The treatment of the negro in state adopted textbooks published from 1940 to 1950

Dorothy Maree Washington

Atlanta University

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THE TREATMENT OF THE NEGRO IN
STATE ADOPTED TEXTBOOKS PUBLISHED
FROM 1940 TO 1950

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE IN LIBRARY SERVICE

BY
DOROTHY MARIE WASHINGTON

SCHOOL OF LIBRARY SERVICE

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
AUGUST, 1951
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful acknowledgement is made to Mrs. Hallie Beachem Brooks, who suggested this study and who has given me painstaking assistance throughout.

I am indebted to Dr. Virginia L. Jones who aided me in securing copies of the textbooks used in the study.

Grateful thanks is due to Mr. Robert Cureton and Mrs. A. W. Robinson who permitted me to use textbooks from their personal libraries.

To my mother, without whose aid and encouragement this study would not have been possible.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

In 1941, a study of the Treatment of the Negro in American History School Textbooks was made by Marie Elizabeth Carpenter. The study compared the changing textbook content from 1826 to 1939 with developing scholarship on the history of the Negro in the United States. The Carpenter study concluded that in textbooks written during the 1930's, there had been a trend toward improvement in the presentation of historical facts relating to Negroes, but that there still remained room for improvement.

In Historical Outlook, there appeared a study by Irene T. Blythe, which measured the extent to which new discoveries, emphases, and viewpoints have been made available to the secondary school students through an incorporation of research results in secondary American History texts. This study concluded that more recent views have not been generally included in secondary texts; that is, the textbook writers appear to act slowly in accepting new viewpoints, emphases, and discoveries.

1 Marie Elizabeth Carpenter, The Treatment of the Negro in American History School Textbooks (Menasha, Wis.: Banta Publishing Company, 1941), 139p.

The present study attempts to measure the extent of improvement made in the treatment of the Negro from the period of Slavery through the period of Reconstruction in a selected number of American History textbooks published between 1940 and 1950. Textbook content is compared with research studies on the Negro, and an attempt is made to determine the extent to which important events taken from research studies concerning the Negro have been incorporated into these texts.

Statement of the Problem

In determining the treatment of the Negro in American History textbooks, it was necessary to find out what attitude is expressed toward the Negro, the relative emphasis upon or importance of the Negro in these textbooks, and the extent to which these textbooks are accurate in their treatment of the Negro in terms of newer conclusions growing out of research.

Assumptions

Two basic assumptions underly the study: First, that the material one reads exerts a great amount of influence upon one's attitudes and opinions; and second, that the authors intend for the material included in secondary school textbooks to be factual and accurate.

Methodology

1. The texts used in this study were those titles which appeared most frequently on several lists of textbooks adopted by Southern states for use in Senior High Schools (see Table I). The states whose textbook lists were used were: Alabama, Florida,
Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. The texts used in the study were:


Wirth, *The Development of America*. 1941.


### TABLE 1

ADOPTION OF TEXTBOOKS BY SOUTHERN STATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Barker</th>
<th>Carman</th>
<th>Dumond</th>
<th>Muzzey</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Wirth&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Wirth&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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<sup>1</sup>Wirth, *Development of America*

<sup>2</sup>Wirth, *United States History*

Full bibliographic data given in Appendix I.
2. Each textbook was analyzed with regard to the treatment of the Negro during the Slavery period (1619-1860), the Civil War period (1861-1865), and the reconstruction (1865-1878) period in American History.

3. An examination of the character of the words and statements concerning the Negro in each textbook was made in order to determine the nature of the contents.

4. Illustrations of the Negro were examined and classified in order to determine the frequency of certain types of scenes used in portraying the Negro during the three periods studied.

5. Study questions on the Negro appearing in the textbooks were examined and classified in order to denote the particular area or phase of events toward which these questions were directed, and the frequency with which they appeared.

6. Statements used in the textbooks were checked for accuracy against the conclusions presented in research studies. Eight of the research studies were selected from the *Journal of Negro History*; and books written on the Negro by William E. B. DuBois, John Hope Franklin, E. Franklin Frazier, and Carter G. Woodson (see Appendix II) were used as research sources.

7. The conclusions of this study were compared with the conclusions of the Carpenter study in order to indicate the extent of improvement in the treatment of the Negro in newer American History textbooks, and to determine whether or not textbook authors have shown improvement in the area of keeping abreast of developing research on the Negro.
CHAPTER II

THE TREATMENT OF THE NEGRO IN AMERICAN HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

This chapter is divided into three sections: the institution of Slavery and the Negro, the Negro during the Civil War, and Reconstruction and the Negro. In each section, excerpts showing the treatment of the Negro have been taken from the textbooks. Illustrations and study questions pertaining to the Negro have been analyzed, and a comparison of research studies and textbooks have been made.

The Institution of Slavery and the Negro

Textual Treatment

Most of the textbook authors considered the introduction of Negroes into the colony of Virginia as being synonymous with the introduction of slavery into America. In relating the event of the Negroes' landing at Jamestown in 1619, it is stated that the Negroes were brought to be sold as slaves; slavery was introduced when the Negroes were brought to the colony; and that Virginia received Negro slaves into the colony. The only mention of Negroes being used as

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- 5 -
indentured servants in the colony is made by Fremont P. Wirth. In his textbook, *The Development of America*, he states that the Negroes were "sold or indentured to Virginia planters." In Wirth's *United States History*, he states, "These first Negroes, according to modern scholars, were sold to the planters as indentured servants rather than as slaves."

In discussing the use of Negroes as slaves instead of the Indian or the whites, it is stated that Negroes were adapted to hard manual labor; their labor was adapted to hot work; and that Negro labor was apparently a necessity.

In explaining the absence of slavery in the North several authors present the factors which might explain why the Negro could not be used. Such reasons are given as: the Negroes were found unsatisfactory for commerce and shipping; the Negro had received no training for commerce and shipping; neither the climate nor the industry was suited to the institution; and because fairly skilled labor was needed in the North. Barker and Commager, however, in explaining why the North was not

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3 Wirth, *Development of America*, p. 341.
6 Wirth, *Development of America*, p. 343.
7 Wirth, *United States History*, p. 209.
receptive to the institution of slavery per se, state: "The small farms, the poor yield of the land, and the compact village settlements prevented the establishment of Negro slavery on a large scale in New England. Large numbers of slaves could not be employed profitably."

The social scale in America during colonial times is described as having been very elastic, except for the status of the slaves. No mention is made, in these descriptions, of the free Negro, who, as will be pointed out later, had risen in many instances through his own efforts, from the status of a slave.

As slavery became increasingly fixed upon the South, it became more and more difficult, according to some textbook authors, to free the slaves because white Southerners feared the results of the emancipation of the Negro. Wirth, in the United States History, states that the Southerners "feared that they would be unable to cope with the problem of dealing with half a million free Negroes. In his textbook, Development of America, he explains that the Southerners had a "fear of race war and Africanization." Barker contends: "the North as well as the South considered them undesirable. Dumond writes that most white Southerners "did not believe that the two races could live together if

4 Wirth, Development of America, p. 343.
5 Barker, op. cit., p. 344.
the Negroes were free," and he also states, "not only were the slaves of a different race from the whites, but many of them were only a generation or two removed from barbarism."

The hope of solving the problem of disposing of the freed Negro led to the establishment of the American Colonization Society. The reasons for the failure of this Society are varied: the Negroes did not want to go to Africa; few Negroes were willing to leave the United States; the Society could not begin to cope with the problem; and it was found impossible to send Negroes there as rapidly as they were born in America."

Only two of the textbooks devote space to the treatment of the slave and his relation to the plantation master. Wirth, in Development of America, states:

Brutal treatment of the Negroes was uncommon except on the large plantations where the overseers were often more heartless than the master, and where the large number of slaves made strict discipline necessary....Kind treatment was the rule where the slaves were not very numerous, and was not uncommon even on the large plantations.

Barker writes: "There was undoubtedly hard driving on some plantations; but the Negro's lot was probably little worse than that of the English factory worker, or the Irish farm laborer of the same period."

In painting a picture of slavery, Wirth lists the "good features" as such:

1 Dumond, op.cit., p. 372.  2 Ibid., p. 374.
4 Barker, op. cit., p. 344.  5 Dumond, op. cit., p. 263.
6 Carman, op. cit., p. 296.  7 West, op. cit., p. 383.
8 Wirth, Development of America, p. 353.  9 Barker, op. cit., p. 304.
When slaves were sick they were attended by the family physician, and sometimes were nursed by the mistress. In case of death the slave was given a simple but decent burial in the 'God's acre' of the plantation. Amusements among the Negroes were encouraged so long as they were conducted in an orderly manner.¹

Barker also points out the brighter side of slavery. He writes:

Though his cabin was small, there were shade trees about it, a vegetable garden near by and chickens in his coop. He received one suit of clothes a year, a pair of shoes, and extra garments for winter wear and summer use. His food was coarse and simple but not unwholesome. On this fare and under the treatment of the masters the slaves multiplied as fast as the white people.²

Wirth, in describing the appearance of the slaves, writes: "The pickanninnies wore a little more than a long shirt, and sometimes, indeed, they played around the cabin without any clothing."³

The objectionable features, according to Wirth, were: (1) labor was usually hard and long; (2) families were sometimes separated through sales; and (3) punishment at times was severe.

Wirth's Development of America is the only textbook which make any mention of the education of the slaves. He states that this kind of Negro training was almost entirely neglected.

Barker, in relating the attitude of the Negro toward slavery, points out:

Nor was the slave always unhappy in his cabin. On the contrary, he sang at his work. He was respectful to 'people of quality', contemptuous of 'poor whites', and proud of the dignity and ceremonial of the plantation home to which he belonged.⁶

Dumond gives some attention to the status of the free Negro.

¹ Wirth, Development of America, p. 353.  
² Barker, op. cit., p. 304.  
³ Ibid., p. 354.  
⁴ Barker, op. cit., p. 304.  
⁵ Ibid., p. 353.  
⁶ Ibid.
He states:

The notion that the Negro race was inferior to the white was very prevalent. Therefore, the free Negro was an object of persecution and discrimination. While he did not suffer the disadvantages of slavery neither did he have the security and protection enjoyed by the slave. Thus the 'free' Negro was neither slave nor free man.1

Barker writes that the free Negro's position in the South was peculiar:

The laws of all the southern states forbade his existence. But for a century and a half masters in the older regions had been in the habit of freeing deserving servants. Many had received their liberty in recognition of military service, and children of free Negroes were always free.2

Barker also describes the free Negro's living conditions:

In the towns the free Negroes lived generally in poor and unsanitary quarters. In the country they occupied, and sometimes owned, little allotments of land, where they earned a meager living. Everywhere they did much of the work of the simpler trades of ditching, blacksmithing, bricklaying, and even carpentering. Some of them owned large tracts of land and slaves, and time considered themselves planters. If a man earned and saved money in the South, land and slaves were chief forms of investment open to him.

The county courts granted free Negroes permits to live in certain neighborhoods and to own property. Even members of state legislatures sometimes stood sponsors for their good behavior, and although there was considerable hatred of the free Negroes by the poorer white people, they suffered little from lawlessness.3

The writers agree that Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin, was not a true picture of slavery. Wirth describes the novel as an "exaggerated account," and as a "propaganda document." Muzzey, in both editions of his textbook, says that the novel was "pathetic but highly exaggerated." Carman describes the novel as being a "vivid, although exaggerated, picture of slavery." Dumond states that it was "not a

2 Ibid. Wirth, Development of America, p. 364.
3 Ibid. Wirth, United States History, p. 218.
5 Carman, op. cit., p. 334.
completely accurate portrayal of the days of slavery." West relates that it "undoubtedly misrepresented slavery," and also points out that the novel "did its work in making the people of the North feel that the slave was a fellow for whom any slavery was hateful."

The only account given by the textbooks of slave revolts was the Nat Turner Insurrection, and it is pointed out that the Southerners believed that this uprising was due to the work of the abolitionists.

In giving an account of the Dred Scott Decision, Wirth points out: "The question had no practical interest for Scott, for he had been promised his freedom by his New York master," and Muzzey, in the 1950 edition of his textbook, also goes on to explain: "Of course, the Negro slave, Dred Scott, did not start this case himself." The 1946 edition of Muzzey's textbook does not include this statement.

Wirth's Development of America is the only textbook which presents the discussion of slavery in a compact and separate unit. The other texts have woven the discussion of the Negro and of slavery in chronologically with other historical events and phenomena.

Illustrations on the Negro in Slavery

Wirth and Dumond were the only authors presenting the stereotyped picture of Negroes singing and dancing. The explanation

3 Wirth, Development of America, p. 349; Dumond, op. cit., p. 297; Carman, op. cit., p. 305; Yarbrough, op. cit., p. 486; Barker, op. cit., p. 346.
4 Wirth, Development of America, p. 368.
6 Wirth, Development of America, p. 352; Dumond, op. cit., p. 172.
under this picture in Wirth's Development of America reads: "Negroes
always have been fond of singing and dancing; and the banjo has been a
favorite musical instrument with them." Dumond writes that the picture
he presents "reveals something of the spirit of gaiety which often
caracterized plantation slaves."

Wirth also includes a picture of "slaves who worked in a cotton
field getting rations," and "slaves at work in a cotton field." Slaves
are shown on a picture illustrating the cotton gin in Barker's textbook,
and also in Dumond's.

Yarborough illustrates the Underground Railroad by showing a
picture of a white woman opening the door for a runaway slave. He also
presents a picture of a southern plantation Ball which shows a Negro
slave serving the party. The explanation under this picture reads:
"Negro slaves served the beautifully dressed ladies and powdered-wigged
gentlemen. Muzzey's 1946 edition gives a picture of dilapidated slave
cabins.

Types of Study Questions on Slavery

Tables 2 and 3 show the frequency and distribution of certain
types of study questions appearing in the textbooks on the Negro. The
word questions as used here includes projects, suggested activities,
problems for investigation, and debate topics.

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1 Wirth, Development of America, p. 352.
TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONS ON THE NEGRO IN SLAVERY

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Barker</th>
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<th>Dunmond</th>
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<th>Mazey (1950)</th>
<th>West</th>
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<th>With, United States History</th>
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The numbers on the right indicate the total number of times a question appeared in the textbooks under the subjects indicated on the left.
Questions dealing with the institution of slavery as concerned with political issues were not included. The types of questions included were: (1) those questions concerned with the Negro and his life during slavery, (2) questions which seek to point out different factors preventing or promoting slavery, and (3) questions on different attitudes concerning slavery. The latter two types of questions were included because it is believed by the writer that attitudes expressed toward the institution of slavery in the American colonies, whether pro or con, may indirectly serve to form attitudes toward the American Negro.

Comparison of Research Studies and Textbook Accounts on Slavery

According to recent studies, the accounts given by textbook writers of the event of Negroes being introduced into Virginia as slaves are erroneous.

It has been shown conclusively that Negro servitude preceded Negro slavery in most of the American colonies. T. R. Davis states that the records made it certain that Negro servitude preceded Negro slavery in the case of Virginia. Carter G. Woodson also writes that the first Negroes brought to the continental colonies served largely as indentured servants. With the exception of Wirth, textbook authors have misrepresented this fact by saying that the first Negroes served in the capacity of slaves.

2 Ibid., p. 250.
Contrary to textbook accounts, Negroes replaced white servitude not because they were suited to hard manual labor or to the hot sun, but for the following reasons:

1. As a general rule, every advantage was taken of the servant by the masters to hold them in servitude longer than the required time. Ignorance, and the lack of ability to speak the English language made it easy for the master to take advantage of the African Negro.

2. It was more difficult for the Negro than for the white servant to escape and lose himself among the colonists.

3. The supply of African Negroes seemed less likely to exhaust itself than that of whites and Indians.

4. The problem of governing Negroes was less difficult because they were chastised with less qualms and with greater severity than in the case of whites.

Certain economic conditions served to differentiate the status of the Negro in the North from his status in the South. John R. Mecklin gives reasons for the status of the Negro in the North which are in accord with accounts given by textbooks.

His reasons for conditions adhering to Negro labor in the South

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4. Ibid.
which vary slightly from textbook accounts are: (1) fertile lands lent themselves to unskillful and exhausting methods of slave labor, (2) the climate was congenial to the Negro, and (3) the staples produced could be cultivated by use of unscientific slave labor.

Not any of the research studies examined substantiate the theory presented by textbook writers that the Negro was better adapted to slavery because of his physical stamina.

The permanency and inflexibility of the status of the slave during colonial times is a generalization made by the textbook authors. Luther P. Jackson shows that many slaves in Virginia became free through hiring themselves out, and thus purchasing themselves from their masters. He also writes that this was done not only in Virginia cities, but in many urban areas where the Negro could engage in non-agricultural work. These research studies do not refute the statement that the slave had little chance of bettering himself, for the condition of the slave was more fixed than not. But the omission of the existence of the free Negro during colonial times seems to imply impossibility instead of improbability.

Dumond, one of the two authors treating the free Negro, is supported in his discussion of the "precarious" position of the free

3 Ibid., p. 278.
4 Ibid., p. 278.
Negro by Mecklin's study, "The Evolution of Slave Status in American Democracy." Barker, however, states that the free Negroes engaged in the "simpler trades of ditching, blacksmithing, bricklaying, and even carpentering." John Hope Franklin's study shows that free Negroes engaged in many occupations requiring a high degree of skill.

In New Orleans there were teachers, jewelers, architects, and lithographers in 1860. Almost every community had its free Negro carpenters, barbers, cabinet makers, and brick masons....

Louis R. Mehlinger, in his study on "The Attitude of the Free Negro Toward African Colonization," shows that on the whole, the movement never appealed to a large number of intelligent free people of color. He also lists the outbreak of the Civil War as a cause for the failure of the movement. However, the "Negro birthrate" idea, which is advanced by West, is not substantiated by this study.

According to Woodson, the treatment of the Negro during slavery varied with different periods in American history. He concludes that the treatment of the Negro on the plantations during the eighteenth century was relatively favorable, but in the nineteenth century, slavery was at its worst. The treatment of the slaves depended largely
upon economic conditions, the supply of slaves, and the prevailing sentiment of the period toward slavery.

In the following sections, statements which have been taken from research studies appear first, followed by a listing of the accounts given by textbook writers. This has been done in order to obtain a general picture of the extent to which textbook accounts agree with research studies.

Research Statement.—The first Negroes brought to the colony of Virginia served as indentured servants.

Textbook accounts

Barker:

Carman: Negro slaves were first brought into Virginia

Dumond:

Muzzey: (1946) a Dutch vessel from the West Indies landed some twenty Negroes in the colony, to be sold as slaves

Muzzey: (1950) (same as 1946 edition)

West: received the first importation of Negro slaves

Wirth: (Development of America) Virginia planters

Wirth: (U. S. History) twenty Negroes, who were sold or indentured to

Yarbrough: Slavery was introduced into Jamestown, Virginia

1 Davis, op. cit., p. 250; Woodson, op. cit., p. 82.
2 Carman, op. cit., p. 58.
5 West, op. cit., p. 113.
6 Wirth, Development of America, p. 341.
7 Wirth, United States History, p. 209.
in 1619 when a Dutch vessel brought a few Negroes to the colony

Research statement.—Slavery became fixed upon the Negro in the South due to the following conditions: (1) fertile lands lent themselves to unskilled and exhausting methods of slave labor, (2) the climate was congenial to the Negro, (3) the staples produced could be cultivated by use of unscientific slave labor.

Textbook accounts

Barker: because of the profits of agriculture
Carman: Negro labor apparently a necessity
Muzzey: (1946) Negro labor was adapted to hot work in the tobacco and rice fields
Muzzey: (1950) (same as 1946 edition)
West: Negroes were adapted to hard manual labor
(Development of America)
Wirth: The South was devoted to the growth of three staples—for the culture of which the planter depended on slave labor

Research statement.—The Negro, at first, had the status of the white servant, but was gradually debased from servitude to slavery. But even so, the existence of the free Negro shows that in many instances

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1 Yarbrough, op. cit., p. 288. 2 Mecklin, op. cit., p. 108.
3 Barker, op. cit., p. 71. 4 Carman, op. cit., p. 59.
7 Wirth, Development of America, p. 341.
the Negro did better his status.

**Textbook accounts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Quote</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barker</td>
<td>At the bottom were slaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carman</td>
<td>At the bottom of the social scale were the Negro slaves, who, alone had no hope of bettering their position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dumond</td>
<td>They, of course, had no chance to change their status or rise in the social scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muzzey: (1946)</td>
<td>At the bottom of the social scale were the Negro slaves, who were bought or sold like horses or cattle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muzzey: (1950)</td>
<td>(same as 1946 edition)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wirth:</td>
<td>Except for the condition of the slave, the organization of society was very elastic</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Development of America)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wirth:</td>
<td>Except for the condition of the slave, the organization of society was very elastic</td>
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<tr>
<td>(United States History)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yarbrough</td>
<td>Though the classes were clearly defined, ambitious individuals, excluding slaves, could by hard work and economy rise from a lower class into a higher one</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Research Statement.**—The failure of the American Colonization Society was due to (1) the outbreak of the Civil War, and (2) the fact that the movement did not appeal to the majority of free Negroes.

**Textbook accounts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Citation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wirth,</td>
<td>Development of America, p. 96.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(United States History)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
anywhere else. They were as attached to their homes in the South as were the whites. The society could not begin to cope with the problem so few Negroes were willing to leave the United States.

It was found impossible to send Negroes there as rapidly as they were born in the United States.

Summary

The textbooks, on the whole, portray the Negro during slavery through the discussions of other historical events and phenomena. Only two of the textbooks (Wirth and Barker) have given consideration to the Negro per se, and the underlying attitude expressed in these textbooks convey the idea that the Negro was more or less passive, and was not too unhappy under the slave system.

Of the nine illustrations appearing on the Negro, three of them show stereotyped pictures of slave life on the plantations. Other textbook authors give pictures illustrating the slavery system, or phases relative to the slavery period, rather than the life of the Negro.

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1 Barker, *op. cit.*, p. 344.  
3 Dumond, *op. cit.*, p. 263.  
Study questions focus predominately upon (1) factors fastening slavery upon the South, (2) the South's attitude toward slavery and, (3) anti-slavery efforts. Only one of the textbooks includes questions on slave life, and two include questions on the free Negro.

The comparison of textbook accounts with research study shows that the textbook authors have not been wholly accurate in their presentation of the Negro. The authors fail to include any mention of Negro resistance to the slave system. The Nat Turner Insurrection is included; however, textbook writers point out clearly that the Southerners believed that this revolt was caused by the abolitionists. Factors such as Negro resistance to the slave system should be pertinent in explaining certain situations relative to the Negro.

The Negro During the Civil War

Textual Treatment

The treatment in the textbooks of the Negro during the Civil War is negligible. Concerning the use of slaves by the Confederate army, Wirth states:

Although they were of little military value, they were used effectively on the plantations in the production of agricultural products, and thus made it possible for nearly every white man of military age to join the Confederate army....

The characteristic loyalty of the slaves during the War between the States is strong evidence of the gratitude of servants for the sympathetic treatment of kind and generous masters, some of whom, upon entering the service of the Confederacy, left the management of their plantation in the hands of trusted slaves, without any fears or misgivings.

Carman makes the statement that "although the Confederacy did not venture to use the slaves as soldiers, they were employed in every other kind of work for the army such as driving, cooking, and building."

1 Wirth, Development of America, p. 383. 2 Ibid., p. 353.
fortifications." Barker, in relating the desperation of the Confederate army says: "They enlisted Negroes in their armies and promised them freedom as the reward of loyal service." According to Muzzey: "Negroes began to be recruited for the army." Yarborough says only that "slave labor produced food for the Confederate states."

The fact that Negroes served in the Northern armies is included only in the textbooks written by Wirth and Carman. Carman states: "They continued to flock in, and more than 100,000 served as soldiers." Wirth informs us that "the Northern armies were increased by 104,387 Negroes enlisted from Confederate territory."

Muzzey, in discussing Sherman's march to the sea, states: "but discipline was lax, and the wanton destruction of private property by camp followers, Negroes, and 'bummers' made Sherman's name a byword throughout the South." All the textbooks agree that the Emancipation Proclamation was issued as a war measure.

Illustrations on the Negro in the Civil War

Not any of the textbooks include illustrations showing the Negro as a participant in the Civil War.

Types of Study Questions on the Negro in the Civil War

The only questions appearing in the textbooks on the Negro in the

Civil War were those dealing with the Emancipation Proclamation. These fell into three groups: (1) the extent to which the Emancipation Proclamation freed the slaves, (2) the necessity for the Emancipation Proclamation, (3) Lincoln's attitude toward the freeing of the slaves.

Comparison of Research Study and Textbook Accounts On the Civil War

According to Research study, the slaves not only produced food for the Confederate army during the Civil War, but they were of even more immediate use. DuBois has found that they were used "as military labor, to throw up breastworks, transport and prepare food, and act as servants in camp." The only textbook which is not in accord with this fact is Wirth, who states that the slaves were of little military value.

The fact that the Negroes served in Union armies is supported by research studies, but is ignored in all of the textbooks except those written by Wirth and Carman.

Summary

The omission of any considerable mention of the Negro during this phase of American History is found in all the textbooks. Research

West, op. cit., pp. 442-44; Wirth, United States History, p. 244; Wirth, Development of America, p. 393; Yarbrough, op. cit., p. 323.

1 Barker, op. cit., p. 416; Muzzey, op. cit., (1946), p. 423; Wirth, United States History, p. 250.


studies show that the part played by Negroes during the Civil War was relatively significant, but the textbooks, in general, do not convey this idea.

Reconstruction and the Negro

Textual Treatment

Textbook writers agree that one of the greatest problems faced by the South was the question of what to do with the millions of freed slaves. These newly freed men are described as follows: "turned loose to fend for themselves without preparation or training for freedom...." "...an orphaned race, with little property, less inclination to work, and no conception of the responsibilities of citizenship...." "...turned out into the world, homeless, without money, and with extravagant hopes but with no experience in managing for themselves...."

Barker relates that new rights had to be secured for the Negroes, and West states that they had to be "kept in order, protected, and uplifted, and brought back into the industrial system." He contends also:

After the war, hundreds of thousands of ex-slaves, to whom freedom meant idleness, drifted aimlessly about the country for months. Even when starvation finally drove them back to desultory work, the disorderly habits they had been forming led to much violence and crime.

Barker is somewhat in agreement with West, in stating:

A large portion of the Negroes thought that freedom meant

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1 Dumond, op. cit., p. 374.
2 Wirth, Development of America, p. 405.
4 Ibid., p. 455. 5 Ibid., p. 455.
release from work, and they abandoned the land to flock to the towns and enjoy the relief dispensed by the Freedman's Bureau.¹

Carman does not make quite the same generalization as Barker and West, but states:

...some Negroes stayed and worked for their old masters for a mere subsistence. Other wandered about the country, convinced that freedom meant a perpetual holiday. Still others waited in idleness for the forty acres and a mule which they believed the government would give each man.²

The purpose of the Freedman's Bureau, as stated by the authors, was to "aid" and "provide" for the Negroes, to relieve distress among both Negroes and whites, and to "protect them (the Negroes) from oppression and mistreatment by the whites."³

Muzzey depicts the Reconstruction governments as being "sorry affairs, ruled by carpetbaggers, scalawags, and their Negro allies." Wirth states that these governments were "dominated by 'carpetbaggers,' 'scalawags,' and Negroes."⁴ In United States History, Wirth states that the governments were "dominated by Negroes and 'carpetbaggers' from the North, who cooperated with the Southern 'scalawags'." Barker asserts that the "carpetbag-scalawag governments were elected and maintained in office by their control of Negro votes...." Carman states that the "carpetbaggers occupied most of the chief positions in the reconstructed

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⁶ Wirth, Development of America, p. 414.
⁷ Wirth, United States History, p. 260.
⁸ Barker, op. cit., p. 430.
government, leaving the secondary places to the Negroes and scalawags."

Dumond only says that the conventions were "composed of Negroes, 'scalawags' and Northern carpetbaggers." Yarbrough writes: "the majority of the members of the legislatures in some states were ignorant Negroes...." West asserts that the Northern adventurers came to the South to exploit the "ignorant Negro vote and to organize it as the Republican party." He elucidates further:

A favorite device was to show the illiterate and credulous Negroes an 'order' purporting to be signed by General Grant, commanding them to vote the Republican ticket. These carpetbaggers, joined by a few even more detested scalawags, with uneducated freedmen, made up the bulk of the constitutional and state legislatures during the next years.

The South Carolina legislature is used by most of the textbook authors as an example of a typical reconstruction government. Muzzey relates: "In the legislature of South Carolina, for example, there were ninety-eight Negroes to fifty-seven white, and only twenty-two of the members could read and write." This is also stated in the 1950 edition of Muzzey's textbook. Wirth writes:

...there were eighty-eight negroes and only sixty-seven whites, and many of the negro members could neither read nor write.

Extravagant sums were appropriated from the public funds for fine desks upon which the negroes put their feet.

In giving the causes for the black codes, Carman states: "from the first the freed Negroes presented a serious problem...." and these

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4 Wirth, Development of America, p. 414; Ibid.
5 Carman, op. cit., p. 366.
codes "provided help in making the transition from salvery to freedom." According to Muzzey, the Southerners regarded the codes as "necessary measures of social protection, for few of the liberated slaves had any sense of responsibility, and none had the capital to begin a life of industrial freedom." Wirth writes that they were drawn up because "many of the negro freedmen positively refused to work, and became a burden as well as a source of annoyance to the whites." In Wirth's United States History, the reason for the black codes was that the South had the problem of dealing with a "propertyless, landless, ignorant, and frequently lawless group. Due to no fault of their own, the Negroes had no experience in citizenship." West asserts: "The Southerner felt sure that the demoralized Blacks could not be kept in order and made self-supporting without special legislation." Barker says that these laws "seemed necessary to many white Southerners as a means of self-preservation...."

According to Muzzey, the Ku Klux Klan was a "natural resort of the South," since they were "deprived of any legal means of defense against such iniquitous government." The same statement is made in the 1950 edition. Wirth maintains that the rise of the Ku Klux Klan was due to the fact that the Southerners were "unable to offer open resistance to

1 Carman, op. cit., p. 366.  
3 Wirth, Development of America, p. 409.  
4 Wirth, United States History, p. 257.  
5 West, op. cit., p. 455.  
6 Barker, op. cit., p. 424.  
the Union League...." He says that its original purpose was "merely
to discipline the criminally inclined Negroes and 'carpetbaggers'."

In *United States History*, Wirth states: "the South responded with
secret societies for its own protection." Other causes enumerated are:
conditions eventually became so bad; political action was denied the
Southerners; in order for the Southerners to regain control of their
government; to defend themselves against the corrupt rule of the
unscrupulous politicians; and because there were no peaceful and legal
means for "preserving White civilization"; and it was their recourse to
the "only available methods—which were very deplorable ones."

As has been stated, Wirth attributes the rise of the Klan to the
Union League. Concerning the Union League, Wirth goes into some detail:

Their meetings were held at night, and new members were initiated
with pompous ritualistic ceremonies--factors which were well
calculated to appeal to the emotional nature of the negro. At these
meetings, the white 'carpetbagger' leaders lectured the blacks on
their obligations to the Republican party, and encouraged them to
demand the social, as well as the political, equality of the races—a
principle which was put into practice by the 'carpetbaggers' by
fraternizing with the negroes on terms of racial equality. Some of
these leagues adopted violent methods. In extreme cases, Democratic
white leaders were robbed and even murdered, or their houses and barns
were burned. The Southern whites, in desperation, sought some means
of retaliation and protection.

However, in his discussion of the Klan, Wirth states only that this
organization had been "guilty of conduct which was a discredit to the
organization."

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Carman has this to say about the Union League:

As an offset to the Klan, Negroes and some white sympathizers extended the already established Union League for protection and mutual aid. It had the support of the government and the troops, and it did not use violence.¹

Five of the textbooks make it clear that the franchise was granted to the Negro in order to keep the Republican party in power. In explaining the plight of the South during Reconstruction days, Muzzey explains: "the time and energy which the Southerners should have had to devote to their economic recovery was absorbed in the struggle to wrest political control from the carpetbaggers and keep the Negroes in their social place."²

Illustrations on the Negro During Reconstruction

Three of the nine textbooks present pictures of the Negro during Reconstruction. These textbooks were those written by Carman, Wirth, and West.

Carman shows a picture of a class in shoe-making at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama. Wirth presents a picture of "a session of the South Carolina Legislature of 1873." This picture shows Negroes on the platform, with the floor littered with paper and trash. West gives a picture of slaves picking cotton, explaining that "cotton had to be picked during all this disorder—-if labor could be found."³

¹ Carman, op. cit., p. 370.
² DuMond, op. cit., p. 426; Barker, op. cit., p. 433; Wirth, Development of America, p. 410; Wirth, United States History, p. 261; Carman, op. cit., p. 369.
### TABLE 4

**DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONS ON THE NEGRO DURING THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD**

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<td>Black Codes</td>
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Types of Study Questions on the Negro During the Reconstruction Period

Tables 4 and 5 show the distribution and frequency of questions concerned with the Negro during Reconstruction. The study questions appearing in the textbooks focus predominately upon (1) the Ku Klux Klan, (2) the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth Amendments, (3) the black codes, and (4) the problem of restoring white supremacy.
TABLE 5

FREQUENCY OF QUESTIONS ON THE NEGRO DURING THE RECONSTRUCTION PERIOD

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<thead>
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<th>Subjects</th>
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Comparison of Research Studies and Textbook Accounts on Reconstruction

The picture of Negroes aimlessly wandering and drifting about the country as represented by West, Barker, and Carman does not agree with research studies made by A. A. Taylor. Taylor shows that the activities of the Negroes varied according to prevailing conditions. "Where there existed good feeling between the army officers and agents of the Freedman's Bureau on the one hand, and the native whites on the other, the Negroes were generally induced to work on the contract basis and few of them deserted from their plantations."

2 Ibid., p. 274.
However, concerning the Negroes who did wander around the country without working, Taylor has found that these were only a small minority of the freemen.

It has been pointed out by textbook authors that many of the Negro legislators were illiterate. But these Negroes, it has been found, were not necessarily ignorant. Those Negroes who were lacking in the capacity for leadership and whose speech was unacceptable generally deferred to the judgement of those better qualified. "There were in all of these sessions a number of well trained Negroes to direct their co-workers in the right way."

While the role which the Negro played in the Reconstruction government has been shown as the work of an ignorant mass, Taylor has found that the Negro was somewhat prepared for this new function by the early opportunities for improvement offered through the school and church. "Most of the leaders of the Negroes in politics were men of fair education and some were exceptionally well trained...." Woodson also points out that the charge that all Negro officers were illiterate, ignorant of the science of government cannot be sustained.

In the first place, the education of the Negro by Union soldiers in the South began in spots as early as 1861. Many of the Negro leaders who had been educated in the North or abroad returned to the South after the war. Negro illiteracy had been reduced to 79.9 by 1870, just about the time the freedmen were actually participating in reconstruction.  

It is conceded by Woodson, and DuBois, and Taylor that many

1 Ibid., p. 277.  
2 Ibid., p. 383.  
3 Ibid.  
4 Ibid., p. 566.  
5 Ibid.  
6 Woodson, op. cit., p. 405.  
7 Ibid.  
9 Taylor, op. cit., p. 566.
of the Negroes who were elected as legislators lacked the training to serve in that capacity. It is asserted, however, that these Negroes were never in sufficient numbers to dictate the policy of the administration, for this was done by the native whites and Northern adventurers in control of the administration.

Concerning the legislature of South Carolina, DuBois shows that at no time did the Negroes have control of the state.

...the white members of the legislature, from their control of the Senate, were always able to block Negro legislators; [and that] Negro control of the legislature was only possible because most of the white Senators voted with the Negroes.

The direct causes provoking the violent methods employed by the Ku Klux Klan, according to Saksins, were: (1) the militia, (2) the Negro vote, and (3) the Union League. Of these three factors, the Union League caused the least provocation.

Following is a listed comparison of textbook accounts and research studies:

Research statement.—Where conditions were favorable, the Negroes were generally induced to work on the contract basis and few of them deserted from their plantations. The Negroes who wandered about the country and did not work were a small minority.

Textbook Accounts

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Barker:</th>
<th>A large proportion of the Negroes thought that</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Taylor, op. cit., p. 566.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>DuBois, op. cit., p. 404.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Ibid.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Ibid.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Frances B. Saksins, &quot;The Ku Klux Klan in South Carolina,&quot; Journal of Negro History, XII (October, 1927), 606-647.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Ibid., pp. 631-32</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Ibid.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
freedom meant release from work, and they abandoned the land to flock to the towns and enjoy the relief dispensed by the Freedman's Bureau.¹

Carman:

Some Negroes stayed and worked for their old masters for a mere subsistence. Others wandered about the country, convinced that freedom meant a perpetual holiday. Still others waited in idleness for the forty acres and a mule which they believed the government would give each man.²

Dumond:

Because of the difficulties of freedom many Negroes refused to leave their old plantation homes.... The many slaves who did leave the plantations, however, were thereby deprived of the encouragement and assistance of their former owners and friends among the white people.³

Muzzey: (1946)

Muzzey: (1950)

West:

After the war, hundreds of thousands of ex-slaves, to whom freedom meant idleness, drifted aimlessly about the country for months. Even when starvation drove them back to desultory work, the disorderly habits they had been forming led to much violence and crime.⁴

Wirth:
(Development of America)

Wirth:
(United States History)

Yarbrough:

Research Statement.—While many of the Negro legislators were illiterate, most of the leaders of the Negroes in politics were men of fair education and some were exceptionally well trained.⁵

¹ Carman, op. cit., p. 364.
² Carman, op. cit., p. 364.
³ Dumond, op. cit., p. 374.
⁴ West, op. cit., p. 455.
⁵ Taylor, op. cit., p. 566.
Textbook accounts

Barker:

Carman:

Dumond:

Muzzey: (1946) In the legislature of South Carolina, for example, there were ninety-eight Negroes to fifty-seven white, and only twenty-two of the members could read and write.  

Muzzey: (1950) (same as 1946 edition)

West: illiterate and incredulous Negroes

Wirth: Many of the negro members could neither read nor write.
(Development of America)

Wirth: Many of the Negro members were without training and could neither read nor write.
(United States History)

Yarbrough: The majority of the members of the legislatures were ignorant Negroes.

Research Statement.—The three major factors influencing the Ku Klux Klan, in order of their significance, were: (1) the militia, (2) the Negro vote, and (3) the Union League.

Textbook accounts

Barker: to regain control of their governments

Carman: political action was denied the Southerners

Dumond: eventually conditions became so bad

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6  
7  
8  
9  
Muzzey: (1946) deprived of any means against such iniquitous government

Muzzey: (1950) (same as 1946 edition)

West: to overthrow this alien supremacy

Wirth: (Development of America) unable to offer open resistance to the Union League

Wirth: (United States History) the South objected to these Union Leagues

Yarbrough: to defend themselves from the corrupt rule of the unscrupulous politicians

Summary

The picture of the Negro during Reconstruction as presented by textbook authors is one-sided. The greatest fault of the treatment of the Negro in this period lay in generalizations.

The factors which might serve to form a better attitude toward the Negro are the very factors which are excluded, and those which paint the Negro in a bad light are the ones which predominate.

1 Muzzey, op. cit., (1946), pp. 433-34.
2 3
4 Wirth, Development of America, p. 415.
5 Wirth, United States History, p. 261.
6 Yarbrough, op. cit., p. 338.
CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

Fremont P. Wirth's textbook, *The Development of America*, which is adopted by the highest number of Southern states, gives a very inaccurate portrayal of the Negro during the periods studied. This textbook not only presents Negroes as a passive group during slavery, but emphasizes through detailed discussion the undesirable aspects of the Negro group during the Reconstruction period. Included in this textbook are stereotyped illustrations of the Negro, and the word Negro is spelled throughout the book with a small "n".

In his *United States History*, Wirth shows considerable improvement over *The Development of America* in his treatment of the Negro during the three periods. Much of the misinformation and many of the generalities made in *Development of America* are excluded. There is an indication of some effort to include research findings to a limited extent, and no illustrations of the Negro are included. However, much less attention is given to the Negro in this textbook.

Barker gives a considerable amount of space to the Negro, but the treatment is more negative than positive. This negative picture results from the inclusion of only partial information, rather than inaccurate information.

The 1950 edition of Muzzey shows no improvement over the 1946 edition, but rather, in a few instances, unfavorable statements on the
Negro have been added.

Carman, Dumond, West and Yarbrough do not give any significant treatment to the Negro but, here again, omission shows the failure of these authors to keep up with or to include important facts relative to the Negro. Carman's illustration of a class in shoe-making does portray a more favorable side of the Negro during Reconstruction than do the other textbook illustrations.

Hence, two conclusions can be drawn from this study: (1) the treatment of the Negro is either negative or negligible in the textbooks adopted by Southern states and, (2) there is a great time lapse between research studies made on the Negro and the inclusion of facts growing out of such studies in these American History textbooks.

Comparison with the Carpenter Study

There is no significant improvement in the treatment of the Negro during the Slavery, Civil War and Reconstruction periods in the textbooks published from 1940 to 1950 over the presentations made by textbooks of the 1930's. It is found from an examination of the Carpenter Study, that West and Wirth have retained most of the same illustrations on the Negro which were presented in their textbooks of the 1930's. It can be seen from the nine textbooks used in this study, that there is a trend toward an omission of illustrations on the Negro, and a general exclusion of statements on the Negro relative to his character or slave life.

The textbook authors still hold to the concept of mass ignorance among the Negroes during the Reconstruction period and Negro participation in Reconstruction governments is more closely tied up with or attributed
to "carpetbaggers" and "scalawags."

The extent to which the authors failed to keep informed about or to include the results of historical study in the textbooks used in this study reveals a serious academic lag, as was found in the Carpenter Study.

Recommendations

On the basis of these conclusions, it is recommended that the authors of American History textbooks:

1. Recognize the fact that the Negro was not wholly passive, but was active in resisting the slave system.

2. Include the positive as well as the negative aspects of the Negro during the Slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction periods.

3. Indicate significant differences when portraying Negroes as a group.

It is recommended that teachers of American History courses examine carefully the textbooks on State Approved Lists, and in cases where the range of choice is limited, to prefer those textbooks which omit any detailed treatment of the Negro over those textbooks which present only a negative view, because then it would be necessary to rely upon additional and possibly more accurate materials pertaining to the Negro in American History.

These general recommendations afford a basis for a more positive attitude toward the Negro and his role in American History.
APPENDIXES

APPENDIX I. TEXTBOOKS USED IN THE STUDY


Both editions of this text were used in order to determine the change or improvement, if any, in the editions.


APPENDIX II. RESEARCH STUDIES


Jackson, Luther P. "Manumission in Certain Virginia Cities," Journal


Simkins, Frances B. "The Ku Klux Klan in South Carolina," Journal of Negro History, XII (October, 1927), 606-647.
