

the limitations and operations of that "democracy"--its weaknesses as well as its strengths. A similar note was struck later in the chapter, in a discussion introduced by the subheading, "Social Mobility" where Robert Brown's work on Massachusetts was examined in the following terms: ". . . it is incorrect to think of colonial society as being democratic in the modern sense. Practical democracy was far in advance of popular thinking about democracy throughout America."[31] The text also specified the limitations of colonial democracy in the subsection, "Sectional Conflicts," where another key point was made: "Although the internal life of most colonial communities was relatively harmonious, sharp conflicts often broke out between different sections."[32] In general, the text provided a detailed picture supportive of the author's thesis:

> . . . while still prisoners of European social and political ideas, while aping as provincials nearly always do the standards of the homeland, the Americans were actually establishing a way of life more egalitarian and more democratic than any in the world.[33]

The bibliography at the end of the chapter was also up-to-date and well annotated. Thus Daniel Boorstin's and Bernard Bailyn's works were characterized, respectively, as "stimulating and provocative" and "an excellent study" while

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[31]*Ibid.*, p. 57. [32]*Ibid.*, p. 58.

[33]*Ibid.*

Robert Brown's research was characterized more fully:

> Voting in colonial America has been subject recently to intensive reexamination. R. E. Brown has made the most important contribution to the controversy. . . .[34]

The works of historians of the imperial or economic determinist schools were, however, conspicuously absent; as was the New Left historians.

Under the subheading, "A Search for Meaning," at the end of the book, the author, as previously mentioned, provided a reasoned summary of evolving historical interpretations of American life, including the colonial period. He wrote, for example: "Nearly all historians have concluded that the country's democratic institutions were of special importance in shaping both American civilization and the national character."[35] Subsequently Garraty continued to note briefly the contributions of George Bancroft, Frederick J. Turner, and Charles Beard, but then developed his theme into a broader, essay-like conclusion on the challenges to the American spirit that concluded the entire work. In sum, therefore, while The American Nation provided a thorough account of American life in the colonial period, the treatment of democracy, in terms of abstract and operational definitions, was not fully developed. Furthermore, references to competing historical interpretations were incomplete.

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[34] *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 877.

Gruver: An American History

The last work to be examined was that authored by Rebecca Brooks Gruver and entitled An American History.[36] Commendably, from an educational point of view, the author wrote in her Preface:

> The history of America has been told many times and from many points of view . . . [but] even the college freshman . . . will show a renewed interest in the subject if it is presented in a clear and challenging manner.[37]

The author also made a plea for a reasoned, analytical treatment of the topic.

Exclusive of appendices, Gruver's book encompassed 1,093 pages of text. Of that total, the first four chapters, entitled, respectively, "The Meeting of Two Worlds," "Colonizing the New World," "Shaping an Identity," and "Prelude to Independence," centered on the pre-Independence period of American history. Those sections occupied 182 pages, or 16.7% of the whole.[38] This was the largest college or high school text covered in this dissertation. Further, it devoted more space to the colonial period than any except Williams and Wolf, Our American Nation, a high school text.

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[36]Rebecca Brooks Gruver, An American History (New York: Appleton, Century, and Crofts, 1972).

[37]Ibid., Preface, p. i.

[38]Ibid., pp. 1-40; 41-84; 85-124; and 125-182, respectively.

However, only 117 pages, or 10.7% of the entire text were especially germane to the present study.

The author made it very clear that the early settlers of Jamestown had very little practical democracy within their political system: "The king had retained the right to influence the ruling of the colony . . . the eight members of the resident council in Jamestown had no authority to originate orders, and no power to enforce those from England."[39] An illustration of democracy in action--voting, participating in governmental offices, representation, and the making of laws--was given in relationship to the new charter given to Jamestown in 1619. The text pointed out: "The greatest innovation in the new charter was permission to the colonists to elect representatives to an assembly called the House of Burgesses." It is safe to say that we have, in the House of Burgesses, the first representative assembly of the New World--a prime example of self-government.[40]

Another example of an operational definition of democracy was observed as the author discussed "Religious Freedom." In 1649 the Toleration Act was made law, banning all religious insults. "This act," according to Gruver, was an important step toward the religious freedom that ultimately

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[39] Ibid., p. 44.

[40] Ibid., p. 46.

would become a fundamental civil liberty in the United State."[41] Further operational definitions of democracy were explicitly made by the author. Concerning "representational government" the text pointed out:

> Seeds of representative government were also taking root in Maryland. Its charter had guaranteed Lord Baltimore and his heirs nearly total control over the administration of the government, but with the 'advice, assent, and approbation of freemen.' "[42]

Concerning Puritan democracy the text stated that the early Puritan settlers "were not interested in democracy." But then, after having discussed "freemen" and the right to vote, an example of democracy in action was presented:

> Representative government slowly took form in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. In 1632 the freemen gained the right to elect the governor directly, and in 1634 a growing number of communities insisted that each town be represented by two or three deputies in the General Court, all elected annually by the freemen."[43]

Extending the operation of democracy even further the author added: "While only freemen, that is, male church members, could vote for members of the General Court, in the towns even nonfreemen could hold local offices . . . such town meetings became an important instrument for direct participation in government. . . . ."[44]

Another interesting concept of democracy was pointed out when the author noted: "The Fundamental Orders of

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[41]*Ibid.*, p. 54. [42]*Ibid.*, p. 50.

[43]*Ibid.*, pp. 59-60. [44]*Ibid.*, p. 60.

Connecticut of 1639, the first written constitution in the New World, left voter qualification up to the individual towns."[45] Thus, according to Gruver, the democratic process was developing early in the colonial experience.

The author inadvertently included an illustration of conflict of values which revealed that not all colonials were recipients of equal rights. The Quakers were not given fair trials, rights of worship, freedom of speech and action, as was emphasized in the following quote: " . . . banished Quakers as witches, branded and whipped Quakers, drove red-hot irons through Quakers' tongues, attempted to sell Quaker children as slaves to sugar farmers . . . and hanged half a dozen noisy Quaker adults."[46]

Later, the subsection "Patterns of Life," in the third chapter of the text, offered an insight into the author's feelings about the development of democracy in colonial America, although no clear-cut definition of democracy was ever presented by the author:

> At the time of the Revolution, the American's standard of living was the highest in the world . . . the religious laws of the early settlers were more tolerant and his government more truly democratic than those in Europe.[47]

The subsequent narrative, though not detailed, was supportive of this interpretation. The chapter ended with a quotation

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[45]*Ibid.*, p. 63. [46]*Ibid.*, p. 69.

[47]*Ibid.*, p. 86.

from Frederick J. Turner on the importance of the frontier in shaping American life, and was itself tempered by the observation: "Today many historians contend that Turner has overemphasized the importance of the frontier."[48] The bibliography to the chapter cited works by Boorstin, Gipson, Rossiter, Bailyn, and Brown, among others, and is thus relatively representative. The following chapter, discussing the "Prelude to Independence," opened with a three page section on eighteenth century colonial politics.[49] Although the main outline of the topic was presented quite succinctly in the small compass provided, and though the limitations to representative government were duly noted, the word "democracy" was neither used nor explained, and no indication of differing historical interpretation was given. However, the author made up for this with an excellent short section on pages 159-161 entitled, "Interpretation of the Revolution." Although not directly related to the colonial era, this provided an excellent survey of the various historical schools. Bancroft, Beer, Andrews, Gipson, Beard, Schlesinger, Jameson, Brown, Boorstin, and Bailyn were all mentioned and their theories briefly summarized. Concerning George Bancroft's interpretation it was noted: "The Revolution had been fought for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, and as a blow

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[48]*Ibid.*, p. 103.

[49]*Ibid.*, pp. 126-129.

against tyranny. The outstanding spokesman of this orthodox, 'patriotic' point of view was George Bancroft. . . ."[50] George L. Beer, Charles M. Andrews, and Lawrence Henry Gipson were included in "the imperial school of historians," which "saw the revolution as a constitutional struggle between two different concepts of what a colony should be. . . ."[51] The progressive historians, including Charles A. Beard, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., and J. Franklin Jameson, "considered the Revolution as a class struggle that had been economically determined."[52] Of special interest was the comment concerning Jameson: "Jameson drew attention to the extraordinary advances democracy made during the Revolution."[53] Robert E. Brown and Daniel J. Boorstin were listed as "neoconservative historians" whom the text declared, "challenged the theory that colonial America had been undemocratic."[54] Bernard Bailyn, according to the author, "interprets the Revolution as a movement in the history of ideas."[55] This was by far the best such survey in all the texts surveyed in the present dissertation. It corresponded to a major degree with the categorization of historical schools specified in the survey of the literature carried out earlier in this study, and is deserving of the highest tribute in this respect. Gruver's

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[50] _Ibid._, p. 159. [51] _Ibid._

[52] _Ibid._, pp. 159-60. [53] _Ibid._, p. 160.

[54] _Ibid._ [55] _Ibid._, p. 161.

actual coverage of democracy in colonial America, however, falls back to the rather uninspired average level of treatment found in some of the earlier texts examined.

Findings: A Preliminary Overview

Tentative findings emerging from the study of four college texts may now be briefly summarized as a prelude to later discussion.

1. There was great variation in the coverage devoted to colonial America.

2. Treatment of democracy in colonial American was extremely uneven.

3. Seldom was there a sustained analysis of colonial democracy in the texts.

4. Differing views of historians on the topic were seldom presented in the text material but were frequently in bibliographies or special sections on historical interpretation.

5. The overall size of the textbooks varied noticeably.

6. The views of the colonists concerning democracy were scarcely alluded to, except inferrentially.

7. Index references under "Democracy," and the appearance of the term within the text material with reference to the pre-Revolutionary period of American life had extreme variations.

8. The concepts of democracy--freedom, liberty, self-government, and rights--were employed in various degrees, as were examples of operational definitions of democracy.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The genesis of the present study, as analyzed in the first chapter, was an increasing awareness that, as the national Bicentennial approaches, it behooves today's educators to pay particular attention to the roots of the national experience. Special attention should be given to the roots that reach deepest into the soil from which the national consciousness has sprung--the colonial period. As nearly two hundred years of national existence have emphasized the durability of the democratic spirit, and as that spirit plays such an important role in the modern world, it was felt appropriate to pay particular attention to the role played by democracy in the colonial period, as reflected in numerous historical sources.

The four preceding chapters have, respectively, examined colonial writing on democracy, surveyed the literature relating to differing historical interpretations of the roots of the American Revolution and their democratic components; assessed related treatments in a sample of seven high school texts; and similarly made a critical investigation of four representative college texts treating of American history. This chapter will further synthesize, discuss, and refine the findings and conclusions emanating from the

areas of investigation mentioned, and present some recommendations.

Conclusions

The basic findings of the present study support the conclusion that various high school and college texts do differ widely in their treatment of the topic of democracy in colonial America. This is true both in terms of the coverage given to the topic and of the ways in which the topic is treated. The findings were also supportive of the conclusion that the differing treatments do relate to differing academic theories on the topic, although connections might be implicit and tenuous rather than explicit and specifically formulated. Also revealed was the fact that there appears to be as much variation within both the categories of high school and college textbooks as there is between the two categories considered as units. There was no clear-cut differentiation between high school and college texts in the treatment of the topic. This was especially true when allowance for the differing educational levels are made. However, there is one possible exception, in that the high school texts do make more frequent references to the basic concepts of democracy than did the college texts. The findings further prove that a number of critical observations and constructive suggestions concerning the treatment of democracy in colonial America in the cited texts can be made.

The most striking factor in the differentiation of the topic of democracy in colonial America, in both high school and college textbooks, was the low priority given overall to the topic. Most of the texts examined included introductory or prefatory statements extolling the democratic character of United States history and noting the deep roots of that process, but not one of the texts offered an abstract definition of democracy. However, the 7% to 12.8% of the texts devoted to the colonial pre-Independence period rendered little attention to democracy per se, with the abstract term "democracy" seldom being given full separate treatment. In fact, one high school text--Kownslar and Frizzle--and three college texts--Current, Garraty, and Gruver--fail to list a single index reference under the term "democracy," as it related to the colonial era. It seems fair to conclude, therefore, that there is some hesitancy about treating the abstract term democracy. For example, the term "democracy," while not appearing in the index of four textbooks, had as many as twenty-eight listing in the text authored by Graff and Krout. Furthermore, in reading the narratives one encounters the term as many as fifty times--in Feder's text--while on the other hand one text, Blum's does not use the term a single time.

The basic concepts of democracy--equality, freedom, representative or self-government, and civil rights--also received a variety of treatment. The concept "equality"

revealed some striking conclusions. Not a single textbook index had the term "equality" listed for reference in the colonial period. There were seven references to "equality" within the text narrative, in Feder's work; none in the text by Williams and Wolf. "Freedom" is another term of noticable variation; three high school textbooks and two college textbooks had no index references relating "freedom" to the colonial period. However, all the textbooks used the term within the colonial America sections of the books. While Garraty used the word only twice, Graff and Krout used it twenty-one times. If the term "freedom" is considered synonymous with "liberty" then there was more comprehensive coverage in the texts. For the most part, the terms "freedom" and "liberty" were used in reference to religion. The most frequently used concept of democracy was "self-government," or "representative government." Although two textbooks--Feder's, and Williams and Wolf's--had no index references relating either of these terms to colonial America, one volume--Kownslar and Grizzle--had forty-eight listings. Furthermore, the term appeared in the text no less than thirty-six times within Blum's work; thirty-five times in Williams and Wolf's volume, and thirty times in Gruver's book. Therefore it seems safe to conclude that the authors of the history textbooks analyzed in the present study saw "self-government" or "representative government" as the epitome of democracy. The second most frequently

used concept of democracy, in the specified textbooks was "rights." While six of the texts analyzed had no index reference listed under "rights," as related to the colonial sections of the book, one textbook--Kownslar and Frizzle's--had twenty-one index references. While reading the portions of the narratives designated to colonial American history, the term "rights" was encountered as many as thirty-one times in Feder's work, twenty-six times in Blum's, and twenty-two times in Frost's. So, while the term "democracy" did not appear very frequently in most of the textbooks, the concepts of democracy were frequently employed.

When the democratic theme in colonial America was treated in any extended manner in the texts, it was only rarely that adequate attention was given to the fact that there is controversy on this topic among historians. Furthermore, as has been shown, it was rarer still that the differing views of the historians are presented, and rarest of all that democracy was defined in terms of what the colonists themselves felt about the matter. Another astonishing characteristic of the textbooks was the absence of the meanings of the concepts of democracy, or their relationships to the democratic theme. Overall--while there are a few exceptions--the general level of treatment must therefore be characterized as inadequate, even within the stated terms of the authors of the textbooks themselves.

Because of this low level of concern, definition and analysis, it is difficult to make meaningful generalizations concerning the relationship between the treatment of the democratic theme in the texts analyzed and the five broad schools of historical interpretation. At best, the texts offered a textual explanation that gave some coverage to all the views, together with some kind of insert that presented the views of differing schools and related them to the overall narrative. The college textbook of Rebecca Gruver was, for example, cited for its excellence in this respect. The average level of treatment, however, fell far below this. Some texts, as indicated, offered a reasoned palimpsest, as it were, in their textual coverage, that attempted to summarize the differing interpretations of historians by blending them into an overall narrative covering economic through social, political, religious, and cultural aspects of colonial life.

Unfortunately, however, the texts as a whole tend to appear overly fascinated with the once-fashionable neo-conservative viewpoint, or to be saturated with even earlier sentiments associated with excessively economic interpretations, whether of the imperial or determinist schools. The ideological trend of interpretation associated with Bernard Bailyn has, by and large, been correspondingly neglected. The New Left school received even less treatment. That this interpretation of the textual treatment is accurate is borne

out by the attention given to the respective historians in the bibliographies, especially where annotations are offered. In sum, there appears to have been a kind of "weighting" of the scale of the historical interpretation toward earlier schools, even though the textbooks appeared from 1963 to 1972, when the results of more current research have been available.

As far as the differences in treatment between high school and college textbooks are concerned, it may be farily observed that there is no clear-cut division in this respect. There is, however, one possible distinction, based on the texts used in this survey: the concepts of democracy--such as liberty, freedom, rights, voting, self-government, and obedience--used in this research were, with but one exception, used more frequently within high school textbooks than in college textbooks. Blum's text had more index references under "rights" than any of the other textbooks--making it the only exception. A solid, narrative focus with a sophisticated style does, of course, mark the method of presentation in the college texts, including the text authored by Bailey and entitled The American Pageant, which has been adopted by a few advanced sections in high school. An equal density of detail--presented in a livlier, more visual fashion--permeated the majority of the high school texts. In terms of content, however, there was considerable overlap between the two groups of textbooks. It might generally

be observed that the college texts had not perhaps risen to the challenge of meeting the needs of maturing minds insofar as aspects of democracy in colonial America were concerned.

Regarding the adequacy of the treatment of democracy in colonial America, the overall conclusion emanating from the present study must be that neither the high school nor the college textbooks surveyed exhibited a thorough presentation of the topic. Specifically, in spite of sundry editorial pronouncements to the contrary at the beginning of the works surveyed, the roots of modern democracy in pre-Independence America have not been thoroughly or adequately treated. Little, if any, coverage has been given to the varying interpretations offered by schools of historians on this topic. There has been almost no sustained attempt at precise analysis of what democracy--or any of the concepts of democracy--means. There has been even less discussion of what the concepts of democracy and democracy *per se* meant at the time to the people of the time. Given the importance of the democratic theme in contemporary life, given the importance of developing an awareness of the processes of democracy and of its roots in the young people of the nation, and given, most pertinently, the need to cultivate a consciousness of the essential origins of the national experience, and reasoned assessment of the sampling of all the textbooks surveyed must lean toward the conclusion that those texts, with occasional exceptions, have not risen to the challenge presented them.

The present study must generate a certain amount of concern on the part of thinking educators. Specifically, concerning the teachers of undergraduate survey classes, it seems that much more could be done to make those courses meaningful and attractive insofar as the accompanying basic textbooks are concerned. Nowhere, it might be reasonably suggested, is this deficiency as evident as in the treatment of the roots of the national experience as the British subjects sturggled to win for themselves the right to control their destiny in a manner appropriate to freedom-loving enviornment of what in all senses of the word was a New World.

Given the above overall conclusions, therefore, it seems obvious that improvement is needed in the treatment of democracy and the concepts of democracy in colonial America, in appropriate historical sources designed for educational usage. It must be recognized that the uneven treatments in the textbooks studied afford ample opportunity for qualification and annotation, as the critical analyses carried out in the appropriate chapters of the present study made clear. The wealth of new research on this topic that has been carried on in academic journals in recent years merely serves to reinforce this conclusion. As a result, certain recommendations stem from the overall thrust of this study.

Recommendations

A number of recommendations for further research and for possible changes in the educational treatment of democracy in colonial America, specifically in the college survey-class level, appear to emerge from the present study. They are largely self-explanatory, and are therefore listed *seriatim* as follows:

1. The present study has been limited to a representative sampling of eleven high school and college texts available in the State of Tennessee. It is therefore recommended that a wider sampling of both high school and college texts be made in other state or city contexts and the results of the present survey tested against the results produced by those extended duplications of the survey.

2. The present study has been limited to high school and college texts. It is therefore recommended that representative samplings be made of a wider range of texts, including those at the elementary level. At this level vital introductions to the concept of democracy are often made, and student mind-sets concerning the topic may well become quite rigid, not necessarily with later beneficial results in their educational lives.

3. Educational professionals generally, and social studies experts in particular, should make further investigations into the teaching of democracy and its curricular context in the light of the present study and contemporary student and educational needs.

4. Special study projects should be devised to investigate the way democracy is presented in our school systems, particularly in respect to the earlier years of national life and the colonial period. Such research groups could well function in conjunction with official activities in connection with the national Bicentennial, when the development of American democracy will naturally be a major theme.

5. Textbook publishers and their authors might be approached with a view to improving coverage of democratic themes in current texts, and to preparing substantive revisions that will upgrade the treatment of democracy in future editions of current texts, and new texts that are now at the planning stage.

6. From occasional glimpses of excellent material in the texts studied, it is clear that the treatment of the subject of democracy in those texts can be specifically upgraded insofar as the colonial period is concerned. Generally, greater textual coverage of the topic, a more critical approach, and sensitivity to the differing views of historians and the people of the colonial period is recommended, along with evidence of the consolidation of scattered treatments of the democratic topic into full chapters, or chapter segments, in the appropriate texts.

7. In the case of college undergraduates who are studying the topic of democratic development in colonial

America, the following specific recommendations are made for this key period in educational maturation and growing awareness of citizen responsibilities:

a. That fuller coverage be given to the topic both in classroom practice and in use of texts;

b. That a special effort be made to consolidate treatment of the topic, rather than treat it as an appendage of economic development or as part of a vague, undifferentiated move towards freedom;

c. That a special effort be made to acquaint students that the topic is not a straightforward one susceptible of unilineal interpretation, but a complex one where a multiplicity of viewpoints can and do exist;

d. That students be introduced to the work of earlier historians who have examined the topic of democracy in colonial America in order that current views may be placed in proper perspective;

e. That students should be encouraged to develop a critical attitude towards the topic in order that they might acquire the critical attitude that is, in itself, essential to the functioning of a modern democratic society;

f. That students should be encouraged to examine primary, as well as secondary, source materials on the topic of democracy in colonial America in order that they acquire a full understanding of, and appreciation for, the meaning of the term as it was used at the time, thus enhancing their overall awareness of the multiple variety of the democratic experience;

g. That a class be developed especially to teach democratic development, the concepts of democracy, and the relationships of democracy to "power," "efficiency," and "justice."

Finally, it is recommended that future textbook studying colonial America present the author's abstract definition of democracy. Democracy is popular government; government by the people, either directly or through elective representatives. It should then be explained to the readers how that abstract definition will be operationalized and how the operational definitions are to be exemplified. For example: democracy is government by the people. Operationalized that could be taken to mean maximum participation of the people. Defined more specifically it could mean the right of the individual to participate in deciding the form of government to be established. An example of this definition being put into action is the Mayflower Compact, wherein all the people were given equal voice, equal

opportunity, and an equal vote. If the present and future students of history are to grasp what is really meant by democracy every effort must be made to presnet it accurately and with clarity, in both abstract and operational forms.

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