ABSTRACT

DAVIS, JENNIFER M. North Carolina Textbooks in the 19th Century: “To Interest and Instruct the Boys and Girls of North Carolina.” (Under the direction of John K. Lee).

This historical study analyzes 19th century North Carolina history books. It focuses on continuity in North Carolina public school history textbooks from 1851, when the first textbook was published, to 1889, when the last known North Carolina history book of the century was published. In determining how much continuity exists among these books, this study considers controversies or cultural shifts textbook authors may have addressed in their books. Textbook content often reflects the political, cultural, or societal norms of leaders and authors, whether in historical or contemporary times. Textbooks are essentially society’s letter to their young about what knowledge and values are most important. In North Carolina, textbooks were also evidence of a growing public education movement. By the mid-19th century, North Carolina was situated near the top among Southern states’ education programs. This placement was partly due to the fact that leaders simultaneously encouraged the growth of free, universal education for all white students in the state while depending upon educators to teach these students North Carolina’s social norms and status quos. Leaders viewed education both as a major component of progress and as an institution that could maintain tradition and morality in a changing society. In this context, educators and textbook authors attempted to teach future generations socially accepted historical knowledge of and love for their state.

Analysis of North Carolina history textbooks reveals the positive portrayals of North Carolina’s history and society that writers hoped to impart to readers. Political or social upheavals such as the Civil War or Reconstruction were a context for textbook authors to
offer students historical interpretations of these events that justified or even glorified North Carolina’s actions in history. While textbook authors varied in the degrees to which they attempted to instill patriotism in their readers or by the amount of detail they included about a given topic, the basic interpretation of North Carolina’s history as inspiring and working toward positive completion remained unchanged from 1851 to 1889. Authors shared similar purposes for writing textbooks that aimed to provide students with positive views of their state provided by North Carolina natives. They also presented similar themes highlighting North Carolina’s historical love and defense of freedom and her position of moderation in social or political matters. While authors did not always interpret specific historical events the same, they highlighted similar themes about the state’s history. Changes in textbooks were usually inspired more by new historical events than by a desire to retreat from a basic summation of North Carolina history that emphasized the state’s proud historical origins, contributions to United States history, and desirableness as a place to live.
DEDICATION

First and foremost I dedicate this work to God. I’m thankful that research, nor accomplishment, has altered the person I am or desire to be. While time consuming, my dissertation did not become my ‘way of life’ nor does the ‘title’ this dissertation grants change me. I’m still the same person, with perhaps more patience, perseverance, and a stronger sense of self-accomplishment. I relate with the Apostle Paul when he said, “I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7)

To my parents, Mom and Dad, thank you both for your constant and loving support over the years of my schooling. Thank you for your believing in me, for always encouraging me to follow my dreams and ambitions, for allowing me to pursue my own interests, and for patiently enabling me with the necessary time to study, research, travel, write, etc. I owe a great debt of gratitude for the schooling that allowed me to even arrive at this level of study and achievement. It must have been that “one dollar per A” agreement we had starting in the first grade that made me love education so much. Thank you, too, for the ‘good genes’ that aided and abetted this endeavor. I love you both. You are indeed the best parents ever. Dad, I’m forever grateful for your critical analysis of my dissertation, practicing defense with your questions and observations, and your ‘Martha Stewart’ touch on my dissertation defense reception – even with those UNC napkins!

Brian, you have been most understanding and helpful. Thank you for the special times of
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While it is virtually impossible to name everyone who has encouraged and supported me over the years of this undertaking, I would like to express my gratitude to all of my friends, family, and church family who showed an interest and offered reassurance. Not the least of these was Amanda Nelson, who volunteered to edit my dissertation rough draft, and still maintained her best friend status after doing so.
Lastly, in memory of my Granddaddy Davis, who loved history; I know he would have cheered this accomplishment. I regret we could not share this ‘journey through history’ together as we did the ‘tour of Normandy’ in France. I shall carry on his love of history.
BIOGRAPHY

Jennifer Marie Davis-Doyle was born to the greatest parents in the world, Rev. Phil and Joan Davis, in Nashville, Tennessee, on June 20, 1978.

At ten days old, Jennifer claimed home to Cordova, Alabama, until she was two years old. From there she spent her next nine years, including kindergarten and grade school, in Mantachie, Mississippi, where she grew up listening to her Dad’s preaching and singing in church before she could read or write.

In the middle of her sixth grade year, Jennifer moved to Dunn, North Carolina. Her favorite subject soon became social studies and history, later confirmed by favorite Triton High School teacher Jim Currin. By the time of graduation she had two long-term goals: 1) marry the cutest boy ever who she met at Bible School at age 14, and 2) teach college history.

The next four years at Meredith College rendered a major in history, minor in Spanish, and certification to teach social studies grades 9-12. An additional two years at North Carolina State University rendered a Masters degree in history with a minor in English. Following graduation, Jennifer’s dream of teaching college was fulfilled as she became an adjunct history professor at Campbell University, where she continues to teach Western Civilization, North Carolina History, and U.S. History.

In 2009, on a carriage ride through Central Park, New York, on New Year’s Eve, with her Dad presiding, Jennifer did exchange marriage vows with that cutest boy ever from Bible School, after dating him for fifteen years.
When not in the classroom at Campbell University or at the lake skiing, Jennifer can be found sitting on the church pew between that cute boy and her Mom…still listening to her Dad’s sermons and singing in church. Additionally, she enjoys teaching youth and playing the piano.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

In 2010, members on the Texas Board of Education made national news after they discussed potential changes to their state’s US history curriculum (Birnbaum, 2012; McKinley, Jr, 2010; Scharrer, 2010). Observers pointed out that due to the large population in Texas and the state’s inevitable influence over textbook publishing, these curriculum changes would affect history textbooks across the nation. At issue for some critics was whether or not the new curriculum, and by extension the textbooks, stressed a conservative perspective of history that overly emphasized “capitalist enterprise, the military, Christianity, and modern Republican political figures” (“Texas textbook revisions cause controversy,” 2010). Other critics pointed out that while the new curriculum sought to put more of a focus on the founding fathers and their accomplishments, authors avoided writing much about Thomas Jefferson (Birnbaum, 2010). The subject of Jefferson was contentious because of conservatives’ beliefs that he originated the theory of separation of church and state, an unwelcome theory in their view. Some Hispanic school board members criticized the new curriculum due to the absence of Latino role models presented in it (McKinley, Jr., 2010). This conflict received national attention since observers realized that textbook publishers would have to respond to these agenda driven changes to history curriculum. The ripple effects from the changes that leaders in the populous state of Texas made would mean changes in textbooks nationally. Critics argued that politics, not research or scholarship, was influencing the historical narrative.
Ultimately, the Texas Board of Education passed these controversial curriculum changes with a completely partisan vote. Some leaders celebrated what they saw as a return to proper history while others argued that the new curriculum reflected politics, not proper history at all. As author William Faulkner (1951) reminded us, “the past is never dead. It’s not even past” (p. 37). He might have been observing the history of textbooks when he made this observation. While North Carolina may not exercise the influence that Texas does on textbook publishing, the state is not exempt from its own changing viewpoints regarding history.

Consider the following anecdote, which relates to North Carolina history textbooks. On Sunday, February 22, 2009, the *News and Observer* printed an article about the meeting of a local group called the Raleigh Research Circle. This group included historians and biographers of Sir Walter Raleigh, a figure long credited in North Carolina history for his contributions to exploring and attempting colonization on Roanoke Island, North Carolina, prior to the first, permanent English settlement of Jamestown, Virginia. The purpose of these historians’ meeting was to rethink “Sir Walter’s exaggerated reputation” in history, especially in terms of his contribution to the eventual founding of English colonies in North America (Shafer, 6A). In noting these changes among researchers’ views on Sir Walter Raleigh, Shafer cited North Carolina history textbook authors’ discussions of Raleigh over time. While an author in 1882 noted “the ready gallantry of the youth,” which Raleigh apparently possessed and adequately used to charm Queen Elizabeth I, by 1916 an author felt free to suggest, “if he [Raleigh] could have come to America with his colonists, he no doubt
would have succeeded just as he did in England” (Shafer, p. 6A). By 1993, textbook authors shortened descriptions of Raleigh to the fact that he was an “English adventurer” (Shafer, p. 6A). In North Carolina, textbooks have been reflective of changing trends in public perceptions of Sir Walter Raleigh.

It would be fair to say that the facts about Sir Walter Raleigh have not changed, but the amount of knowledge provided about him in textbooks has. It would also be fair to suggest that the willingness of historians to put their own viewpoints into their descriptions of Raleigh has varied over time as well. This story about Raleigh sheds light on a much larger trend in history textbooks as the kind of information, amount of subjectivity, and even adjectives used to describe historical figures varies over generations. Scholars have suggested that throughout history, the information found in textbooks often has reflected societal changes, political transitions, or cultural shifts (Apple, 1992; Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995; Moreau, 2003).

It would take extensive research to ascertain what societal or political shifts led to changes in authors’ portrayals of Sir Walter Raleigh in North Carolina history books. It would take even more research to understand whether changes in textbook portrayals of Raleigh affected how people understood and accepted historical interpretations regarding him and his attempt at colonization in North Carolina. Scholars’ contention that textbook changes cannot be separated from the social or historical context in which they took place lends credence to the idea that there may have been some sort of cultural or social motivation for authors’ changing views on Raleigh. Yet other scholars suggest that many changes in
textbooks, even changed descriptions about figures like Sir Walter Raleigh, are minor ones that generally do not change an enduring historical narrative seeking to instill visions of progress and feelings of patriotism in readers (Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995; Cell, 1982).

In this study, I analyzed three public school North Carolina history textbooks written in 19th century North Carolina to determine if there were any changes in the historical narratives presented by the authors. In answering this question, I analyzed the context of the textbooks over the forty-year period of their publication. The first of the books was published in 1851, about a decade after North Carolina’s leaders began providing public schools for its citizens’ children. This book, the North Carolina Reader, by Calvin Wiley, was the first North Carolina history book written for use in public schools. The second book, School history of North Carolina, by John Moore, was published in 1879. Cornelia Phillips Spencer’s First steps in North Carolina history was published in 1889. I began my study with the assumption that history textbook information from any time period reveals what information was important to society’s leaders and educators at the time since they were attempting to instruct future generations of North Carolina.

**Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework that supported this research was critical theory. According to Bogden and Bilken (2003), this theory is one whose proponents are “critical of social organization that privileges some at the expense of others” (p. 21). Applied to education, critical theory allows researchers to examine ways in which schools are institutions that reproduce society’s values and organizations, even if some of these traditions favor certain
groups of people over others. Traditional educational theorists, Weiler (1988) points out, often include an underlying acceptance of existing arrangements of society “as a given,” while critical theorists suggest that researchers should examine ways that schools and their traditions contribute to forming socially accepted “political identities and subjectivities” (p. x). Critical theory is especially useful to researchers interested in gender, race or class issues. For example, Weiler (1988) used a critical theory lens when she examined how the feminist movement had influenced portrayals of women in school classrooms, traditions, and textbooks. Other scholars have analyzed textbooks using critical theory, suggesting that textbooks are essentially political texts that reveal what and who is important to society (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1992; Chaplin, 2003; Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995).

In his critical analysis of 20th century United States history books, James Loewen (1995) suggested that history books in particular reveal how a society wants to be thought of and remembered. He charged that textbooks reveal what the “controlling top of society” wants future citizens to know, ultimately diminishing “power to the people” by denying them a more multi-faceted presentation of history (Loewen, 1995, p. 302). It was Loewen’s approach to textbooks that helped to guide my own study of 19th century North Carolina history textbooks. Using a framework of critical theory, I planned to examine whether or not information from textbooks revealed authors’ need to support the continuity of one narrative of history over others, as Loewen found to be generally true of 20th century American history textbooks.
Multiple researchers have found textbook analysis to be helpful in understanding the influence schools have had on society by providing students with a certain narrative about their past (Apple, 1992; Carroll, 1986; Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995; Moreau, 2003). From the 19th century forward, educators have relied on textbooks to provide an authoritative narrative of history that includes mostly positive portrayals of their country, region, or state (Angus, 1988; Beach, 1969; Chaplin, 2003; Fitzgerald, 1979; Gordon, Hunt, & Weiler, 1987; Moreau, 2003). Many 19th century teachers relied exclusively on textbooks in their teaching (Apple, 1992). As these teachers continued to rely on texts to instruct their students, the influence and importance of the texts grew (Apple, 1992; Fitzgerald, 1979). This continued reliance has meant that textbooks have historically had the dual job of providing students with factual information while also providing them with a socially accepted version of their history. Researchers suggest that this version was often told from the perspective of those with political power in society and in a way that highlighted their successes while omitting negative parts of the story (Apple, 1992; Beach, 1969; Loewen, 1995; Moreau, 2003; Nash, 1997). Since educators and parents usually considered textbooks as having authority on their subject matters, there was little room for ambiguity, especially in writing history. Despite this need to avoid ambiguity in textbooks, authors have not always been successful in avoiding conflicts over what information and interpretations should be in them (Apple, 1992; Moreau, 2003; Nash, 1997; Sewall, 2000).

Scholars have suggested that conflicts over textbooks may occur because the classroom is the arena where ideas about politics, a nation’s future, and views on democracy
or education meet (Apple, 1992; Loewen, 1995; O’Brien, 2004). Historically, there were two basic views about the effect public schools would have on society (Apple, 1992; Loewen, 1995; O’Brien, 2004; Tyack, 1999). There was one group of leaders that hoped that the institution of public school would become a moral enterprise that would preserve society by allowing leaders to teach youth how to mature into good, productive citizens who understood their particular place in society (Genovese & Genovese, 2005; O’Brien, 2004). The second group worried less about students learning their place in society. Instead, this group saw public education as the institution that would encourage students to make their own place in society. To this group, schools were the great equalizer that would protect American democracy since all students, regardless of their social or financial status, would have the same educational background to guide them into adulthood.

In both of these scenarios, textbooks became important because they aided and sometimes led in the education and formation of future citizens. Authors and readers often found that the goals of providing students with both facts and an inspiring narrative were at odds with one another. From changing depictions of the British during and after the American Revolutionary period to changes in portrayals of Southern slavery throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the content of textbooks has been a potentially explosive political issue because of its presumed effects on future citizens (Apple, 1992; Carroll, 1986; Furstenberg, 2003; Moreau, 2003). Many early educational leaders chose to use public instruction to help create a populace with strong loyalties to their nation rather than focus only on providing them facts.
Since the experience of attending school and reading textbooks would presumably be one of the most common experiences students would have, leaders used the classroom and the textbook to provide these future citizens with an adequate knowledge of and pride for their nation’s history, heritage, and future. Leaders as well as textbook authors realized that adequate knowledge of an event and pride-instilling history do not always complement one another. Researchers suggest that historically, when conflict between these two goals has occurred, textbook authors have tended to provide texts that favor patriotism over analysis (Apple, 1992; Fitzgerald, 1979; Furstenberg, 2003; Loewen, 1995; Moreau, 2003). These textbooks have often supported those who hoped public education would train citizens to know their proper place in society, to support their nation’s policies, and to become productive workers (Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995). Some researchers have been disappointed to find that many textbook authors’ insistence in writing a socially accepted historical narrative has meant that these authors lean away from treatments of current, controversial issues (Holt, 1995; Kantor & Lowe, R., 2004; Krug, 1970; Loewen, 1995; Nash, 1997; Pinar & Bowers, 1992). These researchers suggest that this kind of writing that focuses only on providing a socially correct narrative robs students of the opportunity to make informed political decisions (Loewen, 1995; Salvucci, 1991). As Salvucci (1991) asked, how can leaders expect students to make informed decisions about immigration to the United States without knowing the historical context that helped to create the situation? To put it another way, how can students meet these goals of learning to think critically, making
informed decisions, and questioning sources if they only receive one, positive narrative of a nation’s progress and victory (Pinar & Bowers, 1992)?

Today’s textbook authors end up being faced with a question of balance. For example, they must decide if students can learn to appreciate a U.S. Constitution that has stood for over two hundred years while at the same time acknowledging the paradox of its acceptance of slavery in the 3/5 compromise (Ratzlaff & Schick, 1981). In the 21st century, textbook publishers and authors must deal with current political and economic issues even as they write about the contradictory history of the United States. Authors realize that if their books delve too far into controversial ideas or too much into new or unaccepted historical scholarship, schools may refuse to buy their books, parents may speak out, or there may be negative media attention (Apple, 1992; Ratzlaff & Schick, 1981; Salvucci, 1991). The conflicts we see today over textbooks echo similar 19th century struggles to decide what students should be reading in school.

It is tempting to think of the good old days of simple education, quaint one-room school-houses, and small communities who came together to support their schools, but in reality, the quaint one room school houses of the 19th and early 20th centuries functioned in a politically charged atmosphere much as schools do today (Angus, 1988; Beach, 1969; Carroll, 1986; Weeks, 1889). “The efforts of pressure groups to influence the history curriculum are not new,” author Moreau (2003) reminds readers (p. 1). Where publishers in the 21st century seek to include global perspectives and interpret social history to achieve a more balanced presentation of history, 19th century authors struggled with slavery, economic
issues, and political turmoil, all while attempting to teach future generations a single, authoritative historical narrative (Butler & Watson, 1984; Chall, 1994; Furstenberg, 2003; More, 1964; Moreau, 2003; Wiley, 1857).

Educators in the state of North Carolina were not exempt from the need for textbook construction or carefully constructed interpretations of history (Carroll, 1986; Wiley, 1857). During the beginning of the 19th century, North Carolina was predominantly an agrarian and rural state whose leaders worried that too many young people were leaving the stagnant region for more economically diversified and advanced, growing places (Butler & Watson, 1984; Wiley, 1859). By the end of the century, North Carolina had made a transition from a stagnant state to one seen as an educational leader in the South (Butler & Watson, 1984; Harris, 2008; Jarrett, 1964; 1967). In the years between these two periods, the state of North Carolina struggled with multiple challenges like the institution of slavery, debates about internal improvements in the state, secession, Civil War, Reconstruction, Redemption, the establishment of public schools, changes to the state’s constitution, and the codification of Jim Crow laws (Chafe, 1980; Noble, 1930; O’Brien, 2004; Spencer, 1889; Trelease, 1976). Analysis of textbooks reveals how authors attempted to address some of these issues in North Carolina’s history as they sought to instill what they deemed as appropriate knowledge and values in students during the changing times of the 19th century.

Researchers have established that analyses of textbooks can reveal what kinds of values a society’s leaders attempted to instill in future citizens at a given time (Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995). Scholars suggest that in North Carolina, textbooks and education
enabled North Carolina leaders to establish themselves as innovative even as they used schools to teach students their idea of the status quo in a society experiencing so much upheaval (Cell, 1982; Chafe, 1980; O’Brien, 1986; Powell, 1989). The findings reported in this study of 19th century North Carolina textbooks illustrate how authors and leaders in North Carolina hoped to interpret 19th century historical events for North Carolina students in a way that left them feeling little less than love for and gratitude to their state.

In each textbook analyzed in this study, the authors encouraged readers’ allegiance to their native state. Calvin Wiley (1851), author of the first public school history book, illuminated proud moments in the state’s history and noteworthy attributes in his own era of North Carolina in an attempt to show how education and textbooks could train students to become good, loyal citizens. Wiley’s textbook reveals what information and themes he believed would most support the state’s traditions and values. John Moore (1879) wrote his School History of North Carolina under the leadership of the North Carolina Board of Education. He wrote just after the time known as Redemption, a time when native, conservative state leaders had just regained control over North Carolina’s public schools after the changes of Reconstruction had meant that outsiders to the state took over the institution. His textbook reflects ideas that he and these leaders hoped to impart to youth during this time. Cornelia Phillips Spencer’s 1889 North Carolina history textbook acknowledged the importance of what children learn about their history by promising educators that students would feel a “new attachment to the land of their birth” after reading her text (Spencer, 1889, p. iv). The textbook reveals what specific information Spencer believed would endear
readers to their state and its history. Each textbook in my study reveals the values and information authors hoped to pass on to readers throughout the second half of 19th century North Carolina.

**Statement of the problem**

This study attempts to fill a gap in historical knowledge regarding North Carolina history textbooks in the 19th century. While there are histories of textbooks in the United States, and while several scholars have provided overviews of educational history in North Carolina and the United States, none of these works are specifically focused on North Carolina history textbooks in the 19th century (Angus, 1988; Apple, 1992; Butler & Watson, 1984; Harris, 2008; Powell, 1989; Pulliam & Patten, 2006; Urban & Jennings, 2008; Venezky, 1987). In studies focused on North Carolina schools and educators during this time, textbooks were typically a small part of the research (Carroll, 1986; Harris, 2008; Jarrett, 1964; Nix, 1993). Scholars who looked at textbooks generally did not address textbook information, authors’ intent, continuity in textbooks over time, or potential conflict over textbook stances. In this research, I investigated three leading history textbooks written for use in North Carolina public schools from 1851-1889. This research is focused on North Carolina history textbooks, complements previous research on textbooks, and adds to our knowledge of North Carolina history. I sought to analyze the information in 19th century North Carolina history textbooks given the social, political, and economic conditions in which authors wrote them. I utilized both textbook content and information about the books’ authors or other educational leaders, found in their professional or personal papers. In this
study, I analyzed three 19th century North Carolina history textbooks to help me determine if there were any changes in the historical narratives presented in these textbooks over the time of their publications from 1851 to 1889. A summary of related research on textbooks follows.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction To Literature

In this literature review, I consider research on textbook development from the Revolutionary period of American history through the 21st century. While my research focus is on 19th century textbooks in North Carolina, this broader scope of studies helps to set the context for how culture and politics can influence the writing of textbooks. My research has revealed that studies of textbooks began almost as soon as they became common in 18th and 19th century classrooms. Researchers wanted to understand what kind of content was in the textbooks because of the controversy and discussion among educators and the public that they sometimes generated (Apple, 1992; Anyon, 1979; Barth & Shermis, 1980; Chall, 1994; Venezky, 1987). They found that authors were motivated by varying concerns about the effects their textbooks would have on society and politics. Many researchers also found that there was a general pattern to changes that authors made in textbooks over time (Apple, 1992; Barth & Shermis, 1980; Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995). In other words, changes were made to textbook information, but these changes often only added what amounted to footnotes to an already established, rarely questioned, nationally accepted narrative about the greatness of a region’s or nation’s history. The first part of this literature review provides a brief overview of studies of 19th century textbooks. Because scholars continued to investigate textbook changes into the present time, this review also includes a brief overview of textbook studies throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries. In addition to a broad review
of research on textbooks, I examined research on North Carolina education during the 19th century in order to give context for the textbooks analyzed in my study.

**Textbooks in the 19th century: Forming an Historical Narrative**

During the 19th century, textbooks were an important part of students’ education (Angus, 1988; Apple, 1992). Then as now, students and many teachers tended to interpret information in textbooks as the one complete version of knowledge that they needed. Teachers relied on textbooks to guide their instruction (Bain, 2006; Herbel-Eisenmann, 2007). Because of teachers’ reliance on textbooks, textbook authors’ interpretations tended to carry authority (Angus, 1988; Apple, 1992; Fitzgerald, 1979; Furstenberg, 2003; Gordon & Hunt, 1987; Loewen, 1995; Tyack, 1999). Disagreements over content could sometimes occur since parents, leaders, scholars, and authors all understood that textbooks offered a large part of the foundation for students’ understanding of their history and society (Fitzgerald, 1979; Furstenberg, 2003). Researchers have tried to gain understanding of the 19th century by looking at the information in textbooks as well as any conflicts that they may have reflected (Belok, 1981; Chall, 1994; Fitzgerald, 1979; Krug, 1961; Tibbetts, 1961).

This research is focused on history textbooks, but a brief examination of science textbooks in the 19th century can help us to understand how societal values and textbook information sometimes collide (Beach, 1969). Charles Darwin’s scientific theory of evolution offered potential controversy almost as soon as scientists began disseminating it to the public (Antolin & Herbers, 2001; Beach, 1969). Some educators disagreed with adding to science textbooks a new scientific theory that threatened to contradict the Bible (Beach,
Others countered that students would be less than educated if they were not familiar with the new science of Darwinism (Antolin & Herbers, 2001; Beach, 1969). Researchers analyzing science textbook authors’ treatments of Darwinism suggested that conflicts regarding science textbooks were more about values than scientific information itself (Anton & Herbers, 2001). It mattered to educators, parents, and readers how textbooks dealt with Darwinism.

While science textbook authors struggled with how to present Darwinism, many 19th century history authors struggled to decide which events to include in the textbooks and which political or historical interpretations of the events would be most appropriate for students. For example, scholars of the American South have noted how 19th century educators used textbooks to sway students toward a certain political viewpoint regarding slavery or race relations (Carroll, 1986; Chall, 1994; Genovese & Genovese, 2005; Kolchin, 1998; O’Brien, 2004; Perlstein, 2002). In the first years after the Civil War, textbook authors worked to provide students with an appropriate political explanation of the conflict (Butler & Watson, 1984; Cohen, 2008; Genovese & Genovese, 2005).

Genovese & Genovese (2005) explained that the aftermath of the Civil War and its changes to social hierarchies and institutions created a need for Southern authors to provide an historical interpretation of this event that supported the South’s traditions. In their study of education in the South, Genovese & Genovese (2005) found that until the Civil War, rich planters counted on a solid, classical education that emphasized Greek and Latin for their own children while they mostly ignored the education of the lower classes. After the war,
leaders feared that lower class whites and newly freed slaves no longer divided by the institution of slavery might realize their similar struggles, combine forces, and either question or overpower the plantation owners’ political leadership. Leaders worried that lower class whites whose loyalty had previously been bought by racial divisions between poor whites and blacks due to the institution of slavery would now be in question. Poor whites could no longer contrast their own free status with those of inferior, black slaves, nor would they be content to be ignored by those in power (Morgan, 1975). Educators needed to instruct the lower classes, and they needed to ensure these individuals’ allegiance to Southern society. Textbook authors needed to portray the Civil War in a way that highlighted the positive aspects of the South and the atrocities that were committed towards the region so that future Southern generations would not turn against their own native land (Genovese & Genovese, 2005). Using this example from the Civil War to illustrate how Southern textbooks changed in order to accommodate a changed society, Genovese & Genovese (2005) suggested that major changes such as revolutions or civil wars in any society often bred changes in textbooks during the 19th century. Additional researchers offered evidence to further support the idea that after society changed due to such events as the Civil War, textbook authors reacted by amending the textbook information students should learn (Butler & Watson, 1984; Cohen, 2008; Genovese & Genovese, 2005).

Davis (1996) found that textbook changes could also occur when they were not related to dramatic upheavals in society such as wars or revolutions. He suggested that society’s changing views on religion or politics could affect textbook interpretations of
history. In one example of textbook change in 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} century books, Davis (1996) found portrayals of John Calvin to be different over time. Davis studied religious and historical texts in order to assess textbook treatments of the Protestant theologian who helped to found the doctrine of predestination. Davis (1996) found that the goals of schools, churches, and government changed in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, as did textbook authors’ treatments of John Calvin. In the early 1700s, Calvin was presented as a respected leader. By the 1800s, textbook authors presented Calvin as an intolerant religious figure. Davis (1996) concluded that the religious makeup of America was closer to Calvin’s in the 1700s, so many readers would have naturally identified Calvin as a leader of their religion. Due to immigration and new divisions among religious groups, it was not as likely that readers in the 1800s would view Calvin as their religion’s leader. Textbook authors’ treatments of Calvin reflected changes in American religion, Davis (1996) concluded. These changes meant that textbook authors desiring to write about religious history adjusted their interpretations of Calvin to fit with mainstream American religious views. Davis’ study found textbook changes that related to one individual in history, but his work fit with those of other researchers who analyzed textbooks and found change in multiple themes or subject areas.

In fact, there is much research on American textbooks that has found some type of change in the content of textbooks or their uses over time (Antolin & Herbers, 2001; Barth and Shermis, 1980; Chall, 1994; Chaplin, 2003; Nietz, 1961; Steuer & Steddom, 1979; Tibbetts, 1966; Venezky, 1990; Venezky, 1987; Zimet, 1972). The motivations for these studies varied. Some authors sought to compare education at various times in American
history, and they considered textbook analysis an appropriate way to complete this
comparison (Chall, 1994; Gilbert, 2000; Tibbetts, 1966). In these studies, researchers
suggested that schools in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century used easier curriculum and had less strict standards
for students than in previous times when public education was just starting (Chall, 1994;
Gilbert, 2000; Tibbetts, 1966). Both Chall (1994) and Tibbetts (1966) compared textbook
reading passages or activities in the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries. These researchers found that
reading assignments demanded more of 19\textsuperscript{th} century students because the text passages that
they read were written on much higher reading levels (Chall, 1994). Gilbert Sewall (2000)
compared American history books at the end of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century with those at the end of the
19\textsuperscript{th} century and concluded that 20\textsuperscript{th} century textbooks covered even less content than they
had in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. Sewall (2000) added to this observation his interpretation that over
time, textbook authors had become so concerned about political or cultural differences and
political correctness that they hesitated to write potentially divisive historical content. Sewall
speculated that this continued hesitation would mean that students in the future might read
less than their 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} century counterparts (Sewall, 2000). Sewall (2000)
believed that the fact that textbooks in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century had less information in them than 19\textsuperscript{th}
century books suggested some sort of cultural shift regarding education and students’ reading
material. For Sewall, this shift signified educators’ growing unwillingness to address
controversial issues in increasingly diverse classrooms. Sewall (2000) concluded with his
prediction that 21\textsuperscript{st} century education would be inadequate compared to 19\textsuperscript{th} century
schooling, although he never really addressed the possibility that 19th century textbook authors avoided controversy by presenting a unitary version of history.

Other researchers have suggested that there are additional ways to explain changes in 20th century textbook authors’ avoidance of controversy or reduction of subject coverage. Authors who offered overviews of the American educational system sought to assess changing attitudes about childhood, education, and society, reflected in textbooks used throughout history (Nietz, 1961; Venezky, 1987, 1990; Zimet, 1972). They concluded that curriculum changes were not necessarily reflective of a less demanding education, as Sewall (2000) or Chall (1994) suggested. Instead, these scholars proposed that textbook changes reflected new findings in the fields of education or psychology. These new ideas about how students develop changed views of what they should know and how they should obtain this knowledge. Sewall (2000) acknowledged these changes in how textbook authors presented this information from one century to the next, but his theories on why these changes existed differed from other researchers. Some researchers suggested that 19th century authors were also more overt in their attempts to use their writing to guide students to certain conclusions or viewpoints (Nietz, 1961; Venezky, 1987; 1990). While Sewall (2000) theorized that 20th century textbook authors included less information as they worked to avoid controversy, Nietz (1961) and Venezky (1987; 1990) theorized that 19th century authors needed to include more information so that they could write a patriotic narrative of early American history.

In an analysis of elementary textbooks in the 19th century, both Nietz (1961) and Venezky (1987; 1990) found that literature selections in reading books at least partly
reflected society’s beliefs about how children were supposed to learn not just the skill of reading but also good morals and citizenship. Textbook authors included activities that prompted students to repeat and recite textbook passages, reflecting research that found that repetition and recitations were the best way for students to learn (Venezky, 1990). Since students would be repeating ideas, many textbook authors found it convenient to have their reading selections be ones about the founding of America, proud, patriotic American history, or laudable American morals. Sewall’s (2000) suggestion that 19th century textbooks challenged their readers more than 20th century ones does not necessarily explain the findings of Nietz (1961) and Venezky (1987). They found that the inclusion of texts related to what textbook authors deemed American values and morals offered evidence that textbooks had more of a purpose than merely providing information, challenging students, or handling conflict. The books were helping to teach students what it meant to be an American, especially since this identity was still somewhat new by the beginning of the 19th century.

Multiple researchers found that the need to construct a historical narrative supporting patriotism and a proud American identity was evident in 19th century textbooks (Belok, 1981; Eldred & Mortensen, 1998; Furstenberg, 2003; Steur & Steddom (1979); Zimlet, 1972). Michael Belok (1981) noted that early American textbooks were designed to promote certain values for students and to also socialize young children who would grow up to become workers or voters. The authors wanted to supply children with a suitable vision of their nation’s past, present, and future, thus inculcating a strong national identity into them. Belok (1981) concluded his study by suggesting that at some periods in American history,
education bordered on indoctrination of American students. Belok (1981) studied popular textbooks from the 19th century to support this claim. He found that even the photographs authors chose to include in books reflected some of the values or beliefs leaders hoped students would gain. In particular, he focused on the high volume of photographs that favored farmers or wage earners instead of professionals (Belok, 1981). Belok believed that this example illustrated another way that textbook authors attempted to guide students toward the American value of manual labor. He found it disturbing that text photographs intimated to readers that most of them should aspire towards these manual labor, not professional, jobs.

Francois Furstenberg (2003) found a similar push for a particular set of American values in 19th century textbooks when he compared a 1737 New England Primer to an 1822 elementary reading book used in early America. Both books included a section in which authors provided a sentence beginning with each letter of the alphabet. However, Furstenberg noticed that by 1822, the “W” sentence had been changed from a sentence about whales to a glowing account of President George Washington’s great deeds (Furstenberg, 2003, p. 1306). Since none of the other sentences changed in the 1822 primer, Furstenberg agreed with previous scholars’ assessment that 19th century textbook authors made a conscious effort to include uniquely American values for students.

Furstenberg’s findings further corroborated other scholars’ work that had compared textbooks just before and after the American Revolutionary war (Eldred & Mortensen, 1998; Steur & Steddom, 1979; Zimlet, 1972). These researchers found that after the Revolutionary war period, authors made changes to history textbooks that reflected a young nation’s need of
training a new, upcoming generation in the principles on which the nation was built (Eldred & Mortensen, 1998; Steur & Steddom, 1979; Zimlet, 1972). Since the textbook changes were focused on instilling patriotism in the nation’s youth, researchers found that the idea of providing an accepted and prideful narrative of history was a constant among textbook authors of the era (Eldred & Mortensen, 1998; Steur & Steddom, 1979; Zimlet, 1972). Once authors constructed this historical narrative, circumstances merely demanded that recent events fit into the newly American narrative. Eldred and Mortensen (1998), feminist historians who examined rhetoric textbooks that women used in the 19th century, found evidence of change in textbooks that related to the forming of a newly independent nation and the need to provide students with an historical narrative of it. Eldred and Mortensen (1998) studied books that educators used at women’s schools to instruct in grammar and writing. In addition to grammar instruction, they found recurring themes about the virtues of defending liberty. They noted that these themes were present in books that were written or revised around the time of the American Revolution. Zimlet (1972) and Steur and Steddom (1979) also analyzed the ways that values represented or praised in textbooks changed through the 19th and even 20th centuries. Each of these studies’ authors concluded that textbooks reflected values of society as well as the proud narrative of history that society’s leaders wanted to impart to students.

The desire to use textbooks to influence and train future generations is not just an American one. Scholars around the world have noted that textbook information often reinforces beliefs about a region’s or nation’s history and have asserted that text can change
in order to accommodate changed societies (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Altschul, C. 1917; Belok, 1968; Belok, 1981; Dean, Hartmann, & Katzen, 1983; Eldred & Mortensen, 1998; Kahveci, 2005; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; Yang, 1991). These scholars have suggested that textbooks often reinforce a patriotic national identity. Nihat Kahveci (2005) noted that high school textbooks are crucial to teaching students about their national identity. She also noted that the definition of this identity is “constantly changing to take into account shifting interpretations” of the nation’s political, cultural, or social changes (Kahveci, 2005, p. 5). Kahveci’s study of Turkish high school textbooks showed how historical presentations of Europe changed as Turkey’s current role in the world and the country’s relationship with Europe shifted. Where Europe might have been presented as too secular and Westernized in earlier centuries, 20th century textbook authors touted Europe’s contributions to the world as well as the European Union. Textbook authors knew that it mattered how Turkish students understood their country’s connection to Europe, Kahveci concluded, especially since these students would come of age in a world in which international cooperation would be relevant to their lives.

A similar study of world history textbooks in South Korea illustrated how textbook treatments of revolutions in history, such as the American Revolution, changed as political leaders tried to amend how Koreans understood definitions of liberty (Yang, 1991). While authors did not change their interpretation of the American Revolution, they reduced the amount of coverage they gave the event. Yang (1991) suggested that this varied coverage occurred because of Korea’s inconsistent relationship with the United States throughout the
century. Dean, Hartmann, & Katzen (1983) showed how white authors of textbooks in South Africa, writing for African schoolchildren, used their text to justify apartheid in the country during the 1980s. It appeared that these authors were trying to help maintain their country’s status quo even as many world leaders were attacking this policy (Dean, Hartmann, & Katzen, 1983).

Other scholars have studied German textbooks in the 1930s. Blackburn (1980; 1985) found that leaders and authors used textbooks during this time to justify their Nazi ideology. Specifically, Blackburn (1985) found that textbook authors’ portrayals of Christianity became less positive, since Christian teachings about the meek inheriting the earth did not match with Nazi philosophies about master races and world domination. He also found that textbook authors in the 1930s often omitted passages about subjects like music and art so that they could include more passages about war. In writing about wars in which Germans lost, authors explained the defeat as being the fault of outsiders to Germany with impure racial makeup. These studies help to establish that the connection between political or cultural concerns to education and textbooks is a global one, although the focus of this review is primarily on ones in the United States.

The theme of creating or maintaining historical narratives for future citizens connects studies of 19th and 20th century textbooks. Even 20th century textbooks that included additions or revisions generally did not take away from a general narrative they seemed meant to uphold (Loewen, 1995). Near the beginning of the 21st century, Furstenberg (2003) charged that the sense of a “mythologized narrative” of American history persisted in books
even at the turn of the 20th century, despite numerous changes in their content since earlier historical times (Furstenberg, 2003, p. 1296). Although 20th century books included information that focused less on the “great men” of history and their successes, Furstenberg (2003) believed that the master narrative of American history continued to have more in common with 19th century textbooks than one might first realize (p. 1296). He theorized that the reason for these similarities was 20th century authors’ continued insistence in providing students with flawless heroes and glories in their nation’s history, just as textbook authors had done in the previous century (Furstenberg, 2003). Other scholars charged that this apparent need for textbook authors to portray American history from the perspective of the victors and in a generally positive, almost awed tone amounted to blatant indoctrination of students (Belok, 1981; Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995; Furstenberg, 2003). Even if textbook authors were not blatantly trying to indoctrinate students, researchers found them guilty of whitewashing history in order to support one general telling of the story (Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995). Perhaps historians’ awareness of this issue throughout the 20th century explains why the textbook studies in the 1900s often looked at textbook biases, omissions of relevant facts, or approaches that unduly favored one version of history over others.

**Overview of 20th century textbook studies: Adding to the historical narrative**

In an early 20th century study of school textbooks, Charles Altschul (1917) attempted to assess how American textbook authors treated the subject of the American Revolution. He conducted this study of textbooks in the context of World War One. Altschul was intrigued with the tendencies of Americans to support the French in the war, but not their English
allies. He concluded that this tendency was based in part on the ways that history textbook writers negatively portrayed the British during the American revolutionary period (Altschul, 1917). Altschul’s aim in his study was to investigate how authors attempted to pull students away from supporting the English in World War One. He believed that there was a connection between students’ classroom learning and their future political leanings or opinions. A study by Axtell (1987) much later in the century analyzed the same 1917 textbooks as Altschul had, but Axtell noted how German-authored literature in American reading texts was suddenly missing during this period as the United States neared entry into World War One. This omission, Axtell suggested, illustrated textbook authors’ desire to remove all positive traces of an enemy of the United States from its public school instruction by amending students’ textbooks. Given this realization that authors were sometimes calculating in their decisions as to what history to share with students, it seemed that almost any historical topic could be susceptible to author bias.

By the 1920s, educators and researchers openly acknowledged that textbooks revealed authors’ biases as well as the biases and expectations of the people with power in the societies for whom they wrote (Tryon, 1925). Scholars knew that leaders and educators hoped to use books to shape students’ beliefs about both historical and current issues. In this context, some scholars began calling for revised textbooks, especially as the nation began experiencing the social, political, and economic changes of the roaring 1920s (Beach, 1969). These scholars hoped to see new additions and revisions of textbooks that would reflect the changing views of historians or other progressive leaders in society. R.M. Tryon (1925)
acknowledged the rush to produce new curriculum materials and textbooks in an article in which he argued for a more balanced and careful inclusion of maps in junior high geography textbooks. Since some maps used half of a page while others were only small squares on the page, Tryon reasoned, students received an implied message about which maps were more important to their nation’s history. Tryon’s (1925) analysis of popular textbooks of the 1920s revealed that the larger maps tended to be related either to Westward territorial expansion of the United States or to battles in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. This finding further enhanced Tryon’s notion that there were implied messages in map sizes, since military history and US expansion clearly received more of a focus in textbooks than cultural developments. Tryon went on to suggest that the inclusion of maps showing population change, immigration, or other forms of social history might enhance future texts.

This theme of enhancing the narrative in American texts by including other viewpoints or types of history was a recurring one throughout 20th century studies of textbooks (Chaplin, 2003; Dorn, 2008; Fitzgerald, 1979; Krug, 1961, 1970; Loewen, 1995; Nussbaum, 1929; Salvucci, 1991; Seller & Trusz, 1976; Trecker, 1973). Another recurring theme in these studies is the recognition that textbooks continued to influence entire generations of American students’ views on their nation, its history, and its political issues (Fitzgerald, 1979; Krug, 1961, 1970; Loewen, 1995; Trecker, 1973). Authors of textbook studies often expressed concern for what messages textbooks sent to readers as they continued to encourage revisions in history textbooks.
Frederick L. Nussbaum (1929) expressed concern for the amount of influence that textbooks held even in college classrooms. Nussbaum believed that college students were at an academic level in which they should rely on primary sources for their course readings in order to avoid being swayed by influential textbooks. He analyzed high school and college-level European history books and found that these books focused on the development of nations in the continent separately rather than as a group. Nussbaum spent more of his article advocating for how Europe should be portrayed in history books than he did actually reporting research on textbooks. Still, his suggestion that Europe should be presented as a whole unit instead of as individual countries revealed an interesting shift in textbook studies. Nussbaum justified his suggestion that textbooks about Western Europe include a global focus by arguing that too many students were bored with memorizing the royal lines of Spain, England, or France. Nussbaum’s (1929) study illustrates that textbook critiques throughout the 20th century were often framed by scholars’ accusation that authors were focusing on the wrong parts of history, especially when subjects connected to current issues of the time in which they wrote.

This concern about the focus of history textbooks increased among teachers and scholars in the midst of the Great Depression during the 1930s. It was during this time that educator and reformer Harold Rugg’s textbooks were published. Rugg taught at the Teachers College of Columbia University and was a well-known progressive educator. He was an advocate for making education more relevant to students’ lives and using public schools to promote what he viewed as a more democratic curriculum. The lessons in his books
presented problems in contemporary society as a context for providing relevant historical background for students so that they could better understand and attempt to solve the problems. In this way, Rugg believed, students would understand the relevance of what they were studying, and history would become more about critical thinking and less about indoctrination. Schools using the Rugg textbooks focused on contemporary society’s problems in their instruction (Dorn, 2008; Winters, 1967). Since Rugg wrote during the Great Depression, many of the current issues he dealt with were economic. Unfortunately for the sales of Rugg’s textbooks, his desire to provide students with many varied economic explanations, philosophies, or solutions led conservatives to suggest that Rugg’s book were pro-socialist.

Researchers suggest that whereas Rugg’s textbooks had been selling in large numbers, the criticisms and controversies surrounding the books led to their sales being greatly reduced (Apple, 1992; Dorn, 2008). Rugg’s treatment of current issues ignited passionate political views about what students should be learning, and his book sales ultimately suffered. Perhaps textbook publishers learned a lesson from Rugg’s experience. Scholars looking at textbooks later in the 20th century found authors’ treatment of current issues almost nonexistent, while an enduring and largely unchanged historical narrative continued to prevail over revisionist history meant to amend it (Chaplin, 2003; Fitzgerald, 1979; Salvucci, 1991).

As the 20th century progressed, some historians became less concerned with the treatment of current issues in textbooks when they realized how much the historical
information needed to be corrected and enhanced. If the 19th century was a time in which authors constructed an historical narrative, the 20th century was about their attempts to slowly amend it. An author in a 1934 Journal of Negro History article expressed concern for the way that American history textbook authors treated the subject of African Americans. Reddick (1934) noted that for those wanting to provide an optimistic and positive narrative of American history, subjects relevant to African American history were a challenge. Reddick found that most textbook authors met this challenge by either ignoring African American history or misrepresenting it.

In his analysis of American history textbooks, Reddick found both erroneous and biased information, although he acknowledged that every textbook omission of information related to African Americans did not necessarily indicate racial bias. However, Reddick (1934) proposed that the high amount of information in students’ books that justified 19th century slavery in the American South as a nice arrangement for all involved or argued that blacks could not handle the freedom Reconstruction offered them left students with incorrect perceptions about these moments in history. Reddick pointed out that textbook authors often presented their interpretations minus any viewpoints from African Americans or historians with opposing or newly revised understandings of history. The absence of a more balanced treatment of the subject of African Americans coupled with omissions of information about them made textbook biases more suspiciously race-motivated. Reddick (1934) examined six popular American history textbooks written between 1914 and 1931. He found that after authors reached the year 1900 in the content of their textbooks, their treatment of the subject
of African Americans ceased almost completely. This blatant omission left students with the impression that the end of Reconstruction and the 19th century was the end of any historical issues relevant to African Americans. Reddick concluded that students learned only part of the story of African Americans during the Civil War and Reconstruction. He further concluded that students learned almost nothing to help them understand race relations in their current society.

Reddick (1934) began his study with the acknowledgment that textbook authors are caught between two competing needs. First, there is the need to offer American students a story of victory and pride that will inspire love of country. Second, there is the need to tell students what actually happened in history, even when the pages of history are less than attractive. While Reddick expressed some sympathy for the difficult job of textbook authors trying to meet these competing needs, he suggested that future scholars who studied textbooks would be correct to assess authors in three major ways. As his study indicated, Reddick wanted scholars to analyze books by checking for bias in authors’ historical interpretations, and he wanted to assess how often authors omitted information about certain subjects. Reddick also wanted to see stronger relationships between history educators and professional historians. This desire prompted him to suggest comparing the information in textbooks written by educators to recent history written by historians concerning the same subjects.

Reddick (1934) suggested that researchers could assess how much recent history influenced textbooks by examining the sources in the chapters’ bibliographies. Other
researchers agreed that this method offered an appropriate way to find connections between recent scholarship and students’ textbooks (Feiner, 1993; Holt, 1995; Krug, 1970; Trecker, 1973). Reddick, for example, pointed to historian Charles Beard’s 1930s economic interpretation of US History. Beard theorized that the subjects of capitalism, money, and property rights could help to summarize most events in American history. Reddick hoped to see Beard’s economic theory influencing textbook descriptions of 19th century expansion and slavery, but he was disappointed to find that this inclusion of new material was not present in textbooks. Future authors of textbook analyses found similar disparities between current research and text information. By the 1960s and 1970s, movements for civil rights, women’s rights, and other changes in American society meant historians paid even closer attention to history textbooks and their improvement. In particular, they wanted to see better textbook treatments of African Americans, women, and other minorities as they combined their voices into a call for what became known as revisionist history to be included in students’ textbooks. The accepted American history narrative that was formed in the 19th century and upheld in the 20th simply did not serve large segments of the American population, and many scholars wanted to address this problem.

Mark M. Krug (1961) was among these revisionist historians who hoped to see American history textbooks enhanced with new and more accurate information. He focused on the issue of post-Civil War Reconstruction in order to ascertain what ways, if any, history was being “rewritten” to include newly completed historical research and interpretation in textbooks (Krug, 1961, p. 133). Like other researchers before him, Krug looked for biased
interpretations of history or omissions of information that might give the textbooks a more nuanced view of history. It is fair to acknowledge that Krug relied on his own interpretation of history in order to determine what he believed was missing from the narrative. However, like Reddick (1934), Krug used recent changes in historical writing and interpretation to guide his work. Krug (1961) studied three U.S. History books and found that none of them adequately reflected revisionist history of the decade. Instead, Krug found that authors used tones of sympathy for whites in the post-Civil War South. Textbook authors hinted that these whites were treated harshly by Radical Republicans who did not choose to honor what the “lenient” President Lincoln would have done had he lived through Reconstruction (Krug, 1961, p. 136). The Ku Klux Klan, on the other hand, was not nearly as radical as the Congressional Republicans, according to the textbooks. This group of people was simply trying to restore order to their home. These were revealing findings, especially considering that the students reading these texts were growing up in an age when the Ku Klux Klan had reorganized in the context of a refreshed Civil Rights Movement. Krug reminded readers of the important connection between current events, informed decision making, and historical knowledge. He suggested that white students in the 1960s would have a hard time grasping why they were witnessing sit-ins or attempts at desegregation of schools when they were armed only with the knowledge of African Americans that their textbooks provided. Krug (1961) charged that the textbooks gave the impression that the last time blacks had been even somewhat franchised was during Reconstruction, which had been a dismal failure. Krug
concluded his study with the hope that the revisionist history of the 1960s would inspire improvement in textbooks soon.

Approximately ten years after Mark Krug wrote this assessment of textbook treatments of Reconstruction, he again assessed textbooks for their treatments of slavery, Civil War, and Reconstruction. To complete this new assessment, Krug (1970) examined four popular U.S. history textbooks in order to check authors’ interpretations of slavery. He worked from the assumption that views on slavery were “morally important” enough that he should find inclusions of recent historical studies as well as clear condemnations of the 19th century institution (Krug, 1970, p. 298). Krug reported that he did find improved texts in 1970 when compared to the texts he analyzed in 1961. There was evidence of new historical interpretations as well as condemnations of maltreatment of African Americans. Yet, Krug suggested that textbook changes were simple additions more than they were full-scale revisions. He believed authors continued to portray African Americans as only slaves or victims. He advocated for a more balanced presentation of African Americans in which they were proactive members of society who worked within their community towards their freedom. Without this change in authors’ tones, Krug suggested that textbooks left students assuming that slavery began and ended as the white people in charge changed their views. Authors left readers to assume any changes in slavery that took place did so without any African Americans’ involvement. Krug also reminded readers that adjectives used to describe events and people in texts could be telling of author’s biases. For example, authors called John Brown, the abolitionist noted for his raid on Harper’s Ferry, Virginia, “extreme”
or “radical” (Krug, 1970, p. 307). These same authors gave Southern slaveowners who forbade overseers to whip their slaves a more sanitized description of “enlightened” (Krug, 1970, p. 307). Krug correctly anticipated that there would be a continued need to analyze textbooks in order to assess whether or not they were including the recent histories that dealt with social history and the history of groups who had been largely omitted from traditional textbook narratives.

Researchers continued to discuss the need for portraying African American culture more accurately and more from the perspectives of the actors, rather than the observers, of the culture (Genovese & Genovese, 2005; Perlstein, 2002). These researchers continued to examine how African American experiences during slavery and the Civil Rights movement were sometimes neglected or misrepresented in historical texts (Butler & Watson, 1984; Genovese & Genovese, 2005). Daniel Perlstein (2002) referenced this historical omission in his study of African American educators. He was intrigued with how early 20th century black teachers were able to teach their students pride in their own history using textbooks that had been authored by whites who seemed unwilling to treat race questions in history fairly. He illustrated some of the ways that African American leaders attempted to supplement students’ biased texts with additional documents. Leaders wrote their own texts or provided students with essays about heroes in African American culture, for example. Perlstein (2002) concluded that in light of authors continuing to present one-sided views of history, supplementing the text was one way African Americans coped. Ironically, black teachers continued to see the need to supplement their official textbooks despite the fact that
historians from the 1960s forward continued to call for amended and improved textbooks, particularly in the area of African American history.

John R. Sahli (1963) attempted to explain why African Americans might have felt the need to author their own, supplemental books and why publishers continued to resist change in the 20th century. He argued that on matters of race, slavery, and Civil War, the South had exercised such influence over textbook authoring and publishing that many books had been rendered almost useless. In other words, the South’s unwillingness to accurately deal with African American issues like slavery meant that students did not get a complete understanding of the 19th century. Instead, publishers needed authors to provide them with books that would avoid controversy and sell nationally. Sahli (1963) wanted to understand what type of books met these requirements. He examined geography books from early in the 19th century up to the 1960s. He found that books published after 1820 had more tentative treatments of slavery than ones printed before then. He found that prior to 1820, publishers were “brave” enough to include maps tracking anti-slavery movements, showing the way that the institution of slavery developed, or revealing the trade relationships that helped lead to the slave South (Sahli, 1963, p. 155). Sahli argued that these inclusions were less likely after 1820 because Southerners were feeling more defensive about their way of life. The U.S. Congress had just brokered the Missouri Compromise in 1820, and the debate that led to this agreement had revealed deep disagreements between the North and South about slavery and its expansion. From 1820 forward, the likelihood of Southern states’ purchasing textbooks meant that Northern textbook publishers hesitated to confront the issue of slavery. Sahli
expected his readers to take his word for textbook content without always providing evidence. However, his reminder that American history textbooks lacked a full treatment of certain subjects resonated with other researchers, especially as historians through the 1960s and 1970s continued to push for additions to the texts. These historians believed that African American history was one of many areas of history that needed to be improved.

Scholars noted that women’s history, like African American history, was often not treated in any significant manner in textbooks (Trecker, 1973; Weiler, 1988). Textbook authors seemed to prefer to continue to focus on the powerful, mostly male leaders of the past. In one study, Janice Law Trecker (1973) reviewed twelve American history textbooks. She divided history into headings such as the colonial period, the growth of federal government, and the Civil War. For each of these eras, Trecker looked for information authors included that directly related to women’s history. Trecker noted numerous omissions of women from the story of America’s history that, in her view, sometimes had more to do with space than bias. She reserved most of her consternation for the way that texts handled women’s issue in the current age. Trecker accused textbook authors of acting as if the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920 solved almost all problems related to women’s role in society. This act had granted women the right to vote, but Trecker took issue with authors’ implication that the achievement resolved all women’s issues in American history. She cautioned that this lack of in-depth analysis of women’s history painted an overly “rosy” picture of women in current society (Trecker, 1973, p. 137). Trecker (1973) concluded by reminding textbook authors that token additions of women’s history near the ends of the
chapter or in separate vignettes on the page did not get the job of revising the historical narrative done. This reminder could have been prophecy for what future textbook analyses would study. The recurring accusation that textbook authors merely added social history or minority history to the national narrative already present in American history textbooks continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s. By the 1990s, scholars questioned whether or not textbook additions had been successful in amending a national narrative to the point that there was room for debate or inquiry (Loewen, 1995; Nash, 1997). Scholars prior to this point seem to have believed that their first step was to get more new names, actors, and viewpoints into the story of history (Seller and Trusz, 1976).

Maxine Seller and Andrew Trusz (1976) advocated for the inclusion of history related to minority races and religions in their study of history textbook authors’ treatments of the American Revolution. Seller and Trusz (1976) conducted their study in 1976, noting that there would surely be new historical interpretations and compilations about the founding of the United States in light of the bicentennial celebrations of that year. Seller and Trusz (1976) found that in the two hundred years since the American Revolution, textbook histories still generally lacked a comprehensive treatment of things as common as the Declaration of Independence or the U.S. Constitution. What Seller and Trusz found especially lacking was authors’ willingness to deal with these documents’ potential flaws. Instead, they suggested, authors continued to offer a “Holy Scriptures” version of the U.S. Constitution that extolled the document more than it analyzed it (Seller & Trusz, 1976, p. 549). Textbook authors also tended to cover the fighting of the Revolutionary war in great detail while neglecting to
include very much social history. The textbook authors also did not do much to mitigate the idea that the war was inevitable. Each of these shortcomings of textbooks, Seller and Trusz suggested, meant that there was less space in books available for authors to deal with minority history, religious history, or recent revisionist history about the nation’s founders. They went on to suggest this conflict was a logical problem caused by adding information to textbooks without revising the information to which it was added. Seller and Trusz (1976) did not find factual error in the over fifteen junior high and high school textbooks they analyzed, but they did suggest that there were omissions of historical viewpoints and recent historical research. This finding was of little surprise to other researchers finding similar results (Anyon, 1979; Axtell, 1987; Cohen, 2008; Davis, 1996; Fitzgerald, 1979; Furstenberg, 2003; Justice, 2005; Loewen, 1995; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; Perlstein, 2002; Tatum, 1989).

Researchers throughout the 20th century continued to remind readers that textbook authors or publishers often slanted historical text in order to support their desired vision of history or current society (Anyon, 1979; Axtell, 1987; Cohen, 2008; Davis, 1996; Fitzgerald, 1979; Furstenberg, 2003; Justice, 2005; Loewen, 1995; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; Perlstein, 2002; Tatum, 1989). Frances Fitzgerald (1979) galvanized scholars who wanted to improve textbooks when she reported that U.S. History textbooks in the late 20th century continued to offer students a linear version of history in which America’s ultimate success was basically completed. In other words, authors left readers with the impression that American history had been a story of mostly flawless progress. For example, Fitzgerald
suggested that students read a version of American history that celebrated inventions like the cotton gin without analyzing what its use meant to the development of slavery in the American South. By 1979, the year of Fitzgerald’s study, many textbook authors were adding sections to their books to address social history, minority history, or scholars with opposing views on history. Yet, Fitzgerald reported that the basic American narrative of progress first formed during the 19th century was still intact. Textbooks in 20th century America continued to offer students a version of history leaning more towards highlighting national achievement rather than encouraging critical thinking about the successes and failures of the nation. Because of this reliance on providing a successful narrative, Fitzgerald concluded, there was little difference in 19th century and 20th century textbooks. Thanks to the work of revisionist scholars, 20th century textbooks merely had some new additions. Textbook authors continued to leave out parts of histories related to minorities or African Americans that could be too disturbing for students meant to learn pride in their country.

One year after Fitzgerald’s book, Barth and Shermis (1980) took her contention a step farther by suggesting that there was continuity between 19th century textbooks and contemporary ones in that both continued to be celebrations of “great men, great events, and a great destiny” (Barth & Shermis, 1980, p. 29). With the continued attention on textbook omissions and treatments of minority groups, the remainder of the 20th century saw more analyses of textbooks as researchers assessed ways authors might be changing the master narrative of American history. Many researchers continued to look for bias in the textbooks,
suggesting that the first step in amending textbooks would be achieved when authors
presented information more objectively.

Jean Anyon (1979) examined United States history textbooks in order to note any
biases against labor unions and other economic activists. She found that authors often
presented labor history in a way that favored business over American workers and activists.
This finding indicated that members of groups who subscribed to theories not accepted by
mainstream leaders could sometimes experience textbook bias even if they were members of
a majority race or ethnicity. Other scholars found that textbook bias resulted in limited
coverage of the histories of any people who lack political and social capital (Axtell, 1987;
Perlstein, 2002; Cohen, 2008; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002). This fact would explain why
African Americans, a group that historically lacked this capital, continued to struggle to see
their story fairly or adequately represented in textbooks.

Even into the 1980s, scholars of textbooks found that treatments of American slavery
continued to lack depth or adequate reflection of the revisionist history that they believed
should have influenced history books. Ratzlaff & Schick (1981), looking at college
textbooks in 1981, noted the difficulty of getting new information into history texts due to the
long trek the information had to make from the historian’s desk to the publisher’s pen. They
saw a dual problem. First, textbook publishers, haunted by the bottom line of profit in a
competitive industry, were tiring of trying to accommodate every new historical
interpretation. Second, by the 1980s, there was a burgeoning conservative movement whose
leaders touted the idea that education programs needed to get back to basics. Publishers
knew that leaders included textbooks in their agenda when they called for education to return to the way it used to be, presumably with a textbook American history narrative intact. Most educators and participants involved in textbook adoption preferred textbooks that continued to offer one authoritative interpretation rather than touching on controversy by offering multiple, conflicting interpretations of history.

Perhaps as a result of these trends in textbook authorship and publication, Ratzlaff & Schick (1981) found that college history textbooks continued to exhibit deficiencies related to slavery and other potentially controversial topics. The texts also varied greatly in terms of reading levels, hinting that publishers and authors focused more on offering the accepted thematic interpretations of history rather than making sure that they provided text on an appropriate reading level. Nevertheless, Ratzlaff & Schick (1981) took comfort in the fact that a textbook in 1981 read differently than one a few decades older. For example, readers enjoyed a wider variety of history in their texts. They were less likely to read as much political and diplomatic history in 1981 as they did in years past, while they might read more economic history. Ratzlaff and Schick (1981) criticized the ongoing absence of social history in the books. Still, their work added to others’ work showing that by the 1970s and 1980s, small amounts of change were slowly making their way into the textbooks (Krug, M., 1970; O’Neill, P.G., 1987; Ratzlaff & Schick, 1981; Trecker, J.L, 1973).

Unfortunately, many of the changes that researchers found in the 1980s textbooks continued to be surface-level ones that did little to undermine the major narrative of history that had been consistently evident in the books. For example, G. Patrick O’Neill (1987)
studied literature related to American Indians in American and Canadian history books over the span of twenty years. He found that there had been additions of information to the textbooks about Native Americans that put their history in a more positive light. However, O’Neill (1987) charged that these textbook additions did little to confront the overriding theme of Indians as victims in American history. He noted that textbook authors persisted in characterizing Indians as some combination of savage, uncivilized, or victimized. Particularly damaging to the image of American Indians was the constant inclusion of photographs of them in costumes portraying them as warlike savages. Textbook authors rarely addressed the source of the photographs, nor did they attempt to contextualize them in their text. O’Neill asserted that any attempts to enhance text about Native Americans with more balanced viewpoints failed when they were complemented with these stereotypical photographs. The dissonance between text additions extolling Indian virtue and pictures hinting at their violence meant that textbook authors still had a long way to go before their treatment of Native Americans could be considered multi-faceted or complete.

James Charles (1989) turned to children’s literature and textbooks from the 19th century for his research, which sought to find how North Carolina elementary textbooks tended to portray American Indians. He suggested that the authors of most textbooks he analyzed tended to stereotype all Native Americans into one of four categories, American Indians as Noble Savages, American Indians as Savage Savages, American Indians as Generic Indians, and American Indians as Living Fossils. Charles (1989) concluded that most of the North Carolina literature he studied portrayed American Indians as “savage
savages” (p. 6). This portrayal taught readers that the American Indians were uncivilized creatures who could not be helped due to their violent, untamable natures. Charles suggested that it was in the best interest of textbook authors and state leaders for students to have this view of Native Americans. Otherwise, Charles (1989) went on, students might have to face a part of their state’s history that would be less glamorous or require more introspection. Nineteenth century publishers would not sell many books by encouraging this kind of learning, he imagined. Lomawaima and McCarty (2002) argued that 20th and 21st century publishers were equally unlikely to publish books encouraging introspection about Native American history. These scholars compared contemporary textbooks and historical information in American classrooms to American Indian reservation classrooms. They suggested that Native Americans’ contributions to American history continued to be ignored in American history books. The idea that textbooks were not adequate until they thoughtfully treated all segments of American society clearly remained with scholars throughout the remainder of the 1990s and into the 21st century, as they continued to lead efforts to amend American history textbooks and their narratives.

Many researchers agreed that U.S. history textbooks were in need of supplements or reform. The challenge textbook writers needed to meet was that of fitting all the supplements into one textbook, particularly if they did not amend the older information. In 1973, Trecker had considered that textbook authors’ unwillingness to include women’s history in their narratives reflected the fact that white males still had most of the power. But even with this accusation, Trecker realized that another possibility was that future textbook authors would
have to struggle with the question of having enough space. With so many groups jockeying for due coverage in textbooks, just how thick was a student’s book going to get?

Patricia Nelson Limerick (1992) acknowledged the issue of revising textbooks while monitoring their size in an article in which she proposed that textbook authors spend more time discussing the Trans-Mississippi Western United States in American history textbooks. She found in her study that most history books stopped referring to the West as a sub-heading in history after the period of the 1890s. Limerick believed that even as late as 1992, textbooks disproportionately reflected the influence of historian Frederick Jackson Turner’s thesis. In this thesis, Turner suggested that the Western frontier was complete. He made this suggestion in 1893. Limerick (1992) accused textbook authors of taking Turner’s claim that the American West ceased to be a subject after the 1890s too literally. By accepting this thesis, authors missed the opportunity to highlight events in the Trans-Mississippi West in the 20th century. By neglecting to include this information, authors denied students the opportunity to understand recent history and politics in a large region of their nation, Limerick suggested.

For example, students could read that New Mexico housed the Los Alamos nuclear facility, or they could read that California was the most populous state by the 1960s. However, students did not read detailed analyses as to what developments or issues might have led to these events. Students also did not get the chance to examine the demographics of California’s growing population in history, which might have allowed them to connect the historical growth of the state to modern issues of overcrowded cities and immigration. These
kinds of omissions were particularly intolerant to Limerick because she believed that Eastern states received such a large amount of coverage in American history textbooks. The problem of space in textbooks could be solved, Limerick reasoned, if authors and publishers would simply be willing to condense and rewrite traditional history selections in order to make room for more current or relevant ones. Limerick (1992) understood that authors focused on the East through most of the 1800s, when the frontier was still growing and most of the population was located there. However, she did not believe that authors ever rectified this disparity between coverage of the East and West, even when they wrote about the 20th century when it would be more appropriate to do so. Limerick further showed that Turner’s thesis on the West had been disputed in historical scholarship, but she was disappointed to find that textbook authors did not seem to have consulted these new works in order to compose their descriptions of the American West (Limerick, 1992). Two major themes guided Limerick’s study. First, she noted that the main problem with textbook authors neglecting to fully cover a subject like the Trans-Mississippi West in their writing was that students could not make the important connection between current issues and history. Second, Limerick believed that what was missing from textbooks could be as telling as what was printed in them. Both of these ideas were present in other studies throughout the 1990s (Holt, 1995; Loewen, 1995, Salvucci, 1991).

In a clear statement of the importance of current events and politics to textbook construction, Linda K. Salvucci (1991) noted that the subject of Mexico, its people, or Mexican-Americans did not appear often in American history textbooks. Salvucci (1991)
examined history textbooks in Texas. She chose this state because it borders Mexico and because it heavily influenced textbook publishing due to its large population and its textbook adoption plan. The state’s policy in 1991 dictated that a state appointed committee would choose books for all public schools in Texas to use. This policy meant that a committee could decide a success or failure of a textbook due to its decision to use it or not. In the ten textbooks that Salvucci studied, she found problems of omission as well as problems with authors’ implications. For example, Salvucci (1991) looked at textbook treatment of “pre-Conquest America and Spanish Colonialism” (p. 206). She argued that life in Mexico before 1492 barely existed as far as textbook authors were concerned. Not only was this an omission of valid information, Salvucci noted, but it also implied to impressionable students that anything of significance in the Americas began only after European presence became a reality. Salvucci accused lobbyists and other political groups of disproportionately influencing textbook content. She argued that these societal forces often block any attempts to substantially change accepted historical narratives. She offered an example in Texas in which a single person believed that a book had too much of a “feminist perspective” (Salvucci, 1991, p. 215). This book ultimately did not make it to the approved list of books in Texas. While one cannot be sure exactly which factors helped to influence policymakers’ decision, Salvucci wondered how much the threat of controversy influenced them. Surprisingly, Salvucci did not advocate trying to change the realities of textbook publishing. Instead, she concluded her study by suggesting that if lobbying textbook publishers gets
results, then Mexican Americans and other groups omitted from the American narrative should organize and lobby.

Unfortunately for Salvucci and her hopes of lobbying for textbook change, some researchers suggested that lobbying textbook publishers continued to bring only token success where textbook authors would add to, but not revise, a traditional historical narrative already in place (Feiner, 1993, Loewen, 1995; Weiler, 1988). A look at college economics books from 1984 to 1991 revealed that treatment of minorities and women had only marginally improved since the 1970s feminist movement that had produced leaders pushing for textbook changes (Feiner, 1993). Susan Feiner (1993) found that even when textbooks had additions of information to acknowledge changed societal views on women and minorities, photographs of women in traditional roles and of African-American sharecropping families undermined the changed text. Feiner also lamented the absence of updated bibliographies that might direct students to more recently written sources about economics. She reminded readers that the information in textbooks continued to hold “considerable importance” in influencing students’ future viewpoints about society (Feiner, 1993, p. 152). Without updates of text bibliographies or additions of updated text, Feiner argued, students could be shaped by erroneous or biased information. Feiner (1993) was particularly disappointed in her findings since she was analyzing the same textbooks she and a colleague had analyzed for a study in 1987. Historical knowledge and interpretation had changed by the 1990s, but analyses suggested that the textbooks were among the last to
illustrate it. Researchers continued to focus on amounts of unrevised bias in history textbooks (Holt, 1995; Loewen, 1995).

One of the better known studies on bias in American history textbooks came from James Loewen (1995). He confirmed that textbooks would probably continue to be the last to report new historical interpretations as long as authors continued in their well established habits of forsaking the telling of all sides of history in order to support one accepted American narrative. Loewen noted that American high school students disliked history because it was boring. He suggested that the textbook narratives students heard throughout their education that focused only on the same stories of great men and great successes in history to which many could not relate were to blame for boring students. History textbooks in the 1990s continued to be caught between two competing interests of promoting “inquiry” and indoctrinating “blind patriotism” in students (Loewen, 1995, p. 19). Loewen found in his textbook analysis of American history textbooks that the need to indoctrinate students seemed to motivate authors more than the need to promote student inquiry. He found an historical narrative touting themes of American progress with few setbacks and citing American heroes with virtually no flaws. For example, students read about Helen Keller’s overcoming her handicaps to become an advocate for others. They read about President Woodrow Wilson’s leading the country through World War One. Omitted from this storytelling was that the same Helen Keller who advocated for the handicapped was a socialist, or that the same Woodrow Wilson who led a nation through war was a racist. Loewen (1995) provided numerous examples of authors either omitting or misrepresenting
information in textbooks. He believed they censored information because a more complete version of events could take away from their aim of instilling citizenship and patriotism. Loewen predicted that authors might add token additions of social history intermittently in the text, but significant textbook change would continue to be slow to come because those with power and influence in society had not changed their vision for what future citizens should be reading.

Two years after Loewen’s book, Thomas Holt (1995) agreed that textbook revision was happening too slowly, although he was able to find some evidence for change. He looked at seven college history books in order to assess authors’ treatment of Reconstruction. He found evidence that they had made some changes in their writing about this subject since researchers had examined textbooks earlier in the 20th century. Both Reddick (1934) and Krug (1961) had complained that textbook authors portrayed freed blacks as irresponsible and the South as victims of Northern corruption and aggression. Holt (1993) acknowledged that textbooks had come a long way since using such biased adjectives and descriptions of Reconstruction. He found that textbooks had additions of both African-American and women’s history. Holt also applauded the fact that textbooks included social history that focused on the daily lives of citizens. Previous textbook authors had focused only on those people with political power in society (Holt, 1993). In terms of historical interpretation, Holt saw evidence of recent historical work in the textbook authors’ acknowledgment that Reconstruction was an aberration from the norm of racism, segregation, and denials of civil rights that occurred both before and after it. He appreciated efforts by some textbook authors
to help students understand the significance of Reconstruction. Still, Holt felt that by adding this information without necessarily revamping the entire historical narrative in books, textbook authors still failed to give adequate explanation for why Reconstruction ended, why the North lost interest in the causes of the period, or exactly how multiple forces converged in order for Reconstruction to end as it did. Holt (1993) illustrated that some textbook authors had made progress towards updating their writing, but he suggested that more attempts at correcting bias or amending narratives were necessary. The theme that textbook authors had made some progress in amending information but needed to offer evidence of much more progress guided future studies of textbooks (Chaplin, 2003; Kolchin, 1998).

Peter Kolchin (1998) examined textbook treatments of slavery in eight American history survey books and found results similar to Holt’s. Kolchin (1998) found that textbook authors had made progress in their inclusion of revisionist historical scholarship but needed to do more. While Sahli (1963) had noted the absence of changed views on slavery in history texts, Kolchin (1998) found added information on the development of slavery as well as slave culture. Despite these additions, Kolchin argued that authors still did not properly contextualize the subject of slavery. Authors gave the subject few mentions until they wrote of the Civil War, which gave students the erroneous impression that slavery did not become a major issue for most Americans until the 1860s. Particularly unsettling to Kolchin were errors in textbooks such as misspelled names and the listing of incorrect slave life expectancies. He found these errors to be evident of a high stakes publishing world in which the need to churn out new editions of books overrode the need to spend more time fact
checking. Kolchin (1998) hypothesized that this situation explained why authors had made less progress updating books than he would have expected. He found the bibliography of additional reading to be lacking in current historical scholarship, an omission that Feiner (1993) had noted in her research as well. Publishers and authors still seemed to be more focused on providing students with an American narrative than they were with updating textbook bibliographies or thematic interpretations of history.

Throughout both the 19th and 20th centuries, textbooks generally only offered students a socially accepted narrative of their nation’s history (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991; Apple, 1992; Fitzgerald, 1979; Gordin, Hunt & Weiler, 1987; Loewen, 1995, Salvucci, 1991). Researchers continued to connect disputes over textbooks, omissions of information in the books, or changed information in textbooks to political goals (Apple, 1992; Gordon, Hunt, & Weiler, 1987; Loewen, 1995). Linda Gordon, David Hunter, and Peter Weiler (1987) suggested that the reason that textbooks reflected only a few amendments to their basic structure was authors’ unwillingness to stray too far from an accepted narrative. They made this point clear with the title of their article: “History as indoctrination” (Gordon, Hunter, & Weiler, 1987). The scholars focused their attention on a world history book, Palmer and Colton’s *History of the Modern World*. They found that the book lacked the viewpoints of anyone in Western Civilization other than the dominant winners in history. Information about the folks who Gordon, Hunter, and Weiler believed worked to build Western European society was entirely ignored. For example, Gordon, Hunter, and Weiler found that authors of the textbook were motivated by a need to create unwavering support for capitalism. This
need overrode textbook authors’ attempt to give capitalism a more balanced viewpoint that acknowledged how some workers were negatively affected by capitalistic policies. Gordon, Hunter, and Weiler (1987) concluded that authors continued to offer overly positive portrayals of history to students in order to create patriotic citizens. Publishers and authors tried to avoid sharing negative parts of history lest they take away from the overall goal of instilling patriotism in their readers. They were doing their best to keep political controversy and education separate.

Michael W. Apple (1992) disagreed that it was possible to separate education from politics. He suggested that textbooks were always political texts that revealed the cultural struggles of the time in which they were written as well as the power relationships that defined the era. Apple advised researchers that noting omissions and biases in textbooks was only part of the needed analysis of students’ literature. He noted that textbooks were essentially society’s letters to their young about the group’s past and future. Thus, researchers should carefully analyze content in the texts in order to understand who had political or social capital in a society and what they wanted their youth to learn. Apple explained that when groups in society collided about textbook content, the disagreement stemmed from their divergent views on society’s past, present, and future. In essence, dissenting groups could not agree on what their letter to the youth should actually say. Apple offered an example in which this difference led to conflict in Kanawha County, West Virginia in 1974. Schools in this region witnessed violence between groups who disagreed over the use of certain textbooks. The textbooks in question included sections with titles like
“sexual politics” or “the true story of how the West was won” (Apple, 1992, p. 4). A group in opposition found the books’ contents to be objectionable due to their including what the group deemed as filthy content and unpatriotic themes. Although the violence eventually ended and the Board of Education ultimately approved the controversial books, many schools in West Virginia continued to use older textbooks. In this case, Apple noted, members in society saw a connection between what students read in their textbooks and current politics. Even with publishers trying to avoid controversies over textbooks in order to sell more books, Apple argued that it was not uncommon for textbook content to stir controversy.

In another example of the controversies that textbooks could sometimes encourage, Apple (1992) pointed to California in the early 1990s. Here, parents and other groups attacked an elementary textbook for its lack of patriotism and inclusion of witchcraft, much to the dismay of textbook publishers. Authors of the book had included stories about witches and goblins meant to encourage students’ imaginations, but the inclusion led some to charge that authors were promoting a pagan religion. Again, culture, politics, and education collided when educators attempted to choose a textbook. Apple reiterated that historians had been focused only on how textbooks could be improved with new historical evidence and viewpoints, updated bibliographies, or corrected errors. He encouraged researchers to look for the ways that textbook authors created an image of society. Apple’s examples illustrated that if the image that authors created with their writing did not seem positive or patriotic enough to parents or special interest groups, they could expect conflict and possible boycotting of the book. He pointed out that many times throughout U.S. history, textbooks
had became an issue because of community reaction to its content, regardless of whether or not authors had updated textbook information. Conflict hinged more on historical interpretations presented in the text than factual errors or omissions. This framework meant that authors often attempted to avoid conflict. In such a setting, the American narrative, largely absent controversial or current issues, continued generally unrevised.

Joyce E. Chaplin (2003) noted that textbook narratives had changed little in their continued overall portrayal of American history as exceptional to the rest of the world. She studied American history textbooks and concluded that writers encouraged students to think of the history as unprecedented and sometimes miraculous. Chaplin (2003) offered the example of slavery to illustrate the ways that authors portrayed American history as exceptional. She noted that students often grappled with the paradox of American slavery and American liberty when they read about the founding of the United States. Yet most textbook authors stressed the uniqueness of this paradox and failed to discuss how these conflicts over slavery in the United States compared to slavery in South America, for example. Chaplin advocated for a more global treatment of American history that sees more parallels with other nations’ histories and tries less to portray American history as exceptional from all other countries. Chaplin acknowledged the same problem that Apple (1992) had noted in his study. Textbook controversies often revealed that when textbook publishers moved away from American exceptionalism in their writing, lobbyist groups accused them of being unpatriotic (Apple, 1992; Chaplin, 2003; Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen,
1995). This kind of textbook controversy had already taken place on a national stage a decade before Chaplin’s research.

In the 1990s, leaders at the US Department of Education desired to write new standards for social studies, which included the subject of American history. UCLA professor Gary Nash (1997) led a group of teachers and historians who wrote a new history textbook as well as new national standards to coincide with it. It was soon apparent that even agreeing on history standards could become a volatile political issue. National social studies standards needed to express what students should glean from their history courses. Nash’s committee had attempted to define what kind of history learning would best guide a future good citizen, but not everyone agreed with Nash over the best way to achieve these goals. In an editorial in the *Wall Street Journal*, former conservative Department of Education leader Lynne Cheney (1994) accused the textbook authors of ending history as Americans had known it. She noted that the book Nash’s group authored had little to no mention of the US Constitution or George Washington. Instead, authors included celebratory prose reserved for all nations except the United States, Cheney contended. Both sides agreed that history class should help to train a nation’s youth, and both agreed that the textbook controversy hinged on the question of how best to accomplish this ideal. They could not agree on what kind of information was best to share with students. Nash (1997) wondered, could students know about the horrors of Ku Klux Klan action or slavery and still love their country? Or were they required to read only about the positive traits of George Washington to achieve this love of country? These questions continued to plague textbook publishers, educators, and
historians. A look at history supports the idea that textbooks have always been important to
education and potentially explosive to the politics surrounding the issue of schooling.

An overview of textbook studies of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries substantiates the
claim that textbook content has changed over time. A student in the 21st century comparing
their text to a student in the 19th would find numerous differences. Yet, a recurring theme
among scholars examining the work of textbook authors is that authors often attempted to use
their writing to provide students with a certain historical narrative about society. While
change meant adding information, correcting errors, amending stereotypes, or including
recent historical scholarship, the idea that textbooks should offer students a positive
viewpoint on their history remained. The basic narrative in textbooks changed less than it
might first appear. Evidence suggests more continuity in textbook information than change.
In fact, a look at textbook history shows that when people believed that the idea of their
region or nation being exceptional was threatened by tones or information in textbooks, there
was often some sort of controversy (Apple, 1992; Chaplin, 2003; Fitzgerald, 1979; Gordon,
Hunt, & Weiler, 1987; Loewen, 1995). The suggestion that textbook authors often provided
an historical narrative meant to instill students’ loyalty also appears in studies that look at
North Carolina textbooks. Since textbook changes in North Carolina cannot be separated
from the political, economic, or societal context in which they occurred, this review will now
give a brief overview of the state’s history as it relates to education in the American South.
19th century North Carolina: Support for Public Schools as a Tool for Controlled Social Advancement

Historians suggest that the story of North Carolina public education in the 19th century could not begin until leaders convinced the general populace that public education was a good idea (Butler & Watson, 1984; Harris, 2008; Hoyt, 1914; Smith, 1888). Most children received little to no education in the first few decades of the 1800s. In fact, North Carolina Governor Hutchins G. Burton expressed his belief that it was harder for students to receive primary education during his administration in 1826 than it had been during the 1770s, when churches or private institutions offered education (Powell, 1989). According to Hoyt (1914), most North Carolinians did not support government provided schools. Scholars show that rural North Carolinians complained about giving the state government power to require school attendance, or they noted that students who intended to work on farms their entire lives required no advanced education (Jarrett, 1967; Powell, 1989). As long as students could read the Bible, many families concluded, there was no need for further reading instruction. Besides, parents noted that school leaders would be choosing students’ reading material instead of them, and they did not approve of this shift in authority.

North Carolina’s general population growth continued to lag or remain stagnant, as many of the talented young adults left the state to pursue their education or career goals. Genovese & Genovese (2005) point out that many of those who remained in North Carolina were middle-class farmers who sometimes realized that they could do better financially if they were not competing with slaves whose inexperienced labor made rich planters unlikely
to hire poor to middle-class whites. This stagnant labor condition meant that North Carolina’s leaders needed a way to encourage talented individuals and investors to remain in the state. Lest this free public education become a threat to social stability, they also needed to teach the next generations to uphold the social norms and morals of society – especially regarding slavery and race relations. This need to improve the state, encourage pride in its history, and protect its customs allowed the public education movement to gain support. 
Whitescarver (2002) suggests that where leaders had sensed a threat in free education before, they now saw the potential good of it. These leaders realized that public education would not necessarily have to lead to students’ questioning traditions and norms in their society. Educational institutions did not have to introduce radical change. Instead, education could actually help to maintain traditions and norms by training future citizens to appreciate and uphold their state’s customs. As a result of these advocates for public education, in 1839, leaders in North Carolina instituted a system of state public schools, although it took until the 1850s for the system to become strong.

By the end of the Civil War, the state that had once been nicknamed the Rip Van Winkle state because of its stagnant growth and progress made concerted efforts to modernize. In this changed world, citizens of the state counted on public schools to teach their children important knowledge and morals for the changed, post-Civil War and Reconstruction world in which they would live. There seemed to be something in the plan benefitting each participant. Educators gained the opportunity to shape the thoughts and beliefs of the coming generations of North Carolina citizens. Families, in a time when so
many changes were happening so quickly in what used to be a quiet state, found themselves less intimidated by the growth of state power that would accompany a public school system. Instead, they placed their hope in a state education system that might restore order and maintain tradition in a society that had experienced so much upheaval.

Researchers have found that in this social context, North Carolina’s political leaders could count on public education’s ensuring a future populace loyal to their state and its traditions (Butler & Watson, 1984; Carroll, 1986; Jarrett, 1964; Powell, 1989; Smith, 1888; Whitescarver, 2002). This security allowed leaders to oversee internal improvements to the state, unthreatened by progress’s potential upheaval of societal mores. By the end of the 19th century, North Carolinians elected Charles Aycock as their governor. Aycock became known in the state’s history as the “education governor” (Chafe, 1984; Powell, 1989). Other Southern states soon looked to North Carolina as a leader in education. This was partly due to the work of North Carolina leaders like Archibald Murphy and Calvin Wiley. These leaders became school superintendents, textbook authors, advocates, and trainers of future teachers in order to build North Carolina’s successful school system. As these leaders made attempts to modernize North Carolina economically and socially, they directly connected education to attempts to improve the state. Researchers point out the irony that public education ensured progress of the state just as it simultaneously promised to teach citizens to honor history, to uphold traditions, and to protect society’s status quos (Carroll, 1986; Powell, 1989; Whitescarver, 2002). Aycock’s election and North Carolina’s reputation in 1900 as a leader in education set the tone for future executive leadership in the state. Never
again would North Carolina governors decry the absence of primary education, as Governor Burton had in 1826. Whatever hesitation North Carolinians originally felt about the public school movement, the institution became a constant in the state’s infrastructure.

Despite the remarkable growth of North Carolina’s public schools during the latter half of the 19th century, not everyone received the same education in North Carolina. Since political and education leaders wanted public education to benefit them and their society the most, they had control of who got educated. Education was meant to be the great equalizer among students, the hope promised to common families of North Carolina that their children, not just the children of the rich, had opportunities available to them. But Nix (1993) noted that this equalization did not necessarily apply in the same way to the African American population of North Carolina. In fact, the ambivalence leaders had towards this population shows how the education system of North Carolina might be considered a leader among Southern states on the one hand, and a preserver of what became an official program of segregation on the other. The same Governor Aycock who earned the name education governor delivered a speech in 1903 stating that he was proud of his state for solving what he called the negro problem (“Negro Problem Solved”, 1903). He meant that North Carolina had found a peaceful way to institute Jim Crow segregation laws while at the same time generally avoiding racial violence. Aycock and leaders like him only became interested in educating both black and white students in North Carolina after segregation had ensured that power structures and unspoken rules about interactions between the races were clear. A conservative campaign with a platform of white supremacy as well as a coup against
interracial government in the Wilmington race riot of 1898 had secured leaders’ position of powers and ensuing influence over North Carolina education.

Not unlike the political leaders in North Carolina, textbook authors were equally ambivalent when it came to race relations. State superintendent and textbook author Calvin Wiley (1859) wrote a book prior to the Civil War in which he called for an extension of the areas of slavery. On the other hand, he also expressed concern for the condition of black schools in North Carolina when he was State Superintendent. The preface to Wiley’s first North Carolina history textbook was written by Weldon Edwards, a man who later presided over the convention that officially took North Carolina out of the Union prior to the Civil War. Yet William Holden, a leader who had been against secession, gave Wiley a book endorsement. Scholars suggest that, regardless of one’s specific political beliefs regarding race, educational growth and reform in North Carolina applied to white students destined to run society (Carroll, 1986; Whitescarver, 2002). This reality meant that African American students had completely different educational experiences in the 19th century. There were no legal schools for African Americans during slavery, and they attended segregated ones well into the 20th century. Leaders like Calvin Wiley were motivated by their desire to make sure North Carolina’s students learned appropriate visions of their society and its hierarchical rules. Researchers conclude that Wiley and other leaders like Governor Aycock were in favor of African American education, earning them reputation as moderates when it came to race relations in their state, but their programs resulted in vastly inferior systems for African Americans (Cell, 1982; Chafe, 1980, Ford, 1964).
It must be noted that not all whites agreed with the viewpoints of Aycock or Wiley regarding slavery or society’s status quo, and not everyone in the state agreed with reformers’ educational goals. For example, writer Hinton Rowan Helper (1857) authored a book prior to the Civil War in which he called slavery a curse on the South and its progress. It was not a moral crisis over slavery that inspired Helper’s book, but a realization that North Carolina and the South would never reach its full potential economically unless planters ceased to rely on slave labor, since it kept poor whites from gaining jobs held by slaves. Helper questioned these economic methods in his state more than he questioned the treatment of African Americans, but he disagreed with an education meant to teach students to respect and uphold slavery. Regardless of Helper’s opposing viewpoints, evidence suggests that his ideas were not the ones that leaders disseminated in schools or society. In contrast, superintendent Calvin Wiley’s ideas were widely disseminated. Leaders censored Helper’s book while recommending Wiley’s history books for public school students since they celebrated North Carolina’s history without overly questioning it. This early conflict illustrates that North Carolina may have experienced remarkable change by the end of the 19th century, but it was a change that leaders wanted to control and to allow to go only so far.

**North Carolina’s Social Advancement and Education Protects the Status Quo**

North Carolina’s public education progressed unevenly in the 19th century. In the beginning, educators struggled to convince North Carolinians that there was a need for public education. The state had barely answered this need with a working public education system when the Civil War disrupted life in the South. Many researchers look to Reconstruction,
Redemption and the end of the 19th century to assess North Carolina education, because this is the time period when the public education system for which the state became known was formed (Butler & Watson, 1984; Chafe, 1980; Postel, 2007; Powell, 1989). Charles Postel (2007) studied the Southern Populist Party, a third party that threatened entrenched Southern Democrats. Some historians think of the Populist Party as one born of economic woes, but Postel noted that leaders of the North Carolina Populist Party directly connected their economic and educational needs (Brevel, 2004; Hild, 2007). Populists in North Carolina were a new political party whose foundation was the belief that none of the main political parties were looking out for the common man, the middle-class man, or the poor farmer. This group worked across race and ethnicity divisions, believing that class divisions hurt workers more than racial ones. In this political context, populists noted that North Carolina needed improvement. They specifically called for new textbooks and educational materials that adequately reflected new economic and social viewpoints held by populists instead of traditional ones that sought to uphold economic and social status quo of members of the dominant, privileged class. Researchers suggest populists were correct that textbook production and school growth were starting to slow by the early 1870s as the needs of farming or concerns about race mixing in schools controlled by Northern leaders of Reconstruction in North Carolina led to lax school attendance (Butler & Watson, 1984; Nix, 1993; Powell, 1989). However, North Carolinians were unwilling to implement changes or revive education on suggestions from a group of people many believed were upsetting racial peace and social expectations in the state. Due to this social context, Postel (2007)
concluded that educational leadership in the New South came from somewhere other than this new political party.

Catherine Bishir (2000) suggested that leadership of public education eventually came from a more conservative group seeking to restore and protect the status quo that populists had threatened. This group built North Carolina public education in the final years of the 19th century. Bishir wrote that these leaders “set about codifying a lasting version of the state’s history that tied Old South to new, interweaving old family heritage, Anglo-Saxon supremacy, and military and political heroism,” (Bishir, 2000, p. 148). Bishir contended that after the Civil War and the resulting end to the Old South way of life, leaders needed to simultaneously reconstruct students’ memories of the Confederacy and prepare them for the future. To do so, textbook authors needed to construct positive versions of the state’s history and minimize issues leading to racial controversy. They accomplished this goal by praising North Carolina’s leaders for successfully leading the state through trying times, hinting that citizens who promoted the mixing of races or the questioning of society’s unspoken rules did not fully appreciate the peacefulness and advantages of living in their state. Authors also often ignored how African Americans might have been negatively affected by circumstances in the past or present. For African Americans, issues about education were so minimized that leaders and textbook authors gave them almost no attention at all. Researchers interested in black students’ experiences in school had to conduct separate studies altogether.

Leaving other researchers to address larger themes about African American education in North Carolina, Mary Nix (1993) offered a more focused view of education in the state.
Nix considered education of African Americans in one rural community in North Carolina through the 19th century. She found that both whites and blacks were apt to either justify or simply deny the problems that their educational system had. Neither group liked to be reminded of the unspoken rules that educational segregation enforced. Nix (1993) concluded that African Americans were proactive in securing their educations. However, the model education system of North Carolina that white leaders lauded definitely did not apply to African Americans. She also noted that this same education system was one that continued to uphold and instill segregation in future generations. Nix was not the only researcher to examine the connections between education and race or to remind readers of the importance of textbooks in solidifying this connection.

Michael O’Brien (2003) studied education in the American South and found that education served a specific purpose in this region. He agreed with Nix that particularly after the Civil War, education was increasingly tied to race. In the book Conjectures of orders (2003), O’Brien looked specifically at intellectual life in the South by studying popular books educators used in schools from the university level down to the elementary. O’Brien (2003) found recurring themes of race and protection of societal norms in Southern textbooks. He suggested that textbook authors played a role in the connection between social stability and education. In other words, authors wrote books in which they presented Northerners who worked with freed slaves during Reconstruction as either corrupt or misinformed, white Southerners as innocent victims of a nation’s turning on a region’s way of life, and African Americans as a race in need of whites’ supervision.
Despite North Carolina’s membership in the Confederacy, some North Carolina historians have attempted to highlight ways in which the state’s history was different or exceptional from the rest of the South, particularly when it came to the history of race relations (Chafe, 1980; Powell, 1989; Tyson, 2004). Some historians suggest that when it came to violence between blacks and whites, the state of North Carolina was more moderate than other Southern states (Cell, 1982; Chafe, 1980). Whitescarver (2002) suggested that textbook author Wiley (1851) was milder in his treatment of race issues than other Southern authors of his time period. Whitescarver concluded that both Wiley and leaders of North Carolina were conscious in their attempts to create a reputation of moderation to the extent that Wiley attempted to both exercise moderation and illustrate its use by leaders throughout North Carolina’s history. Additional scholars agree with Whitescarver’s (2002) contention that North Carolina textbook information itself reinforced the idea that the state enjoyed moderation, especially regarding race and politics related to race issues (Cell, 1982; Powell, 1989; Tyson, 2004). The idea that textbook authors often look for ways to present the region’s history about which they write as exceptional is one that previously mentioned scholars found (Apple, 1992; Chaplin, 2003). In the case of North Carolina history textbooks, researchers suggest that authors wanted to present the state as exceptional to other Southern states when it came to race questions (Chafe, 1980; Christensen, 2008; Powell, 1989; Tyson, 2004). Yet as Apple (1992) and Chaplin (2003) found in their analyses of general American history textbooks, the label of exceptional for a region’s history, while
aiding in the goals of instilling patriotism for a region in citizens, may or may not be completely accurate.

There is evidence that North Carolina’s history matched with that of the general American South in terms of race, politics, and education. Nineteenth century North Carolina struggled as the state made attempts to modernize in the context of race, slavery, war, and upheaval. Historians have suggested that 19th century North Carolina can be divided in half, using the Civil War as the dividing line (Butler & Watson, 1984; Powell, 1989). History up to secession and Civil War included debates over the role of state government in personal lives, debates over public education and other state led internal improvements, debates over race or class issues, and debates surrounding the institution of slavery. As Postel (2007) pointed out, in the post-Civil War history of North Carolina, reconstruction, segregation, and reform served as context for educational growth or change in North Carolina. In this context, William Powell (1989) explained that the resistance to public education in North Carolina has to be viewed as resistance to any kind of change to the status quo. This status quo prior to the Civil War supported slavery, white planter society, and race divisions. After the war, it supported the continued leadership and placement of power in the hands of former planters who were already accustomed to being the upper social class with power in society. Such a framework existed throughout the entire American South, and North Carolina was no exception.

North Carolina’s State Superintendent of education Calvin Wiley’s and others’ efforts to improve education were guided by the belief that schools were meant to support the status
quo by teaching students the importance of society’s divisions and rules. This need to maintain society’s status quo especially when it came to relations between races helps to explain why researchers found differing educational experiences for black and white students in North Carolina and the South (Nix, 1993; O’Brien, 2003, Postel, 2007). Yet by the turn of the 20th century, North Carolina held a reputation and a self-image of being a leader in the South, especially in the areas of civil rights and education (Helper, 1857; New York Times, 1903). North Carolina’s leaders stressed the ways in which their state differed from other Southern states, such as those located in the Deep South (Chafe, 1980). Despite the similarities between North Carolina and the rest of the South, many observers focused on the differences (Chafe, 1980; Tyson, 2004). Observers could easily find reasons to compare and to contrast North Carolina and the rest of the South, which explains why Christensen (2008) suggested that politics and social norms in North Carolina are paradoxical. On the one hand, researchers acknowledge that Calvin Wiley deserves credit for tending to both black and white schools, avoiding too much discussion of slavery and secession, or for encouraging good treatment of slaves (Cell, 1982; Chafe, 1980; Christensen, 2008; Tyson, 2004; Whitescarver, 2002). On the other hand, Wiley’s implicit acceptance of slavery and its required racial divisions makes his views on race similar to authors in other Southern states. Many scholars looking at education or textbooks in North Carolina have noted authors’ need to present North Carolina as exceptional in race relations, despite the state’s similarities to other slave states (Carroll, 1986; Ford, 1964; Whitescarver, 2002). North Carolinian leaders
themselves were likely to focus on these differences, since they liked the idea of their state being one of a kind, exceptional in relation to all other Southern states.

By the end of the 19th century and well into the 20th, Southern leaders often offered the state of North Carolina as a good example of a strong and progressing region. The state was thought to have defied the expectations of Northerners because leaders appeared to have less stringent or violent racial views than other Southern leaders, and they had a growing education program. According to one researcher, educators occasionally compared North Carolina Superintendent Calvin Wiley to noted educational leaders such as Horace Mann (Jarrett, 1964). The question remains as to just how North Carolinians’ educational experiences or history of race relations compare to other places in the South. Some historians have suggested that North Carolina leaders distinguished themselves from other Deep South states only in their methods (Chafe, 1980; Tyson, 2004). The results of this kind of leadership meant that North Carolina could appear to be a moderate state while still achieving similar results as Southern states that were considered by outside observers to be more extreme in their traditions. Without aligning with the exact lifestyles and ways of either the North or the rest of the South, North Carolina’s leaders could portray the state both in history and in contemporary times as one existing between a world of extreme industrialism, abolitionism, and urbanism on the one hand, and one of extreme racism or backwardness on the other. While the state’s history usually followed that of the rest of the Southern region, leaders suggested that North Carolina was often swept along with Southern trends even though the state was different. In this context, leaders’ concern for the education
of African American North Carolinians would seem to be a moderate viewpoint setting them
apart from other Southern leaders. In his study of North Carolina’s educational history, Coon
(1915) pointed out that leaders felt free to express this concern only after state law had
mandate segregated schools for blacks and whites. Overviews of North Carolina history
written late in the 20th century continued to reflect this idea of North Carolina’s being a state
less entrenched in extremism than Deep South states even while acknowledging that life in
the state often differed little than life in any other Southern state (Butler & Watson, 1984,
Celeski & Tyson, 1998; Chafe, 1980; Powell, 1989).

For example, Powell, writing overviews of North Carolina history, presented the state
as an “unwilling Hercules” in secession and Civil War (Powell, 1989, p. 114). He also
presented North Carolina as a place that necessarily but peacefully eased into Jim Crow after
Reconstruction’s end. North Carolinians were sometimes begrudging participants in these
events because compared to other Southern states, there were fewer slaves in the state, fewer
problems with slavery before the war, and less civil rights disputes after it, Powell (1989)
continued. Yet North Carolina’s leaders frequently achieved the racial peace they bragged
about partly due to their threats of violence against blacks who might threaten this peace by
attempting to change the norms of inequality in society. Leaders in North Carolina often
copied most of the slave codes that the bordering states of Virginia or South Carolina passed.
Given this reality, North Carolina textbook authors were challenged to both present the
state’s history of moderation and uphold similar, shared Southern values and traditions in
their writings (Whitescarver, 2002).
Timothy Tyson (2004) suggested that threats of violence comparable to what one found in other Southern states rested just under the surface of North Carolina’s purported moderation in race relations. He pointed to the Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 as a prime illustration of how such a framework existed. This conflict ignited after Alexander Manly (1898), a man of mixed race who would have been considered black by North Carolinians, wrote an editorial in a Wilmington newspaper in 1898 in which he suggested that black men were often erroneously accused of raping white women because of society’s inability to consider consensual relationships between black men and white women. North Carolina Democrats in 1898 needed a way to get elected over the more diverse Populist political party, with its less stringent divisions among race and class lines. Leaders used the newspaper editorial to fan the flames of racism and fear in order to secure their election and subsequent conservative leadership. These events led to a riot in which there was essentially a coup against Wilmington’s mixed-race city government and an unknown number of blacks were killed. Ultimately, the rebellion abated, Democrats gained their leadership positions in the state, and the issue of race took a back seat to leaders’ concerns for a time. After the bloody Wilmington race riot frightened enough African Americans into submission, the governor, education governor Charles Aycock, made a speech in which he applauded the happy Negroes in his state (New York Times, 1903). This example suggests that the state of North Carolina was not as moderate regarding race when compared to other Southern states, despite what historians and leaders originally portrayed.
Tyson (2004) concluded that the growing education movement lauded by observers of North Carolina encouraged student loyalty to a region in which politics had produced a race riot followed by leaders’ bragging about racial stability. The fact still remains that North Carolina was seen as a leader in areas like education, partly due to the perceived link between the state’s progress and its moderation in areas like race relations. Scholars suggest that textbook authors made a conscious effort to celebrate this reputation in their writings about North Carolina (Cell, 1982; Chafe, 1980; Tyson, 2004). Historians have grappled with whether or not North Carolina’s moderate reputation was a deserved one (Cell, 1982; Chafe, 1980; Christensen, 2008; Tyson, 2004). Yet one North Carolina historian suggested that scholars should look for ways that the state was moderate on a surface level only (Chafe. 1980).

William Chafe (1980), in his study *Civilities and Civil Rights: Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Black Struggle for Freedom*, suggested that North Carolina exhibited what he coined “a progressive mystique” throughout its history (p. 7). He noted that the state of North Carolina historically enjoyed a reputation as being a growing Southern state that avoided much of the racial strife and conflict seen so dramatically in other states in either the 19th or 20th centuries. Additionally, North Carolina also achieved much in education, technology and innovation, often ahead of other Southern states. Chafe provided evidence to suggest that in actuality, North Carolina leaders were less skilled at addressing racial strife than they were at finding ways to handle it politely. This handling ultimately achieved the same result of supporting the status quo in race relations, education, or politics in the state.
To what extent North Carolina deserved the reputation as education leader or paragon of progress and moderation by the turn of the century is unclear. Chafe seemed to imply that North Carolina’s historical reputation covered an ugly history of racism and violence. In this characterization, education was an institution that helped to build or maintain this undeserved reputation. However, another historian disagreed with this conclusion.

John Cell (1982) wrote a book in which he compared apartheid in South Africa and segregation in the American South. He agreed with Chafe that there was a moment in the American South after Civil War and Reconstruction in which it was unclear to leaders how they would run the state, uphold society’s norms, and control race relations. Cell (1982) differed with Chafe (1980) in suggesting that the leaders who ultimately prevailed and implemented the racist program of segregation truly did deserve a reputation for being moderate in comparison to other leaders’ plans for the South at the time. In this framework, North Carolina’s lateness in seceding from the Union and lack of more overt racial violence appears to be accurate evidence for a state attempting to go at least slightly above the fray of extremism that was more common elsewhere. Where African American schools were ignored or allowed to fall into disrepair in some Southern states, North Carolina’s leaders were more likely to maintain the schools. Cell argued that this fact positions North Carolina as a more moderate Southern state, although he also acknowledged the obvious inequality of segregated schools. This study’s research question did not demand that a final answer be given regarding whether or not North Carolina was in actuality much more moderate when compared to other Southern states or not. Historians do not agree on this issue. However,
the historical literature regarding this subject reveals important facts about the history of North Carolina as well as its education program.

First, it is clear that North Carolina experienced a turbulent 19th century due to its connection to slavery, Civil War, Reconstruction, and eventual segregation. It is also clear that leaders’ need to maintain society’s status quo by properly educating the state’s youth meant that they had to adequately address race relations and social hierarchies. Leaders also wanted students to be proud of their state’s history and its role as a leader in the South. The history textbooks students read help to show how authors hoped to accomplish this dual goal of teaching students the norms of a racially divided society while also extolling the presumed moderation and leadership role of their state. Authors of studies that directly relate to North Carolina textbooks suggest that textbook authors took on this dual goal by never straying too far from their purpose of praising traditions, histories, and ways of lives in both North Carolina and the South through their writing (Carroll, 1986; Whitescarver, 2002).

**North Carolina 19th century textbooks**

Most of the literature on North Carolina textbooks in the 19th century comes from studies with a broader theme of education or Southern education during the century (Ashe, Noppen, & Weeks, 1908; Coon, 1908, 1915; Genovese & Genovese, 2005; Harris, 2008; Knight, 1916; Weeks, 1898). These studies become more relevant when one considers that students in other states used some of the textbooks written by North Carolina authors for their own state’s students. Those scholars who focused solely on North Carolina’s textbooks found that the political and social needs of the state often motivated textbook authors
(Braverman, 1952; 1958; Carroll, 1986; Whitescarver, 2002). Karen Carroll (1986) found that the need to keep morale up in the South during the Civil War meant that authors of textbooks in the region began offering new views on slavery, Northern aggression, states’ rights, and other doctrines that upheld the Confederate cause. She researched a popular publishing company in Greensboro, North Carolina, which at one point supplied almost all of the Southern states with their textbooks. North Carolina educators wrote many of these books. They were answering a charge that North Carolina’s State Superintendent Calvin Wiley had given them to produce books written and published in the South.

Wiley did not want education to suffer in the South even though leaders would not be conducting business with Northern publishers, and he wanted authors to take the opportunity to provide positive portrayals about their region. The coming of the Civil War had created a need to separate any connections with the Union, including purchasing textbooks published there. Carroll (1986) studied textbooks published between 1861 and 1865. She found that authors had to rewrite entire parts of history in order to discuss the Civil War from a pro-slavery, Confederate perspective. Carroll illustrated how examinations of textbooks can reveal information about society’s values as well as how that society changed over time. She concluded that change in the North Carolina textbooks she studied centered on the Civil War. Calvin Wiley’s appeal to North Carolina educators to provide suitable texts to impressionable students demonstrates his awareness of why textbooks were important to education and society. While Wiley had not changed his mind on the need for students to receive a strong narrative about their state’s history, the Civil War and its aftermath demanded that textbooks
be amended to continue to reflect this strong narrative in light of these recent events. Carroll
(1986) concluded that Wiley needed to replace one narrative, written by the North in a way
that brought shame to North Carolina, with a new narrative, written by North Carolinian
authors in a way that would bring pride to the state.

Historians credit Wiley with this awareness of the need to lead progress in the state,
while at the same time controlling how and what students learned (Braverman, 1952; Butler
& Watson, 1984; Powell, 1989; Whitescarver, 2002). Most studies of North Carolina’s
textbooks research the work of Calvin Wiley since he was so central to both the growth of
public education and the writing of the first North Carolina textbook history. In a
compilation of primary documents meant to give students an overview of North Carolina
history, Butler & Watson (1984) included an excerpt from Wiley’s *North Carolina Reader*
(1851). Editors suggested that Wiley’s writings illustrated how the need to teach students to
be proud of a certain version of North Carolina history influenced textbook writing. They
informed readers that they chose Wiley’s textbook as illustrative of North Carolina’s changes
and leaders’ reactions to these changes during the 19th century because of his reputation as an
educational leader and his future position as State Superintendent of North Carolina. While
Benjamin Justice (2005) was focused on education in New York for his study of textbooks,
he referred to research that showed how Wiley enjoyed national stature due to his leadership
in education, and he acknowledged that Wiley’s contributions in the area of textbooks aided
in teaching students allegiance to North Carolina. Justice mentioned how Calvin Wiley
oversaw and sometimes authored new textbooks and changes in classroom training. He also
charged that Wiley’s decisions were sometimes clouded by his overriding need to maintain the status quo in North Carolina society.

Keith Whitescarver (2002) agreed that Wiley was motivated by the overriding needs of patriotism and societal norms. He argued that Wiley was part of a group of leaders known as Southern nationalists. These nationalists wanted to protect their Southern way of life so much that they turned to education and the authoring of textbooks as the answer for how to preserve it. Whitescarver (2002) concluded that one would need to know how many students and families actually read the works of Southern nationalist authors to determine how successful this movement was in influencing future generations’ viewpoints. But, his work provides more insight into some of the themes one can look for in 19th century North Carolina history books. Knowing that these ideas of progress coupled with tradition guided Wiley in his textbook writing and educational leadership gives insight into what type of model for other Southern states North Carolina became.

Heather Williams (2005) noted that Wiley needed to protect slavery even as he advanced education, and he met this dual need when he authored his first North Carolina history book of 1851. Wiley understood that textbook authorship was crucial to training loyal future citizens. Williams (2005) recounted an 1861 meeting in which a committee of teachers led by Calvin Wiley met to assess education in light of the impending conflict with the North. Karen Carroll (1986) researched the same meeting when she researched the publishing company in North Carolina that supplied the South with textbooks. Wiley’s committee ultimately decided that too many textbooks and educational materials came from
the North. True freedom for the state, according to the committee members, meant that native North Carolinians should write their own educational texts and offer to share them with the North and Europe. Williams (2005) noted that “this group of teachers not only wanted to insert the white, southern paternalistic view into its classrooms, it also wanted to export its proslavery doctrine to northern states and to European countries it pursued as allies” (p. 131). Williams’s (2005) and Justice’s (2005) works suggest that North Carolina textbook authors like Wiley were aware of the ways they were constructing certain historical narratives for students of public education in the 19th century. These findings corroborate with scholars who looked at general 19th century textbooks and found similar results (Belok, 1981; Furstenberg, 2003; Nietz, 1961).

Non-historical works also help to reveal how 19th century North Carolina educators viewed the purpose of education. Benjamin F. Grady’s 1867 textbook, An Agricultural Catechism: Or, the chemistry of farming made easy. A textbook for the common schools in NC. By a teacher, aimed to teach students acceptance of and pride for their society. A need to protect traditional ways of life was Grady’s primary aim (1867). Reflecting the importance of an agrarian economy to North Carolina, Grady, who was an instructor at Wayne County’s Neuse River Academy, suggested that schools were neglecting to teach students an easily understood way of farming. Those agricultural instruction books that existed were, according to Grady, focused too much on chemistry details that became too complex or irrelevant to farming realities. “Very few of the young men of the country can hope, if it were desirable, to succeed in any of the so-called learned professions. The
cultivation of the soil is the business to which a very large majority of them must direct their engines,” Grady (1867) reasoned (p. xi). Grady’s book was a down-to-earth account of agrarian economics for students who were more than likely headed to a farming life where advanced theory would prove unnecessary or even frivolous. This focus on what contemporaries might call vocational education revealed Grady’s views on the purposes of textbooks and education. The book also reveals the importance of traditional farming life to Grady. He attempted to use his textbook to steer students to proper attitudes about agrarianism in North Carolina.

Grady’s attempt to use his textbook in this way fits with what researchers have suggested about the purpose of textbooks in the 19th and 20th centuries. This review suggests that the 19th century saw textbook authors forming historical narratives about the region, state, or nation about which they were writing while the 20th century saw authors attempting to maintain these narratives. While there are few additional sources that dealt with North Carolina authored textbooks directly, the available sources suggest that the books shared qualities with other history textbooks whose authors were apt to reveal personal motivations, goals for their readers, or biases in their writings. This study analyzed the primary sources, the textbooks themselves, in order to assess whether or not authors offered a basically unchanged narrative of North Carolina history or whether they substantially changed it. A description of how I conducted this study follows in chapter three.
Chapter 3

METHODS

Research Question

This research focused on the following question. Did the historical narratives in three North Carolina history textbooks from the 19th century change substantially over time? In answering this question, I analyzed the context of the textbooks over the forty-year period of their publication. This analysis focused on determining the interpretations of history that authors put forward in their texts. Researching this question allowed me to examine connections between politics, culture, and education, as represented in history textbooks. My research was focused on three North Carolina textbooks written during the 19th century. Calvin Wiley wrote the first North Carolina history book, *The North Carolina Reader*, for public schools in 1851. John Moore authored *School history of North Carolina* in 1879. Cornelia Phillips Spencer wrote *First steps in North Carolina history* in 1889. Political or cultural movements from the latter half of the 19th century as well as background information about textbook authors helped to provide context for this study.

Sources

This study is a work of history, focused on analyzing 19th century North Carolina public school textbooks in order to better understand what information or potential themes three selected authors included in their works. The primary source of data for this work was the North Carolina history textbooks from 1851 to 1889. I sought to conduct a document analysis of each book. Bogden and Bilken (2003) define document analysis as a work in
which it is important to understand the writer’s purpose in producing the document. McMillan (2004) adds that once researchers gain insight into the aims of textbook authors, they should look for patterns or recurring ideas in order to organize their data. After completing this organization, researchers are free to use inductive reasoning to determine how the documents might answer the research question. This focus on the documents’ purpose and patterns guided my research. In my analysis, I assessed the authors’ treatments of historical events, and I identified recurring themes in all three books. I then compared these themes in an effort to uncover any similarities or divergences. For example, I examined how authors dealt with societal upheavals such as the Civil War or the issue of slavery in their writing since these would be areas of common content that I could compare among textbooks. To further enhance my research, I attempted to analyze the connections between textbooks and the social and political context in which authors worked.

To locate supporting historical materials, I relied heavily on collections at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Three archival collections at the university, the Southern Historical Collection, the Documenting the American South collection, and the North Carolina Collection house general history books, school textbook histories and textbooks written during the 19th century. Among the sources at the University of North Carolina are the General Assembly’s reports on education in the state and Calvin Wiley’s leadership of schools. There is also a newspaper collection that offered access to articles about Wiley, Moore, Spencer, or their textbooks. The North Carolina Collection holds the papers of Cornelia Phillips Spencer, including copies of her early textbook writings as well
as personal communications throughout her writing career. This collection also houses the personal papers of John Moore, although there are no communications related to his North Carolina history textbook. Online resources through East Carolina University and Google books as well as sources at the North Carolina Archives also provided access to helpful documents. All three of the textbooks in this study are available on Google Books, and East Carolina University’s online resources offer access to Spencer’s and Wiley’s books. The North Carolina Archives houses personal papers of Calvin Wiley, which include letters he wrote and received about both the publication of his textbook and his leadership of North Carolina’s schools. These sources, including textbooks themselves, records from schools and education leaders, and personal papers of textbook authors, provided the evidence needed to substantiate my historical interpretation of 19th century school North Carolina history textbooks.

The first of the three textbooks analyzed was Calvin Wiley’s 1851 *The North Carolina Reader: Containing a history and description of North Carolina, selections in prose and verse, many of them by eminent citizens of the state, historical and chronological tables, and a variety of miscellaneous information and statistics*. An original copy of this book as well as reprinted and revised copies were available from the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in addition to online sources. Wiley first wrote and published *The North Carolina Reader* of his own volition in 1851, but the book was reprinted under different publishers after Wiley became North Carolina school superintendent, with editions reprinted in 1855 and 1856. Editions of Wiley’s book were
reprinted again in 1866 and 1868, with the last known republication being 1874. With the exception of an additional preface note to introduce the book beginning in 1855, none of these publications included new or edited information, so the initial 1851 and the second 1855 publications were sufficient to provide material for this research.

John Moore was the author of the second book in my study, *School history of North Carolina: From 1584 to the Present*, published in 1879 and 1882. Moore’s book is in the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina, but it is also available online through Google Books. Moore’s book was first printed in 1879, and was reprinted in 1882, 1892, 1895, and 1901. Other than changing publishing companies, Moore’s textbook information remained the same in each of these editions. The 1882 printing of Moore’s book included a new preface in order to note the fact that the North Carolina Board of Education had chosen the book as an official history textbook, but this addition was the only change over the years. The Tutis Digital Publishing Company reprinted Moore’s book in 2008, so I was able to purchase my own copy of this book.

The third book in my study was also available from multiple sources. The book, titled *First steps in North Carolina history*, was written in 1889 by Cornelia Phillips Spencer. Copies of Spencer’s book are available at both the UNC and North Carolina State University libraries. Her book is also available online through Eastern Carolina University’s digitized book collection, the University of Pennsylvania, and Google Books. Spencer’s book was reprinted every year after 1889 through 1892. Like the other authors in this study, Spencer
did not revise her writing in later editions. In fact, even Spencer’s preface, as opposed to Wiley’s and Moore’s, remained unchanged.

These three textbooks represented the main source for my research meant to analyze the books’ information, but I also made use of a wide range of supporting primary sources for added insight into authors’ purposes. My goal was to locate primary sources that would contextualize the textbook content into the time period in which it was written. The North Carolina State Archives has digitized a collection of North Carolina newspapers that proved helpful to supplement my research. The North Carolina Collection, which includes primary sources relevant to the history of the state, proved to be the most valuable special collections resource for this study. For example, the collection included Wiley’s annual reports on the state of common schools in North Carolina, a circular letter from 1861 encouraging educators to provide their students with appropriate understandings of the Civil War, and other reports in which Wiley refers to the importance of using good textbooks authored by North Carolinians. Copies of Wiley’s letters to local North Carolina newspapers citing the importance of the textbooks he authored and accusing critics of his book of being unpatriotic helped to illuminate the reasons behind Wiley’s writing.

Most of these sources have been digitized and were therefore available online through the University of North Carolina’s website. Even more illuminating were the personal papers of Calvin Wiley, available at both the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the North Carolina State Archives. These papers hold Wiley’s personal correspondence from the 1830s, before he wrote the *North Carolina Reader*, to the 1870s, after Wiley’s time as State
Superintendent of North Carolina had ended. Included in this correspondence are letters between Wiley and his friends regarding the publishing of his history textbook, the sale of his family’s land, Whig politics, and the state of common schools in North Carolina. It also includes letters from Wiley to Reverend Fordyce Hubbard, a professor at the University of Chapel Hill who Wiley asked to author a *North Carolina Reader II* literature book because of his belief that all books could aid in teaching students morals and patriotism in addition to information. Microfiche collections of a newspaper, the *Raleigh Register*, offered articles related to the publishing and selling of Wiley’s textbook.

Finding additional resources about John Moore proved challenging. His personal papers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill helped to illustrate his life as a slaveholder and as a man interested in history, but it did not have any information about his public school history textbook. In fact, the notes involve his interest in writing about the history of Baptists in North Carolina rather than a general history of the state of public schools. The publishing company that reprinted Moore’s book printed incorrect biographical information about him in the book, giving the wrong years of his life and claiming he was from Kentucky. Some additional information about Moore came from one of his descendants, Sally Moore Koestler, in Texas. She researched wills, birth certificates, and tax records to trace the history of her family, and she had copies of primary sources with evidence about Moore’s involvement in slavery and the Civil War as well as his interest in writing North Carolina history. She maintains a website tracing her genealogical studies, so I was able to glean more information from her through email correspondence. The University
of North Carolina’s (UNC) digitized online records of the North Carolina Board of Education helped to confirm board members’ interest and encouragement of Moore’s book, an interest which Moore himself acknowledged in the preface to his text.

Cornelia Phillips Spencer did not acknowledge any such encouragement. In the preface of her book, Spencer wrote that it was her personal belief in the need of a good history book that motivated her work. In addition to Spencer’s textbook, I made use of historical resources relevant to her textbook. There are multiple letters in Spencer’s personal papers between her and others noting how the textbook writing was progressing as well as how it was received in North Carolina. Some of these letters referenced a controversy that Spencer touched upon in her treatment of the Mecklenburg Resolves. Other letters that Spencer wrote to friends noted her opinion of John Moore’s history textbook. She also shared her opinions on current issues and leaders in the state. There is also a letter that Spencer wrote to her daughter upon the death of one of her former slaves. In the letter, Spencer expresses a paternalistic fondness for her former slave, sadness about the end of her life, and wistfulness for the simpler days when each of their roles had been clearly defined. This letter provided insight about Spencer’s personal beliefs. This was one example of how I was able to supplement research of Spencer’s book with letters she wrote to friends and family, all available in the Cornelia Phillips Spencer papers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s North Carolina Collection. These papers also include copies of articles Spencer wrote for a weekly column, “The Lady’s Column,” in The North Carolina Presbyterian, in which she often expounded on historical issues touched on in her textbook.
Organization

After locating copies of textbooks and other relevant documents, I developed a system to summarize and analyze the large number of relevant documents. Many of the documents I used in this study were located online. In these cases, I printed out the documents and underlined key passages or made notes directly on the sources. My work with non-digitized documents was more of a challenge. In order to make notations on these documents, I prepared typed transcriptions. This system allowed me to underline or make notes about documents directly on them as I read and researched. Given the high volume of hard copies and paper, I supplemented the notes that I wrote directly on the documents with additional summaries, annotations, and citations. I then used a filing system to keep all of these materials together and sorted. For example, as I read the textbooks, certain themes became evident. All three authors mentioned the goal of creating patriotic and freedom-loving citizens in their writings. I underlined passages in each of the books that related to this idea, and I created note cards, labeled “creating patriotism.” I then labeled the note cards with the book name on the left side and the theme name on the right side. I also included either a quote or a paraphrase of a relevant passage on the card. In this way, when I was ready to write the results of my study, I simply pulled note cards in order to put my research together.

All research materials were housed in a dedicated file cabinet, divided first between primary and secondary sources and my analytical records. My primary division was between primary and secondary sources. I considered secondary sources to be journal articles, books
and other forms of historical research that were useful in helping me to develop a larger
historiography of textbooks and North Carolina history. I considered primary sources to be
any relevant evidence that directly responded to my research question and aided in my
analysis of textbooks. Secondary sources were divided into four categories, studies of
American textbooks, studies of American education, studies of North Carolina history, and
studies of North Carolina textbooks. These topics were closely related, but the divisions
helped to distinguish those studies that dealt specifically with textbooks from those that dealt
only with education. For example, Karen Carroll’s (1986) article on textbook publishing in
North Carolina during the Civil War dealt with studies of North Carolina history and studies
of American education. Because Carroll specifically researched Calvin Wiley and the
textbooks he supported during the Civil War, I filed Carroll’s article under North Carolina
textbooks. Within each of the secondary source files, I used chronology to sort the articles.
Carroll’s article about textbook publishing during the Civil War came before an article about
textbooks at the turn of the century. Since there were not an overwhelming number of
sources that directly related to the history of 19th century North Carolina textbooks, this
organizational scheme for secondary sources was sufficient.

I initially sorted sources into two main categories, North Carolina textbooks and
general North Carolina history and education. For each North Carolina 19th century history
textbook, I created a unique file. I included in these files secondary resources related to the
books. Additionally, I categorized these files according to the themes that were emerging in
my research. Multiple themes emerged, including: similar interpretations of secession and
war, North Carolina as moderate but caught between extremes, authors’ treatment of Native Americans, similar treatment of Christian religion and beliefs in God, shared treatment of the University of North Carolina, and North Carolina as the first to defend liberty. This filing method made it easy for me to note which of the themes were evident in all of the textbooks and which of the themes were specific only to one book. Each textbook file also included additional information gleaned from primary sources about the book’s author.

The following example is focused on my analysis of Calvin Wiley’s 1851 textbook and provides an example of how my filing system worked. Wiley authored his *North Carolina Reader* in 1851. When he became the State School Superintendent some years later, he asked Fordyce Hubbard to author the second installment of the *North Carolina Reader* series in a letter in 1855 that provided insight as to why Wiley believed so strongly in the need for the textbooks. Wiley also wrote a letter in 1851 to the president of the University of North Carolina in order to ask for his valuable endorsement of the *North Carolina Reader*. I included sources such as these with my file on Wiley’s textbook, since they directly related to his intent in writing the book. I also organized the file content for each textbook to highlight emerging themes. For example, one theme in Wiley’s book dealt with the natural beauty of North Carolina. Each time I read passages in Wiley’s book or personal correspondence related to this theme, I included it in the designated file. I supported themes such as these with sources that helped to provide a context for each author’s motivations and viewpoints as well as the general historical time in which his/her work was written. As I located information about authors and their textbooks, I continued to
sort and arrange my notes and related themes. For example, my resources on Wiley’s work included themes related to politics and the North Carolina General Assembly, public reaction, an exchange in North Carolina newspapers between Wiley and an anonymous critic who believed the *North Carolina Reader* was indoctrination and not history, and the coming of the Civil War and its influence on the textbook. Each of my organizational files was further divided into subheadings related to specific authors and textbooks.

I organized general primary materials on 19th century education in North Carolina using a different schema. There were some sources that were large and covered a large span of history. I organized these sources in separate research files. For example, Charles Coon wrote a history of education in North Carolina in 1915. This book included information about schools, textbooks, and educators during the 19th century. Coon’s book was important for me because there were few primary sources on education in North Carolina during this period, so the book had its own file within general primary sources. A few sources were focused on general North Carolina education. I sorted and filed these sources chronologically. For example, I filed reports on North Carolina schools during the Civil War in a 1860s North Carolina education and history category. Additionally, I created a category within the general North Carolina education category on African American education in the state, since I continued to find evidence that African American students’ educational experiences were different than those of white students. It was apparent that the authors in my research neglected a potential African American audience. Although they were not within the scope of this study, numerous African American educators wrote textbooks or
supplements to combat these omissions by white authors. I kept a file on this issue of African American education only when it illustrated how or if the authors in my study addressed the issue.

While my research organizational plan served me well, there were a few instances when evidence fit into more than one category. For example, I found records of Calvin Wiley’s (1849) ambivalent views on African Americans in North Carolina from some of his other, fiction writing. This information related to African American education as well as author information about Wiley. This situation called for cross-referencing, so I placed the evidence in both categories with a note of explanation. I believe this plan was better than creating more categories than would have been manageable. The following outline explains the schema I used for collecting and organizing data.

I. SECONDARY SOURCES
   A. American textbooks
   B. American education
   C. North Carolina history and education
   D. North Carolina textbooks

II. PRIMARY SOURCES
   A. North Carolina textbooks and authors
      1. Calvin Wiley’s *North Carolina Reader*
         a. Information about Calvin Wiley, his leadership, and his experiences, found mostly in his personal papers
1. Politics - Whigs

2. Views on Slavery/Race Relations/Segregation

3. Leadership as superintendent

4. Communication with public regarding book

b. Themes in the textbook

1. Example – North Carolina’s having natural beauty

2. John Moore’s *A School History of North Carolina*

   a. Information about John Moore

      1. Politics

      2. Views on Slavery/Race Relations/Segregation

   b. Themes in the textbook

      1. Example: Political views on Reconstruction

3. Cornelia Phillips Spencer’s *First Steps in North Carolina History*

   a. Information about Cornelia Phillips Spencer

      1. Politics – connection to religion

      2. Feminism

      3. Views on Slavery/Race Relations/Segregation

      4. Experience during Civil War

   b. Themes in the textbook

      1. Example: Changing views on Regulators

4. Themes Textbooks Share
a. Similar interpretations of secession and war
b. North Carolina as moderate but caught between extremes
c. Authors’ treatment of Native Americans
c. Similar treatment of Christian religion and beliefs in God
d. Shared treatment of the University of North Carolina
e. North Carolina as the first to defend liberty

B. North Carolina education

1. African American education
2. NC through changes of the end of the 19th century (divided chronologically)

Limitations

My research question focused on North Carolina history books in the second half of the 19th century, from Calvin Wiley’s first school history book for North Carolina in 1851 to Cornelia Phillips Spencer’s North Carolina history textbook first published in 1889. I chose this period due to my own interest in 19th century North Carolina. I acknowledge that certain personal perspectives influenced the focus of my findings. My interest in the Civil War and race relations in the American South caused me to examine textbooks in detail for any changes they offered in the interpretation of issues related to these events. My interests were supported by historical literature, which suggested that textbooks changed after the Civil War. I also anticipated, based on my literature review findings, that despite these changes, a
narrative touting North Carolina’s attributes and progress would remain largely in place in textbooks.

I read and analyzed the textbooks looking for evidence of either a continuous narrative or substantial change over time, but recognize the limitations of ever completely knowing the full historical record or the total intent of textbook authors in my study. To illustrate the challenges of inducting historical record from 19th century documents, I point to an example from my research on both Moore and Spencer. Early in my reading of these books, I noted that there were sections of these two authors’ textbooks that read similarly. I assumed this similarity was no accident and instead implied some sort of acquaintance between Moore and Spencer, but I had no way to explain this finding. Fortunately, Spencer’s personal papers included a letter to a friend in which she referred to correspondence with Moore about some suggested revisions she made to him for his book. Although this example illustrates how I was able to construct pieces of the historical puzzle of Moore’s and Spencer’s connection, I was limited in this study as to what letters and other resources exist to supplement my research.

This study does not give a complete picture of what students were reading in late 19th century history classrooms or, for that matter, how their textbooks influenced them. My research question examined what authors were saying and not necessarily how many students read the books or how they reacted to them. I would have needed additional resources and analysis to address students’ experiences.
My research focus on three 19th century history or literature textbooks and related historical documents was unique. Secondary sources directly related to my topic were sometimes difficult to find since I was researching a relatively new topic. Given the limited number of secondary resources, I used secondary sources that were similarly focused, such as textbook analyses of U.S. history books. I was more successful in locating primary sources that addressed my research question. My main research focus was on the three textbooks, their historical contexts, and the amounts of continuity or change in them, but this study also included necessary detours into African American history, educational history, and North Carolina history. Readers may not be able to generalize my study to other states, but they will have a clearer picture of textbook authors’ work in North Carolina education from 1851 to 1889. Since there are few studies that deal directly with North Carolina textbooks in the 19th century, this study charted new ground.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this study, I analyzed three 19th century North Carolina history textbooks to help me determine if there were any substantial changes in the historical narratives presented in these textbooks over the time of their publications from 1851 to 1889. I also sought to provide historical context for each of the books in the study. In the course of addressing these research goals, I found that each of the books shared similar themes related to North Carolina history. Authors differed in their treatments of some historical subjects, such as the role of religion in the early North Carolina colony and the existence of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. Despite these differences, the three authors consistently returned to common themes in North Carolina’s history, treating subjects such as secession and Civil War, moderation in North Carolina, Native Americans, Christianity, the beginnings of the University of North Carolina, and North Carolina’s role in the defense of liberty, similarly. Each of the three textbook authors sought to present North Carolina as equal or superior to other states in terms of their contributions to the early formation of the United States. The authors presented information in an effort to convince their student readers to be proud and protective of their state and its reputation. All three authors advanced common themes about North Carolina’s contributions to the defense of liberty. The authors also shared a tendency to present North Carolina as a state known for its moderation, especially in political disputes and race relations.
The findings are organized in two parts. The first part includes descriptions of each textbook, the authors, their aims in writing, receptions of the textbook, and an explanation of the social or political contexts in which they wrote. The second part includes descriptions of common themes I found among the textbooks, using a thematic approach to analysis of the textbooks.

**Calvin Wiley’s North Carolina Reader**

Calvin Wiley’s 1851 *North Carolina Reader* was the first school textbook adopted for broad use in North Carolina. This book was part of Wiley’s larger effort to provide textbooks for North Carolina’s students that were authored by native authors who would promote the state. As state superintendent of public schools, Wiley ensured that his *North Carolina Reader* became required reading for all students. Prior to the state’s official adoption of his textbook, Wiley believed so strongly in his cause of providing a ‘good’ history textbook for students that he paid for its publication with his personal funds. Writing about his book in an official address to North Carolina as state superintendent of public schools, Wiley (1854) called the textbook a “most important number…containing a familiar history and description of the State” (p. 11). He considered the publication of the *North Carolina Reader* a major accomplishment.

**Background.** Wiley was born in Guildford County, North Carolina in 1819. He exhibited an early interest in writing and education because of his belief that education would be the vehicle to bring improvement to North Carolina (Wiley, 1854). Wiley’s family encouraged his intellectual development. He attended Caldwell Institute as a young man in
preparation to attend the University of North Carolina, where he graduated in 1840. This background allowed Wiley to pursue varied interests and a professional life that allowed him to travel in influential circles of state leaders and educators. Wiley wrote novels, promoted education through speeches or writings, practiced law in Oxford, North Carolina, pastored a Presbyterian church, edited and wrote for various newspapers, and served as a Whig state legislator (Braverman, 1952; Jarrett, 1964; 1967). Wiley’s personal correspondence reveals his connections with North Carolina’s political leaders. He communicated frequently with leadership in the state’s Whig party. Wiley’s family owned a moderate number of slaves, and he continued to own slaves into adulthood. His experiences as a member of this slaveholding class of leaders in North Carolina influenced his writing later in life.

Wiley was known as an advocate for his home state. Horace Cromwell, in recommending Wiley for a position within the Whig party, described him as a “gentleman of character” who always sought the best for North Carolina (Cromwell, 1869). In his writing and professional work, Wiley expressed views consistent with Whig positions on economic growth (Whitescarver, 2002). He sought to combat the state’s lack of growth and loss of population. To help achieve this aim, Wiley was also an advocate for a universally accessible educational system that was open and free to all white children, believing that such an institution protected and promoted democracy. Writing a public address a few years after he and the leaders of North Carolina had built a public school system, Wiley (1861) noted, “intellectual [development] must precede or sustain political independence” (p. 10). Wiley encouraged citizens to “remember that the schools and school literature of the State
have been the great nurseries” of civic training of North Carolina’s youth (Wiley, 1861, p. 10). These beliefs guided Wiley in his position as state school superintendent of North Carolina and textbook author. Wiley’s friend Frank Wilson noted that it was love of the state that motivated his educational work, writing to Wiley that his gaining of the position of state superintendent was “magnificent and equaled only by your love for our good old sleepy, slumbering state” (Wilson, 1851).

It was Wiley’s concern for the ‘sleepy’ state of North Carolina that led him to a writing career. Wiley began his literary career writing novels that were typically set in North Carolina and featured characters meant to represent common people in the state. He was always careful in his writings to describe North Carolina and its people in glowing terms. Writing novels earned Wiley what one friend called “a literary reputation in North Carolina” (Jones, 1849). Yet it was a need for textbooks instead of novels that led to Wiley’s writing the North Carolina Reader. In the case of North Carolina, the need for textbooks and public education arose in the context of slowed growth, the loss of the state’s young talent to other states, and the need for internal improvements in the state. Wiley was motivated by a desire to reverse these trends, to awaken pride in North Carolina, and to use education to help improve the state.

Wiley wrote the North Carolina Reader and began his leadership of North Carolina’s common schools in the same year. He hoped to use his textbook to combat the viewpoint held by many citizens of the state that public education threatened morality and social stability. These citizens feared a system that required parents to relinquish control of their
children’s education to state leaders who could choose textbooks and other educational policies that would undermine traditional and accepted institutions in society. Wiley, a prominent member of the North Carolina Whig party and a supporter of its platform for internal improvements that included education, believed these citizens were victims of “ignorant men” and “mean demagogues” who manipulated people’s fears in order to gain votes (Wiley, 1851, p. 341). He wanted to show how educational growth and the influence of public schools could actually guide progress in North Carolina while also protecting the state’s traditions and institutions.

Looking back to his 1851 entry into public education, Wiley later recalled in an address to the state that “the common-school system, from the very nature of things, had been imperfectly understood: it had not received that respect to which it was entitled, and there were doubts and gloomy forebodings pervading the public mind” (Wiley, 1855, p. 4). Wiley’s friend Frank Wilson wrote that common schools were “working badly” when Wiley assumed their leadership, but he encouraged Wiley that “any change must prove beneficial” to schools, especially since “I know your [Wiley’s] heart is in the cause” (Wilson, 1853). Wiley retained his position as state superintendent until 1865. During these years he developed a successful public education program in the state. He believed that education was the answer to keeping young white citizens loyal to their state, the insurance for a healthy republic, and the key to their learning enlightened patriotism. He informed readers of his 1851 textbook that all educators, politicians, or county officials understood that they were “men and Christians, citizens of one country, and servants of one God,” who shared “one
common end – the glory of God, and the good of the people!” (Wiley, 1851, p. 6). Public schools grew and became more organized under Wiley. His continual promotion of the benefits of the common-school system coupled with his textbook helped to encourage this growth. In a circular letter about the state of common schools in North Carolina in 1854, Wiley applauded the fact that “a new and brighter era has dawned upon the common schools of our state…and an enlightened self-interest calls on you for a patient continuation of efforts” (Wiley, 1854, p. 1).

**Analysis of North Carolina Reader.** It was in the context of reversing population decreases and a stagnant economy in North Carolina that Wiley offered his *North Carolina Reader* as a source for helping students who “need[ed] only light to guide them to happiness and prosperity at home” (Wiley, 1851, p. 6). Wiley (1855) later wrote, “the day of despondency in North Carolina has now passed away forever. Our entire youthful population, imbibing with their earliest ideas respect for their State, and for its greatest and most beneficent institutions…will be ready” to become proud, productive citizens (Wiley, 1855, p. viii). The goal of students “imbibing” respect for their state remained in the forefront of Wiley’s efforts as he wrote the history of North Carolina for them (Wiley, 1855, p. viii).

Wiley wanted to protect a conservative, traditional way of life that required deference to a white, elite planter class. He chose not to confront the inconsistencies between the institution of slavery and the ideals of universal education. Instead, Wiley (1851) encouraged students not to question the social status that God had given them, or the social
institutions of their state and its ways of life. Readers could see this implied message in the third section of Wiley’s book, where he included passages from other authors. Included in these selections was a passage in which Reverend E.J. Stearns provided readers with what he believed was an appropriate rebuttal of the book *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and its attack on Southern slavery. Stearns impressed upon the students who read the book the bias of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, and he suggested that it was part of a larger, Northern abolitionist plot to turn Southern students against their own land. After the coming of the Civil War, Wiley (1861) wrote a circular letter in which he encouraged other authors and educators to write history textbooks in which they explained North Carolina’s involvement in slavery and war in a positive way. Wiley wanted North Carolinian students to have a version of history in which the southern cause was presented as a good and moral one. Giving students this kind of information ensured that his brand of public education and his textbook functioned to protect, rather than threaten, North Carolina’s social or political ways of life.

In a 1863 letter, Wiley (1863) wrote to members of his church, assuring his parishioners that he saw a connection between religion, morality, and education, writing to his congregation that places with the “most moral corruption” were places in “most need” of “the Christian” to guide and educate them (p. 4). He believed his *North Carolina Reader* had maintained this connection. Wiley considered his work the work of God. He complained in the introduction to the *North Carolina Reader* that the “yearning heart[s]” of North Carolinians had been forced into “worshipping strange gods” in the absences of a good history textbook (Wiley, 1851, p. 10). Dedicating his textbook “to the God of our fathers,”
Wiley compared himself to the Biblical character of Nehemiah, who was known for leading the Hebrew people to build a wall to defend their city (p. 10).

In this allusion, Wiley did not want to be seen as “a prophet” like Nehemiah since he did not want to be seen as having authority over his own people (Wiley, 1851, p. 10). Instead, Wiley called himself “a worker in the cause” of spreading enlightenment throughout North Carolina (Wiley, 1851, p. 10). He expressed the hope “in the language of Nehemiah, when endeavoring to repair the walls of Jerusalem, that his people might be no more a reproach” (Wiley, 1851, p. 10). In this same comparison, Wiley suggested that those who did not see the benefits of his program for education, and especially history education, were equivalent to scoffers who tried to stop Nehemiah and his people from successfully building their wall. References to Christianity, Biblical stories, and morality appear throughout Wiley’s book. For example, when Wiley noted that early North Carolinian settlers had an aversion to organized religion, he hastened to remind students that the settlers were misguided. He charged, “a people without any regular system of worship, without churches, and without religious teachers, must inevitably relapse into licentiousness and barbarism” (p. 143). In his efforts to show how education could reinforce dominant institutions in society, Wiley included support for the Christian religion throughout his textbook. This inclusion would have appealed to many of the families for whom Wiley wrote.

Wiley wrote his 1851 textbook for a broad audience of North Carolina public school children from diverse financial or social backgrounds. The book begins with general descriptions of the physical geography, natural resources, and population of North Carolina.
Next, Wiley covers the history of the state from its days as a colony owned by English
Proprietors, through its days of being a royal colony, and into the 1800s. Wiley included
poems and short stories that were written by other well-known North Carolinians and meant
to reinforce themes related to the grandeur of North Carolina. Wiley hoped that his North
Carolina Reader would soon be in the homes of every family in North Carolina in addition to
the schoolrooms since he believed that it was not just students who lacked appropriate
appreciation for their state. Wiley later wrote that he could not have given “a more general
and permanent impulse to the cause of popular education than by putting into the hands of all
the children of the State books designed to teach them the advantages of their homes, and
their duties to the State and its institutions” (Wiley, 1855, p. 5).

Wiley was concerned that no good history books existed that helped students and
citizens understand the greatness of their state. To this end, Wiley announced in the first
pages of his book that it was for students and families. He claimed that the North Carolina
Reader was “the only familiar description and history of the State in existence; and it was
intended for families as well as for schools” (Wiley, 1851, p.4). His ultimate desire was that
the book be used in schools to teach generations to come the advantages of living in North
Carolina. Wiley saw the need for his textbook as “obvious,” especially since he believed that
many textbooks in North Carolina classrooms were published in the north and they criticized
agrarianism and plantation life while touting manufacturing and abolitionism (Wiley, 1851,
p. 9). He argued that these textbooks “became more and more arrogant and exacting”
towards North Carolina and the South, giving “slanderous impressions” of the region (Wiley, 1851, p. 3; 5).

Wiley believed an injustice was committed against North Carolina’s students and families when they were asked to read books authored by outsiders who ignored or demeaned the state. He went so far as to compare North Carolina’s reliance on textbooks written by outsiders to the historical bondage of the Israelites in Egypt. Wiley believed his book would address the need to increase “enlightened patriotism” in North Carolinians by attacking the “ignorance” of its citizens regarding the state’s glorious history (Wiley, 1851, p. 9). Wiley viewed his textbooks as a guide for the future that would provide the “light of knowledge” for future citizens (Wiley, 1851, p.6). Other leaders of North Carolina had advocated for education and textbooks to guide progress in the state, but Wiley offered a tangible effort to achieve this goal through the publication of his history textbook. Once he became school superintendent, Wiley stopped collecting royalties on the book so that he could officially recommend it without being accused of having a conflict of interest. His goal remained to instill in students a sense of pride as summed up early in the textbook. Wiley wrote in his book’s introduction: “It is time to dispel the darkness that has brooded over their native state, and driven them from the homes of their fathers, to struggle and toil in foreign lands. Wealth and greatness sleep quietly beneath their feet” (Wiley, 1851, p. 6).

Wiley chose not to emphasize historical scholarship in his textbook, and he made no apologies for his approach, writing, “It was not deemed important to quote authorities in the historical sketch” (Wiley, 1851, p.6). He wrote that North Carolina history had never been
“fairly written,” so he only mentioned a few history books which he consulted in his quest to tell the history of the state (Wiley, 1851, p. 6). Wiley expected his readers to trust his word on much of the information in the book. He implied that his goal of teaching students the joys of life in North Carolina outweighed the need to teach them methods of historical research and writing. He never faltered from his stated purpose of sowing “in the minds of North Carolinians the seeds of a true, healthy, and vigorous North Carolina spirit” and to teach students to “appreciate the worth of their fatherland” (Wiley, 1851, p. 4). He expressed his hope that the book would be in the home of every family in North Carolina as well as every schoolroom.

Wiley applauded North Carolina as a “goodly land to live in, and a proper place to rest after the toils of life,” and “a desirable place to run your own career, and to leave your children in” (Wiley, 1851, p. 89). He encouraged students to be proud of their land “of good morals and steady habits,” “historic renown,” and of advances that “though slow, are sure” (p. 89). He wrote to students that they should feel they almost lived in heaven, due to their being lucky enough to be born in North Carolina. Not only did Wiley believe he was revealing the wonders within the state of North Carolina for students, he also believed he was righting a wrong that had been done against the state after it had been hurt by textbooks that often ignored it altogether.

Wiley believed that the state’s “character and the character of its citizens [had been] notoriously undervalued by the people of the sister states” (Wiley, 1851, p. 4). His goal was to correct previous textbook omissions of North Carolina. In promising to present North
Carolina’s history in a more fair and positive light than previous textbook authors, Wiley anticipated that “if it is a fair picture, it will astonish many in the state as well as those out of it” (Wiley, 1851, p. 6). He specifically mentioned people outside of North Carolina because of his belief that North Carolina’s unfair, negative reputation had contributed to the problem of its citizens’ “expatriation” from the state (Wiley, 1851, p. 6).

The desire to advance North Carolina’s role in the establishment of colonial America explains why Wiley spent many pages discussing Sir Walter Raleigh, “the first proprietor” of North Carolina, and his attempt at establishing a permanent settlement in the Carolinas (Wiley, 1851, p. 47). He presented Raleigh as one of the first American heroes. Wiley wrote that Raleigh, “on this hemisphere at least, will ever be regarded as one of those rare and gifted spirits whose names should never perish from earth” (Wiley, 1851, p. 99). Since Raleigh concentrated his efforts in land that became North Carolina, Wiley believed the state deserved notoriety for its connection to this early hero. He contended, “North Carolinians are indebted for the discovery and the first effort to colonize their State, to the zeal and enterprise of Sir Walter Raleigh” (Wiley, 1851, p. 91). Wiley was careful to place blame for Raleigh’s ultimate failure at permanent colonization on the ineptitude of disloyal, money-seeking Englishmen, rather than Raleigh himself. He contrasted the “great soul and energetic soul of Raleigh” against leaders like Governor Lane who instead seemed to be ruled by “vice and wretchedness, avarice and desolation” (Wiley, 1851, pp. 98, 96). This explanation is telling, since Wiley then suggested that had it not been for leaders’ mistakes, North Carolina, not Virginia, might have seen the first permanent and lasting settlement in the New World.
Wiley wanted to be sure that students realized that technically, their state was first in colonization and settlement, despite the failure of the Roanoke Colony. He wrote that the existence of those first colonists in Carolina was “the first attempt by the English to colonize America: here was the soil first pressed by the foot of an Englishwoman, and here was born the first offspring of that race which was destined to possess and to rule this mighty continent” (Wiley, 1851, p. 99). Wiley intimated that the first settlers were probably better off in North Carolina since “a law was passed in Virginia prohibiting religious toleration” and “Massachusetts was equally intolerant” (Wiley, 1851, p. 101). “It was known that the lands south of Virginia had been explored before Virginia was settled,” Wiley went on to write, suggesting that North Carolina became a haven for men fleeing “unwise and unjust laws” and seeking to live more freely (Wiley, 1851, p. 102). The settlers that became North Carolinians, according to Wiley, merely wanted to live freely, work to care for themselves and their families, and generally live moderate, peaceful lives. He suggested, “the new scenes of a new world kindled within them sentiments to which the greatest philosophers had been strangers” (Wiley, 1851, p. 102). Wiley hoped to bring more attention to the early settlement attempts in North Carolina because he felt that other textbook authors did not give this historical development enough attention. He included praise in his book of the people who eventually settled North Carolina because he believed this theme was missing from other history textbooks. In his writing about the early origins of North Carolina, Wiley clearly attempted to keep his promise to “never despair” of his state’s history (Wiley, 1851, p. 12). Instead, he celebrated it.
Wiley believed that by highlighting positive areas in North Carolina’s history, he was helping to “resuscitate” a lagging state (Wiley, 1851, p. 12). He strove to convince his readers that the acts of the early settlers against some of their leaders, such as the Culpeper rebellion where citizens unhappy with unfair taxation deposed their governor, were not “the conduct of a handful of refugees from justice,” as some previous textbooks had suggested (Wiley, 1851, p. 102). Instead, these were the actions of a group of people who had settled their own land even before a King or a Lord Proprietor claimed it. This unique beginning made settlers more likely to defend their liberty, Wiley suggested. He asked, “Did any planted colony ever thus immediately rise up and assert and maintain new political doctrines, and argue grave questions connected with the theory and science of government?” (Wiley, 1851, p. 102). Wiley’s tone suggested that North Carolina’s history was more glamorous than students may have previously realized.

Wiley later suggested that the people of the state were more advanced in social progress than states such as Virginia, a recurring theme meant to counteract claims that North Carolina lagged behind other states. Although Virginia’s claim to fame in most textbooks was for having the first permanent settlement in the United States, Wiley stressed that the character of settlers in North Carolina was more desirable than that of Virginians and their leaders. For example, Wiley noted that the Virginian William Drummond ruled in North Carolina as an effective and kind governor before returning to Virginia, participating in Bacon’s Rebellion, and ultimately being killed as punishment. He implied that a good leader like Drummond would not have been killed in North Carolina. In speaking of the “highest
and noblest virtues” with which Drummond led North Carolina, Wiley suggested that Drummond’s use of these same virtues were “promulgated a century too soon in Virginia” (Wiley, 1851, pp. 105, 106). North Carolina, on the other hand, included settlers who understood the need for simple government, free religion, and liberty. “They came to plant, and to better their fortunes by subduing and replenishing the earth” rather than to “promote theories or to enjoy the honors of rank,” Wiley insisted (Wiley, 1851, p. 108). Wiley noted that when English proprietors ultimately decided that the Albemarle region, which had been a part of Virginia, should have their own governor separate from Virginia, they hoped for, and ultimately found “a more facile people” in North Carolina (Wiley, 1851, p. 105). Wiley’s tone suggested that he wanted to correct students’ misconceptions of North Carolinians’ character by suggesting that early settlers made a conscious choice to remove themselves from Virginia and set on their own path.

Wiley consistently aimed to “gravely” refute what he saw as unfair interpretations of North Carolina’s history (Wiley, 1851, p. 103). He believed that textbook authors had wrongfully characterized North Carolinians as slow to move toward progress, as being lazy, and of questionable character. Wiley used his textbook as an opportunity to refute such claims, which he believed were “a total perversion of those things which form the glory of the State” (Wiley, 1851, p. 219). Further emphasizing this point, Wiley wrote, “From an early period, North Carolina was called the ‘harbor of rogues and renegades;’ a charge which the inhabitants have treated with contempt” (Wiley, 1851, p. 130). As to the origins of this characterization, Wiley wrote, “is it sufficient for the North Carolinians to know that it was
preferred by the corrupt minions of royalty, and the bigoted adherents to systems of religious intolerance?” (Wiley, 1851, p. 130). Wiley later called the suggestion that the state was founded by rogues “actual absurdity” (Wiley, 1851, p. 130). He argued that North Carolina’s early settlers were unfairly branded first by the British and later by U.S. textbook authors as roguish when they only “wished to take care of themselves, and to be, each one, answerable for his own soul” (Wiley, 1851, p. 133). Wiley’s focus remained on mending the historical record regarding North Carolina’s heritage.

Wiley noted that some teachers would worry that the North Carolina Reader contained little information about other places or states besides just North Carolina, and some might see advantages to using a textbook with a broader focus on history. These critics, Wiley predicted, were those who had already succumbed to a condition resembling slavery, because they looked to outsiders of their culture to define cultural norms and educate them and their children about their own region. “A true slave is readily recognized by his disposition to mimic his master,” Wiley argued (Wiley, 1851, p. 11). Parents who “permit their children to read books” not praising North Carolina or insisting on a more broad historical focus exhibited the same “servile nature” as slaves in their acceptance of textbooks opposed to their own best interest, according to Wiley (Wiley, 1851, p. 11). Since Wiley himself was a slaveholder and understood the power structures within the institution of slavery, he was clear that he did not want North Carolina’s white students to be in such a state when it came to learning and textbooks. He placed hope in those “patriotic minds” that had not yet been enslaved from learning themes and information in books published outside
the state or by authors who did not appreciate it (Wiley, 1851, p. 12). It is clear that Wiley believed his textbook would teach patriotism to young readers, but he also believed that publishing the textbook was in itself a point of pride for North Carolinians tired of having outsiders define their state. He assured readers of his belief that “the name and reputation of North Carolina are sacred” to him (Wiley, 1851, p. 12). He promised that he could “never despair of his own state” (Wiley, 1851, p. 12). His textbook was necessary because “the peculiar situation of North Carolina renders peculiar remedies,” Wiley explained (Wiley, 1851, p. 12). With such a lofty goal, Wiley believed he was justified in attacking anyone who criticized his textbook. Yet many of Wiley’s peers supported, rather than criticized, his efforts.

**Reception of North Carolina Reader.** North Carolina’s educational and political leaders were aware of Wiley’s textbook due to his political and social stature in the state. Early in his adult life, Wiley became a member of the Whig political party in North Carolina, mainly because the party’s platform included a push for state-funded internal improvements, especially public education. However, Wiley benefitted from the fact that the Democratic Party eventually took over this platform of internal improvements, allowing Wiley to serve as superintendent of schools under Democratic leadership with little conflict. He was more interested in educational improvements in the state than political partisanship. Wiley informed North Carolinians that his leadership and his textbook would help develop “men and women, to serve [North Carolina’s] interests with more zeal and more intelligence than those who preceded them” (Wiley, 1855, p. viii).
Wiley was not alone in his belief that his textbook filled a need in North Carolina. In the press release to his textbook, Wiley shared that he had “received many letters of encouragement from leading citizens – all of whom expressed a desire that it [The North Carolina Reader] might find its way into every home in North Carolina” (Wiley, 1851). Many of Wiley’s contemporaries did encourage his endeavors. David L. Swain, former governor of North Carolina and president of the University of North Carolina at the time of Wiley’s book release, noted that Wiley had succeeded not just to “awaken a more lively and general interest in the history of the State,” but also to encourage “patriotic emotions in the youthful bosom” of its future citizens (Swain, 1851). Leaders at Davidson College, St. Mary’s School, and Chowan Female Institute all expressed their appreciation for the book as well as their hope that all schools, private or public, would use it. M.R. Fory, the principal at the Chowan Institute, agreed with Swain that the North Carolina Reader was “well adapted to awaken in the youthful reader a public spirit” of loyalty and patriotism (Fory, 1851). Wiley’s friend Frank Wilson, who had encouraged him in his work as state superintendent, wrote to him that he was “not only pleased, but delighted with” his new textbook (Wilson, 1851). Acknowledging the valuable role of teaching state pride which Wiley’s book would help to fill, one friend, Mr. Walton, wrote to Wiley that his book would “fill a void long seriously felt in our primary schools,” which was that “young men graduate generally at the state university without knowledge of the topography, resources, and history of their own state” (Walton, 1851). An editorial in a Philadelphia newspaper, home of one of Wiley’s publishers as well as a town where Wiley himself lived for a time, offered a glowing
endorsement of the textbook, writing, “All his [Wiley’s] writings…encourage a laudable feeling of state pride, and a certain self respect which is as expanded to an elevated position in the states” (Newbornian, 1851). Public and political leaders inside and outside of North Carolina supported Wiley’s textbook.

Despite the widespread approval of Wiley’s *North Carolina Reader*, the textbook did have critics. Even David Swain, who had publicly endorsed Wiley’s textbook, privately requested a meeting with Wiley in which he hoped they could talk about revisions that Swain believed were necessary (Swain, 1851). W.H. Owen, professor of language at UNC, wrote Wiley an endorsement meant to be used publicly, but he included a private note asking to “whisper in your [Wiley’s] ear” some suggested improvements in language use and style (Owen, 1851). M.A. Curtis, a friend from Philadelphia, wondered in a letter to Wiley if the book’s focus was not “too local” (Curits, 1851). Wiley received a letter from one friend, Mr. Knox, who wanted to discuss the textbook’s treatment of the Regulators, a group of farmers whose protests against corruption in government, unfair taxes, and excessive legal fees culminated in the Battle of Alamance where they were defeated by North Carolina’s Governor Tryon and his army (Knox, 1851; Powell, 1989). Knox did not clarify what specific issue he wanted to discuss with Wiley about the Regulator Movement. When *The North Carolina Reader* was reprinted in 1855, Wiley’s treatment of the Regulators had not changed. In fact, none of these critics’ suggestions resulted in actual revisions to Wiley’s textbook in 1855. Since Wiley became state superintendent the same year that he wrote the *North Carolina Reader*, he focused his time elsewhere. He had published endorsements
from most of his critics anyway. Most of Wiley’s critics wanted to see his treatment of
certain subject matters revised or other small issues addressed, but they did not take issue
with his overall purpose of writing a textbook to train students in an unquestioned loyalty to
their state.

However, the public praise Wiley received was not universal. In a series of letters to
the editor of the *Raleigh Register* signed by an unknown character named Fitz Van Winkle,
the writer accused Wiley of forsaking good history writing in order to brainwash students
into loving their state. “Fitz” made fun of Wiley’s vision for progress in North Carolina, and
he accused leaders like Wiley of actually being impediments to real progress because of their
blind affection for their state. He lamented the kind of citizens that students raised on
reading Wiley’s textbook would become. A look at the correspondence of Wiley shows that
his friends rushed to assure him that “Fitz” did not represent true feelings of leaders in the
state. C.M. Codler explained his belief that “Fitz” was probably not a native North
Carolinian, but instead someone who hated and hoped to harm the state (Codler, 1851). Another friend reminded Wiley that “Fitz” was an “antipode as far as state feeling is
concerned,” and that he “would probably pay tribute all his life to Northern,” rather than
southern or North Carolinian institutions (Stubs, 1852). Seaton Gales, the editor of the
*Raleigh Register*, wrote to Wiley in order to warn him when “Fitz” sent letters to the editor,
assuring him that he only printed the letters out of obligation rather than agreement with the
gist of them (Gales, 1852). Wiley responded to the charges in “Fitz’s” letters by sending his
own letter to the editor of the *Register*, in which he explained to the newspaper’s readers that
to oppose the ideas in his textbook was to be unpatriotic and unloving of North Carolina. To recommend revisions was one thing, Wiley implied, but to question his book’s purpose was unacceptable to good North Carolinian citizens.

Many of Wiley’s friends tried unsuccessfully to determine “Fitz’s” real identity. One friend suggested that “Fitz” was a fan of another history book published in 1851, John Wheeler’s *Historical Sketches of North Carolina: 1584 - 1851*. He wrote that he believed “Fitz” might be a UNC professor, Dr. Joseph Hooper. His reasoning for this accusation was that Hooper “was out again today” to promote Wheeler’s book (Cooke, 1852). There is no record of Dr. Hooper every admitting to being “Fitz,” but his colleagues wrote to Wiley that they knew Dr. Hooper was part of a small group of professors who believed that Wheeler’s book deserved more commendation for its good historical scholarship than Wiley’s did for its attempt at instilling patriotism (Cooke, 1852).

While Wheeler did not share “Fitz’s” outright hostility toward Wiley’s textbook, he did think that historical accuracy should take precedence over teaching patriotism. Wheeler (1851) considered himself a professional historian. He researched, wrote, and published a book on North Carolina’s history, but his book was not meant for public school students. Wheeler wrote to Wiley and requested a meeting with him so that he could share primary sources he had obtained from a recent trip to England’s archives collection. Wheeler also hoped to get Wiley’s “kindly advice…as to the Church of England” and its role in early North Carolina history (Wheeler, 1851). Wiley never mentioned this letter or his looking at Wheeler’s documents in his textbooks. However, he included a copy of a speech that
Wheeler made at an event in Pennsylvania regarding the close ties between these two states. Despite Wiley’s apparent willingness to include Wheeler’s speech in his textbook, Wiley’s and Wheeler’s differing views on the purpose of history books created somewhat of a rivalry between the two authors. Wheeler noted in his book’s preface that student readers of his book would find a more “extended inquiry” in his book than their textbooks (Wheeler, 1851, p. xix). At the end of his book, Wheeler concluded that he would “heartily welcome” any additional authors to write about North Carolina’s history, but he pointed out that they would have to be willing to dedicate ten years of their lives to research, as he had done (Wheeler, 1851, p. 470). Wiley’s friends jumped to suggest that the North Carolina Reader was a better interpretation of North Carolina’s history than Wheeler’s. One friend complained to Wiley that “Wheeler has done the memory of some of [North Carolina’s heroes] great injustices,” and he expressed his appreciation that Wiley’s book corrected these wrongs (Spannagh, 1852).

Wheeler’s work represents a contrast to Wiley’s, especially given the two authors’ differing visions on the role of history. Wiley’s vision of providing students with a positive vision of their state’s history and instilling pride guided his textbook writing as well as his leadership of North Carolina’s common schools. His friends, many of whom represented political leadership in the state, encouraged his endeavors. His influence over schools, and by extension, textbooks, exceeded Wheeler’s in terms of framing North Carolina education. In fact, Wiley used his role as superintendent to encourage the adoption of common
textbooks in North Carolina’s schools, ensuring that he exposed students to his ideas, not the competing ideas of Wheeler’s or other authors with whom he did not share a vision.

In his first annual superintendent’s report in 1854, Wiley suggested that there were three needs when it came to textbooks in North Carolina’s schools. He wanted to first “drive from our schools bad books,” second “to prevent frequent and injurious changes” in the books, and lastly, “to secure the use of a uniform series” for all students (Wiley, 1854, p. 10). Wiley had hoped to meet these needs more directly by authoring additional *North Carolina Readers*, including literature books for elementary and middle school students. With his superintendent duties taking his time, Wiley asked a professor at the University of North Carolina, Reverend Fordyce Hubbard, to continue his work. Hubbard shared Wiley’s belief that the need for textbooks written for North Carolinians by her own citizens would “occur to intelligent and patriotic minds” (Hubbard, 1856, p. 5). He hoped to appeal “to the pride, the patriotism, and the interests of the people” in a time when “most of the popular reading books heretofore in use were calculated to instill in the minds of our youth a dislike of their own State” (Hubbard, 1856, p. 4). Wiley assured readers that in addition to securing Hubbard to author additional *North Carolina Readers*, he had also informed publishers that he would not use their books if he believed that they were in any way damaging to the reputation of North Carolina.

Not only did Wiley demand that publishers avoid disparaging the state, but he also insisted that they should not ignore the state either. He promised to encourage publishers to include addendums to their general geography or spelling textbooks that included
information specific to North Carolina. He characterized his desire to be sure students read positive portrayals of their region as a matter of “southern pride,” and he hoped that better textbooks would “teach our children and our people that mind and industry are not confined to one end of the Union” (Wiley, 1854, p. 11). Wiley believed that his textbook accomplished the goals he was asking other textbook authors to accomplish.

Even Wheeler eventually recognized that Wiley’s book appealed to leaders because of its aims rather than its historical methodology. Wheeler later included him in his 1884 book, Reminisces and Memoirs of North Carolina and Eminent North Carolinians, which included the North Carolinians Wheeler believed to have been influential leaders in his state. He included Calvin Wiley in this list due to his educational leadership as state superintendent of North Carolina’s schools.

**John Moore’s School History of North Carolina**

The economic and social upheavals in North Carolina caused by war and reconstruction help to set the context for the second book in this analysis, John Moore’s *School History of North Carolina* (1879). The North Carolina legislature officially approved John Moore’s history textbook for their public school students in the same year of its publication. The adoption of Moore’s textbook marked the beginning of a new stage in public school education in North Carolina as the system had been in disarray from the end of the Civil War up until the mid-1870s. Moore had to find ways to interpret recent historical events for a new generation of North Carolinian students.
Background. Public schools in North Carolina were closed during Reconstruction changes as a result of the conflict between native Democratic and mostly outside Republican leadership during the late 1860s. Conservative, white North Carolinians chose to have no public schools rather than have a program controlled by outsiders. They felt that it was safe to support public schools only after local leaders had regained control of the state’s political system.

By the 1870s, North Carolinians had regained political control, and Democratic leaders returned to the idea that education was the answer to the state’s struggles. After the Civil War, North Carolina again struggled with a decreasing population and continued economic stagnation. The pre-war conservative leadership of the state had regained political control and had begun to pursue policies supporting new industry and public education. These conservative North Carolinians viewed schools as once again helping to protect traditional society. The conservative North Carolina legislature elected in the mid 1870s set the tone for decades of conservative leadership that would reinstate old traditions, revitalize traditional political leadership, and roll back the radical changes Reconstruction had threatened.

Conservative leaders’ views on the connections between politics and education became clear when they approved an official resolution in the General Assembly that textbooks “should be free from sectarian and denominational and partisan bias in religion and politics,” and that teachers should instruct in such a way as “to foster love for the perpetual union of the States,” rather than just one region of the country (Knight, 1916, p. 232). This
was the conservative legislature’s way of suggesting that no textbooks should highlight social or economic advancements in the north while criticizing ways of life in North Carolina and the south. The North Carolina legislature of 1876 also ensured racially segregated schools through a mandate written into the new state constitution. Since North Carolina educators were, in many ways, beginning public education anew in 1876, records show that, initially, math and reading, rather than history, took center stage. But by 1879, the Board of Education was ready to provide students a history textbook that included more recent information than Wiley’s 1851 textbook. It was in this context that John Moore (1879), under the direction of the North Carolina Board of Education, wrote *A School History of North Carolina*.

John Moore had a professional background in politics and a personal interest in the history of North Carolina. He was born in Hertford County, North Carolina, where he grew up on Mulberry Grove Plantation. Moore was entrenched in the upper rungs of North Carolina’s society as a slaveowner, lawyer, writer, and politician. He was educated at a private school and graduated from the University at Chapel Hill. He made the valedictory speech to his graduating class of 1853. Moore read law and became a member of the bar by 1855. He spent the next few years practicing law and was active in the Democratic Party, unsuccessfully running for state Senate in 1856. In 1861, Moore joined and fought with the Confederate army. Because he was a slaveholder, Moore took his personal servant with him to battle during the Civil War. He served in the 2d Regiment of the North Carolina Cavalry and commanded the 3d North Carolina Battalion. After the war, Moore returned to Hertford
County, where he and his wife raised twelve children on their plantation, Maple Lawn (John Wheeler Moore Papers, # 2734).

Moore explored various subjects as a writer. His personal papers include poems he wrote, mostly sentimental verses on romance and love. He published a roster of North Carolina’s troops who had fought in the Civil War (Moore, 1882). Moore was a devout Christian who spent his final days preparing a history of Baptists in North Carolina. He also wrote a novel in 1881, *The Heirs of St. Kilda*. The novel follows the lives of wealthy, Southern slaveholders. In the preface to the novel, Moore wrote that he hoped to offer a “faithful picture of our lost civilization” as well as a “cry for vindication against the cruel slanders” of the antebellum south (Moore, 1881, pp. 5, 6). He noted that if the South had not lost the Civil War and experienced “wreck and change” in society, he would not have written the book (Moore, 1881, p. 5). Some of the themes about which Moore wrote in his novel – his wistfulness for the antebellum South, his interest in the Christian religion, and his appreciation for North Carolina – are also evident in *School History of North Carolina*.

**Analysis of School History of North Carolina.** Moore’s book begins with a description of the physical geography and inhabitants, including Native Americans, in North Carolina. He then turns to the state’s history, following its history from early colonization through the “resumption of self government” in North Carolina after Reconstruction (Moore, 1879, p. 257). Moore tended to focus on North Carolina’s governors or major military events in order to organize the chapters of his textbook. He was less likely to talk about social history, particularly in the earliest years of the state’s history. Chapter titles often mention
either the name of a governor or a major conflict. Moore’s treatment of potentially
controversial issues such as the Civil War focused on an historical version of recent events
that was acceptable to conservative elite whites, while placing North Carolina in a positive
light. Moore’s concluding chapters focused on advancements in North Carolina, including
literature, railroads, material development, and colleges.

While Moore did not make any explicit mention of his purpose for writing his
textbook, he did, much like Wiley, project a sense of pride in North Carolina throughout the
book. For example, when describing the “three distinct systems of rivers in the State,”
Moore wrote that these river systems “afford a truly magnificent water supply,” making
residents of North Carolina “blessed” (Moore, 1879, p. 5). In describing amounts of minerals
and primitive rocks in the state, Moore wrote that “those of North Carolina surpass any in the
Union,” again giving students reason to appreciate their state (Moore, 1879, p. 8). He then
suggested that in the coming years, “no equal portion of the earth’s surface…will be the
scene of industries so various and of such value” (Moore, 1879, p. 8).

These examples suggest that Moore wanted to instill a love and appreciation for
North Carolina among his readers. “North Carolina has always been, since its settlement, the
home of some highly cultivated people” Moore reminded students near the end of his
textbook (Moore, 1882, p. 272). Throughout the textbook, Moore made clear that students
should develop an awareness and appreciation of the greatness of North Carolina. He
discussed the importance of teaching students to value their state in a note to teachers at the
beginning of his textbook. He encouraged teachers to use his textbook to “inspire your
pupils with a spirit of patriotism and love for their native State. A little effort in this direction will show you how easily it can be done” (Moore, 1879, p. vii). Moore felt he had made teachers’ job easy with his presentation of North Carolina’s history.

Moore was mindful that he was writing for an audience who wanted Protestant Christian traditions to be upheld in public education. When he wrote of North Carolina joining the newly formed United States, Moore explained, “many hearts beat with gratitude to God for the promises of a glorious future” (Moore, 1879, p. 158). Moore characterized the century in which Europeans explored and began colonizing North America as a “Christian era” and “one of the most wonderful periods in the world’s history” (Moore, 1879, p. 17). In another passage, Moore noted, “God has blessed [North Carolinians] year by year with overflow barns” (Moore, 1879, p. 311). When Moore described military generals or political leaders whom he believed deserved praise, he often noted their Christian character. In his account of Confederate General Robert E. Lee’s death, Moore wrote that to those North Carolinians who had fought under Lee, “he was ever the ideal of the soldier, the gentleman and the Christian” (Moore, 1879, p. 254). In a discussion of the Ku Klux Klan’s actions during Reconstruction, Moore explained to his readers that negative circumstances led men to act out in ways they normally would not, since most of them were “respected for personal integrity and Christian character” (Moore, 1879, p. 273).

While Wiley focused exclusively on North Carolina history, Moore attempted to weave together the history of the state with that of the United States. He focused on governors and events that were specific to North Carolina, but when he wrote of the Civil
War, for example, Moore was careful to weave North Carolina’s experience into that of the United States. In these sections, Moore included phrases that reflected his desire to elevate North Carolina’s history over other states. Moore consistently looked for ways to reiterate to his readers that North Carolina performed better in United States history than outsider critics had acknowledged. In describing colonial conflicts in the state prior to the Revolutionary War, Moore noted that “Carolinians kept up their struggle for freedom and equality before the law” long before other colonists thought to do so (Moore, 1879, p. 50). Moore mentioned, during a discussion of issues affecting the United States, that there were still “many issues of local importance confined to North Carolina,” which students would have no other opportunity to read without books like his (Moore, 1882, p. 171). Yet Moore also wanted students to see how North Carolina’s history connected to issues in the United States. When he explained the events of Reconstruction in North Carolina, he included an explanation of some of the national issues that complicated the state’s return to the Union “in every possible way by both State and Federal authority,” although Moore also concluded his book with the assurance that North Carolinians desired nothing more than peaceful union with their nation without sectional divisions or “distrust” (Moore, 1879, pp. 260, 311).

Moore’s need to encourage state pride was most obvious when he wrote about events in North Carolina’s history that he believed had been interpreted differently or unfairly by non-North Carolinian textbook authors, especially those that offered a Union perspective on the Civil War and its aftermath. For example, when discussing the institution of slavery, Moore acknowledged that “some [Americans] doubted the morality of it” although none
questioned the legality of it” prior to the 13th amendment’s passage (Moore, 1882, p. 184). As a former slave-owner himself, perhaps Moore felt it important to make this distinction. After mentioning that the northern states sold their slaves or freed them, Moore unequivocally stated that “it was not possible” to do this in North Carolina (Moore, 1882, p. 184). He also insisted that “human nature is selfish in all regions, and, that Southern men should have clung to their property is no more than what their opponents would have done had the circumstances been exchanged” (Moore, 1879, p. 257). Moore did not believe that a Southern moral crisis explained the Civil War. Instead of accusing the state of lacking in morality or having too much avarice, Moore wrote that the state’s leaders simply upheld an institution that had existed since colonization in North Carolina and that had served the economy well. The fact that these leaders did not initiate slavery but only chose to fight for its survival made them, in Moore’s view, guilty of only a “blind ignorance” which led them to content themselves “simply with a policy of resistance to change” (Moore, 1882, p. 184). Moore never delved into the reasons for debates about the morality of slavery, the ambivalence of leaders in the state about the institution, or race relations in general. He merely offered that the state was ignorantly resistant to change. He also hypothesized in the same passage that had the state been left to its own resources “North Carolina would have been a free State, in the course of events, of her own accord” (Moore, 1882, p. 184).

Moore was unwilling to blatantly defend slavery, but he certainly did not want students to feel ashamed of their state’s history with the institution either. The fact that he spent so much time writing about slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction suggests that
Moore thought he needed to defend North Carolina. Moore wanted students to understand that, despite what other textbooks might suggest, the state of North Carolina was more of a victim than an aggressor, especially during Reconstruction. Moore introduced Reconstruction in North Carolina by suggesting “it would have been an easy task for a ruler who was both patriot and statesman to reestablish Federal authority in North Carolina” since “it was simply impossible to punish all who had fought against the Federal government” (Moore, 1879, p. 236). Instead, Moore noted that “an era of bitterness” meant that Reconstruction was harsh and painful on North Carolinians and led by either corrupt outsiders or native North Carolinians who had betrayed their home state (Moore, 1879, p. 260). Reconstruction, according to Moore, brought “many unnecessary changes that were rendered more distasteful by the harsh manner of their accomplishment” (Moore, 1879, p. 245). Moore accused northern congressional leaders of lying just to get control over the south, writing that “it had been repeatedly announced that no State could thus sever her connection with the Union; but when the legally elected Senators and Representatives from North Carolina reached Washington, they found that this doctrine was reversed, and were told that they could not take part in national legislation” until Reconstruction terms were met (Moore, 1879, p. 262). Moore neglected to mention that Congress turned these North Carolinians away because they were the same leaders who had served in the Confederate congress during the Civil War, and Congress believed that this act showed North Carolina’s unwillingness to change, even after being defeated. Moore consistently put his objectivity aside when he believed the actions of North Carolina could be explained with interpretations
more favorable to the state. His purpose was to present a positive version of North Carolina history that both celebrated and defended it. Moore suggested to instructors, “in every boy and girl is a latent feeling of pride in whatever pertains to the welfare of their native State, and this feeling should be cultivated and enlarged, and thus the children make better citizens when grown” (Moore, 1882, p. vii). He remained consistent in his goal to offer North Carolina’s leaders as well as students a textbook that glorified the state and therefore encouraged loyalty to it.

Reception of School History of North Carolina. North Carolina’s political leadership appreciated Moore’s efforts in writing a textbook to help achieve the goal of making better future citizens. By the time the school board adopted Moore’s textbook as an official public school North Carolina history text, the public school system in North Carolina was more secure. Yet, Moore did not include the obvious references to patriotism and citizenship like Wiley. Considering the upheaval of the Civil War and Reconstruction, perhaps Moore needed to tread more carefully than Wiley. Moore may have been responding to the third party coalition of farmers, poor whites, and blacks that would eventually threaten the political stability of the state. This Populist Party was demanding a more equitable education that fairly dispensed funds across North Carolina counties and potentially included integrated education in regions where there were not enough funds to support segregated schools. They believed equal education among class and race was the best way to ensure progress for the state (Beeby, 2008). Given Moore’s beliefs as well as those leaders who chose to adopt his textbook, it is likely that Moore did not want to provoke
this populist coalition. At the same time, Moore managed to satisfy the needs of the more conservative element that led the state and the North Carolina Board of Education at the time of his textbook’s publication.

Moore’s willingness to uphold North Carolina’s traditions in his textbook made it useful in public schools, according to the Board of Education. Wiley’s leadership as superintendent had helped to lay groundwork for the leaders in the late 1870s and 1880s to oversee authorship and publications of school textbooks. The North Carolina Board of Education clearly felt free to officially recommend, adopt, and even demand revisions of textbooks by this time. Moore acknowledged in his book that it was only after he made revisions demanded by the Board of Education that they chose to officially adopt his textbook for North Carolina’s schools.

In the preface to a second edition of his textbook, Moore acknowledged that the North Carolina Board of Education “expressly reserve(d) to itself the right to require further revisions,” although an examination of the various versions of his textbooks suggests that these future revisions were minor or grammatical ones that did not significantly change the book’s content (Moore, 1881, p. iii). For example, Moore’s 1882 textbook included fewer pages dedicated to North Carolina revolutionary leader John Harvey than the 1879 one had, but the general interpretation of Harvey’s role in North Carolina’s history did not change. Despite the lack of official significant edits, Moore was not without his critics regarding outside editorial suggestions. The Salisbury based Carolina Watchman published an editorial in 1880 noting that Moore had not made enough revisions or corrected enough
errors. The paper charged, “the state board of education and the superintendent of pubic instruction have passed on it [Moore’s textbook] and pronounced it a perfect daisy” (Carolina Watchman, 1880, p.2). The editors went on to argue, “many of those who have endorsed the book so highly have done so on principle” that Moore’s purpose was laudable (Carolina Watchman, 1880, p. 2). The Watchman argued that they would rather have no textbook than one with errors.

The Board of Education must have been pleased with the changes Moore did make since his textbook continued to be published for official use in North Carolina’s public schools through 1892. In an 1882 advertisement of Moore’s textbook, publishers assured readers that it “fosters a spirit of state pride in the minds of our children such as to make them better and truer sons and daughters of North Carolina” (Moore, 1882, p. 370). Moore and members of the Board of Education continued to correct errors in his textbook so that by 1890, even the Carolina Watchman ceased to criticize the textbook and instead applauded it for “the rising generation of North Carolinians” it influenced to be “devoted” to their state (Carolina Watchman, 1890, p. 3).

From one particularly important peer, Moore received a mixed review. Cornelia Phillips Spencer, who would go on to write her own North Carolina history textbook, was largely unimpressed with Moore’s textbook, writing to UNC’s President David Swain’s wife, “Have you seen Major Moore’s History of North Carolina? I think I never have read a book so full of errors” (Spencer, 1879). Spencer went on to note that she had contacted Moore with her critique of his book, and that “he was gentleman enough to write and thank me for it
– and ask me for a list of errors. Which I mean to send to him!” (Spencer, 1879). There is no further record, other than Moore’s acknowledgment of Spencer’s help in his textbook’s preface, as to his response with regard to edits. At any rate, Spencer shared many political views and historical interpretation of events like Reconstruction with Moore. This shared vision is evident in Spencer’s North Carolina history textbook.

**Cornelia Phillips Spencer’s *First Steps in North Carolina History***

By 1889, North Carolina’s education system had stabilized from the upheavals of Civil War and Reconstruction. Conservative Democrats had gained control over the fusion political party of Populists and Republicans and were adapting the public school system to support their vision for the future. Cornelia Phillips Spencer’s 1889 textbook, *First Steps in North Carolina History*, responded to these conditions in much the same way as Wiley and Moore had done in prior decades.

**Background.** Cornelia Phillips Spencer was born in New York, but her father relocated the family to Chapel Hill, North Carolina when she was still an infant. She lived most of her life in Chapel Hill, with the exception of a few years when she lived with her husband in Alabama. Spencer did not have formal schooling, but her home education made her an avid reader. Her father was a professor at the University of North Carolina (UNC), and Spencer was accustomed to socializing with UNC professors. One of her brothers became a professor at UNC, while another followed a career in politics, becoming U.S. solicitor general under Republican President Grant. Spencer was well-connected among influential families in North Carolina, even tutoring some of their children. Between the
years of 1870 and 1876, Spencer authored a weekly column, the *Young Lady’s Column*, in the North Carolina newsletter *The Presbyterian*. Stressing her belief in the importance of education for both boys and girls, Spencer (1876) wrote in one of these articles that parents should always read to their children, encourage them to read, and maintain reading material at a high level. Perhaps because of her family’s background in education as well as her proximity to the state’s university, Spencer remained dedicated to education in North Carolina throughout her life. When old age demanded that Spencer leave Chapel Hill to live with her daughter in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a local paper editor wrote that the town was losing a “fixture – one of the landmarks at the site of our chief seat of learning. Whenever one thinks of Chapel Hill, one thinks of Mrs. Spencer…” (untitled newspaper, 1899). In 1895, the University of North Carolina bestowed Spencer with an honorary degree, making her the first woman to receive such an honor.

Spencer, like Moore and Wiley, was a member of the privileged class of society built on shared race, religion, and economic status. She grew up in a household served by slaves, a lifestyle she continued when she married and had her own home. Spencer’s relationship with the enslaved persons in her life was complicated. She maintained contact with one of her former slaves years after the Civil War. In 1899, Spencer wrote to Cinderealla Shepherd of her fondness for their friendship, noting that she had “always lived in peace and friendship with colored people, and am proud now in my old age to think they are my friends and remember me with kindness. I hope to meet many of them on the other side of the dark river” (Spencer, 1899). However, Spencer’s sense of appreciation only went so far as she
made clear a couple of decades earlier, writing “give the negro a fair chance – be just and generous to him, but instill into the mind of every white over whom you exert any influence, a sense of his superiority, as a white, and a horror of mixed races as forbidden by God and man” (Spencer, 1872). Spencer often wrote of her fears of race mixing in North Carolina, especially by the time she wrote her history textbook, when poor whites and blacks were political allies in the populist movement seeking to stand up against leaders from Spencer’s own social class.

Spencer did not hold political office in North Carolina, but she was politically well-connected. She tended to identify with a conservative political viewpoint that wanted to see North Carolina grow while being controlled by the elite of society. Spencer wanted the state to exist without outside interferences and without major changes to social status quos or divisions in society. She shared Wiley’s belief that public education should support, not threaten, traditions. Spencer had positive correspondence with both Whigs and Democrats, so party affiliation seems to have been less important to her than a shared interest in promoting North Carolina’s traditions (Wright, 1997). Her brothers were members of opposite political parties. She dedicated another book she had written prior to her textbook, titled *The last ninety days of the war in North Carolina*, to the former state governor and president of the University of North Carolina, David Swain. Swain began his political career as a Democrat but ultimately affiliated with the Whigs. Yet, Spencer went to great lengths to defend Swain’s political adversary Democrat Governor Zebulon Vance’s actions and decisions during the war. Ultimately, Spencer closely aligned herself with the
Democratic Party, as she disagreed with the new Republican party of North Carolina. She suggested to readers of her textbook that most “Southern white people…fell into strict lines of opposition to the Republican party,” and she appears to have agreed with them (Spencer, 1889, p. 231). These political alignments helped to keep Spencer well connected among North Carolina’s influential leaders.

Spencer enjoyed a particularly close relationship with David Swain and Kemp Battle, both whom served as president of the University of North Carolina and who often sought Spencer’s advice on the school. When Battle became President of the University, he wrote to Spencer, asking that she “always talk to me candidly and fully” in giving him advice about leadership (Battle, 1876). Given that women rarely influenced 19th century politics in North Carolina, Spencer enjoyed strong political connections. Spencer received endorsements by letter from Battle, Swain, former Zebulon Vance, and other politically powerful individuals. These friends supported her effort to write a North Carolina history book.

**Analysis of *First Steps in North Carolina History*.** In 1889, Alfred Williams & Company published Spencer’s textbook, *First Steps in North Carolina History*. In the textbook, Spencer sought to convey a conservative and traditional story about the history of North Carolina. She wanted her textbook to instill a moral code for future generations of North Carolinians and “to do justice to North Carolina, and to place beyond cavil or reproach the attitude of her leaders” (Spencer, 1889, p. 5). In fact, she initially began writing articles and books about North Carolina because of her concern about the state’s future, especially after the “strife and revolution” of the Civil War and its aftermath (Spencer, 1889, p. 14).
After the Civil War, Spencer was concerned about the changes that were occurring in her state, especially during Reconstruction. Her friend and former North Carolina governor Zebulon Vance encouraged her to write the book, *The Last Ninety Days of the Civil War in North Carolina* (1866), as a distraction to the woes of Reconstruction. Unfortunately for Spencer, she could not be distracted from what she saw as the most problematic effects of Reconstruction. In 1870, the University of North Carolina closed its doors, succumbing to the politics of Reconstruction as well as post-Civil War financial troubles. Spencer lobbied for four years to get the university reopened and safely back in the control of North Carolinians, rather than Republicans or northerners who were interested in reconstructing the state. She received the news that the university would be reopened in 1875. Spencer gained a lasting fame in university lore for ringing the bell at the university to announce its reopening (Phillips, 1949).

Spencer wrote during the long shadow of the Civil War, Reconstruction, and Redemption, at the same time when the state was experiencing progress in terms of economy and education. During this period, North Carolina was seeking to enhance all public and private programs, including education. As part of that process, Spencer wanted students to appreciate their heritage, much like Wiley and Moore. She was direct in her efforts to encourage students to “feel each fibre thrill” that would come from their learning about the proud history of their state (Spencer, 1889, p. v).

Spencer, like Moore, organized her book around political figures and military conflicts. These similarities are not surprising given the fact that Spencer helped to edit
Moore’s book and would have been familiar with its organization. Spencer began her book with a description of the state’s “first inhabitants,” and she carried the history of the state from colonization through Reconstruction, ending with a chapter on North Carolina’s resources and future prospects (Spencer, 1889, p. v). She concluded that “in the last ten or fifteen years North Carolina has taken many steps far in advance of any former progress,” and she reminded students that “all this has been effected by the aroused spirit and the steady industry of our own people, unaided by outside influence” (Spencer, 1889, p. 253).

Like Moore, Spencer suggested that European exploration and colonization of North Carolina was divine. “The whole country teemed with abundance, and seemed as if the Creator had intended it for the abode of a great and prosperous and powerful Christian people,” Spencer wrote (Spencer, 1889, p. 8). She also emphasized the fact that Sir Walter Raleigh was a “good Christian” in her positive description of the explorer (Spencer, 1889, p. 20). Spencer shared Moore’s desire to give credit to God for the success of the United States. In describing the contributions of George Washington to the cause of independence and nation building, Spencer explained to her readers, “to him more than to any other man is owing, under God, the final triumph of the American people” (Spencer, 1889, p. 101). Just as Wiley believed that educating students about their heritage and religion was a sacred duty, Spencer reminded students that “honest, God-fearing, earnest people” founded North Carolina (Spencer, 1889, p. 63). By pointing students to the virtues of these “earnest” founders, Spencer believed she could help to instill a love of North Carolina in her young readers (Spencer, 1889, p. 63).
Spencer opened her textbook by saying it would “interest and instruct the boys and girls of North Carolina” (Spencer, 1889, p. ii). She sought to dispel the notion that North Carolina had not been successful. In the introduction, Spencer stressed that North Carolina’s history was marked by slow growth, but that was preferable to Northern states, where growth came quickly and at the expense of morals and good manners, leaving citizens “aggressive and more calculating” (Spencer, 1889, p. iii). She noted that North Carolina’s history had “few romantic incidents,” but she suggested the reason could be that “Heaven had perhaps done too much for us” with the wonderful climate, soil, religion, traditions, and other blessings to be found in North Carolina (Spencer, 1889, p. iii). Spencer reasoned that a harsher climate or cities plagued with overcrowded slums such as those in the North might have made citizens less than genteel. Spencer surmised that had North Carolina not been blessed with certain geographic and cultural advantages, “we might have developed more activity, exhibited more perseverance, and built our walls more rapidly,” but it would have been ultimately damaging to citizens’ morals and strengths (Spencer, 1889, p. iii). Spencer believed progress in North Carolina had been productively moderate, saying that the citizens of the state were “steady, modest, sincere, and brave” (Spencer, 1889, p. iv). She was concerned that North Carolina was being unfairly criticized for its slow growth, and she wanted students to know that their state was “worthy of high honor” (Spencer, 1889, p. v). Spencer believed that if students understood these themes, they would develop “a new attachment to the land of their birth” and a “fresh zeal” to prove themselves worthy of their state citizenship (Spencer, 1889, p. v).
Spencer wanted to deliver a glowing description of the future of North Carolina’s past, present, and future. She focused on a North Carolina perspective as opposed to an outsider view. She argued, “it has been our fault that we have left our story so long to other hands” (Spencer, 1889, p. v). By reading a North Carolina perspective on state history, Spencer reasoned, students would be more likely to develop an accurate and prideful understanding of their state. Spencer believed that it was “one of the brightest signs of our new day that more and more books about North Carolina are called for,” but the key to this encouragement was that “more and more are written by our own people” (Spencer, 1889, p. iii). She wanted to write about North Carolina’s history in the context of the “new day” that was emerging after Reconstruction, and she saw cause for hope for public education in that it would help to produce loyal North Carolinian citizens (Spencer, 1889, iii). Spencer was concerned that North Carolina’s students were overexposed to histories of the state that were written by people from outside the state, and she believed her textbook sought to address this problem.

Spencer suggested that the historical events included in her textbook would appropriately and finally show “the world that North Carolina is worthy of high honor” (Spencer, 1889, p. iv). She explained the reasons why North Carolina may not have received this honor in other historical narratives. For example, in discussing religious leaders in the colony of North Carolina, Spencer noted that Episcopalian ministers wrote letters that described North Carolinians negatively and, in Spencer’s opinion, unfairly. These ministers met with resistance as they tried to establish churches in the colony. Spencer saw this
resistance as evidence of an independent, hard-working people naturally suspicious of established institutions, but the ministers attributed their struggles to a generally backward and irreligious people. “They complained a great deal, and had no good words to say of Carolina or its people,” Spencer wrote, going on to suggest that this attitude not only hurt North Carolina’s reputation elsewhere, but also the effectiveness of the Episcopalian ministers, “who did very little good and had little or no influence” (Spencer, 1889, p. 41).

Spencer also criticized William Byrd’s book The Dividing Line, published in 1841, in which Byrd had few kind things to say about the North Carolinians with whom he worked to survey the official dividing line between the two colonies in 1728 (Spencer, 1889, pp. 60-61). Spencer wrote that Byrd “was mistaken, as people are apt to be who judge in a hurry from slight observation” (Spencer, 1889, p. 61). Spencer was quick to negate the contributions of people like the Episcopalian ministers or Byrd, whom she believed had been unfair to North Carolina and had a negative influence on the state and its history.

When Spencer was not defending North Carolina against critics, she was noting the state’s high honor. She used military conflicts to highlight the bravery and contributions of North Carolina’s soldiers. Speaking of the French and Indian War, she noted that “the answer of North Carolina to this call was prompt and generous,” making sure students knew that the state’s role in the conflict was just as important as states like Virginia, which was home to the military leader and future president George Washington (Spencer, 1889, pp. 73-74). Spencer did not want to undermine Washington, but instead wanted to elevate her own state’s history to the status of Virginia.
Even when North Carolinians did not think a military conflict was popular, as was the case with the Mexican War, Spencer noted that the soldiers still completed “their whole duty in the modest, manly, steady fashion always characteristic of North Carolinians” (Spencer, 1889, p. 190). Her textbook is filled with statements such as these, serving to remind readers that North Carolina had always been an important part of the United States, and a state filled with brave and good people deserving of praise rather than critique. Noting North Carolina’s contribution to the Civil War, Spencer wrote that “every life laid down was that of a hero. These men died in obedience to the call of North Carolina. It was their duty to go: they went gladly, proudly, and died, knowing that their name and fame would never pass from the memory of their native State” (Spencer, 1889, p. 212). She concluded her book with the assurance that “North Carolina may ever be depended upon to do her share toward the maintenance of truth, justice, and religion” in the nation’s future (Spencer, 1889, p. 265). Her textbook aimed to help students see that their state was every bit as good as other states. Spencer, not unlike Wiley and Moore, was overt in her efforts to not only provide students with an historical understanding of their state but to encourage their love for it.

**Reception of First Steps in North Carolina History.** Leaders in North Carolina and friends of Spencer’s appreciated her attempt to provide students with an accurate, patriotic view of North Carolina’s history. The press release for Spencer’s book, published in many of North Carolina’s newspapers, promised “a book of pleasant reading in which the whole story of the State is told, from the days of the early explorations of the gallant Sir Walter Raleigh to the present time,” and it later praised Spencer as being “alive to the best interests
of the State” and its future (Editorial, 1873). One friend wrote to Spencer that “we [North Carolinian citizens] all owe you a vote of thanks for the History” included in First Steps (Winston, undated). The author of her obituary reminded readers that Spencer had written a history book that “was a text used in the North Carolina schools for many years” (1908). Despite this record of praise for Spencer’s book, the North Carolina Board of Education refused to recommend her book for use in schools and instead encouraged a boycott of it. The rejection of Spencer’s book was not without controversy. The Charlotte Chronicle wrote in 1890 that the state’s leaders refused to “acknowledge state talent” evidenced in Spencer’s book.

Although Spencer’s book was full of attempts to instill pride among its readers, some felt she was too neutral on certain topics. Spencer’s friend George Winston praised her for this tendency toward neutrality, writing that she had “given a silent rebuke to the wholesale flattery that has constituted the main part of our North Carolina histories hitherto” (Winston, undated). Another friend of Spencer’s, Alex McIver, assured her that he was “astonished at your friends justifying as many of them do the exclusion of your excellent and charming little books from the public schools…it is however but an indication of the times in which we live” (McIver, 1890). The Charlotte Chronicle’s editor suggested, “Southern people are backward in this respect. They are too apt to place all writers under a ban, whenever they tell an unpleasant truth” (1890). Spencer defended her book, writing in a letter to the Chapel Hill Daily Chronicle that she did not know of “a single instance in which a State or Nation was made great and glorious simply by declaring at all times and in all companies that it was so”
Spencer only deviated slightly from the approaches used by Wiley and Moore to provide glowing accounts of North Carolina’s history. What seems to have led to trouble for Spencer’s book was her treatment of the Mecklenburg Declaration.

Most historians agreed that leaders in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina declared the rule of Britain’s King George III null and void in 1775 as long as there was revolutionary conflict going on in the colonies. There is evidence of such a document, known as the Mecklenburg Resolves (McKnitt, 1960). However, some North Carolinians believe that leaders in Mecklenburg County went further in their revolutionary activity a few days later and declared North Carolina independent of British rule a full year before the 1776 Declaration of Independence. Controversy over the declaration exists to this day. To complicate matters, there is no known documentary evidence for this declaration. The original claim for the Mecklenburg Declaration came from John McKnitt Alexander, whose father was a clerk in Mecklenburg County in 1775. Alexander wrote about the Mecklenburg Declaration in the Raleigh Register in 1819. Just after the publication of Alexander’s claim, Thomas Jefferson responded that the Mecklenburg Declaration was a fraud. Years later, the North Carolina legislature responded by stating their support for the Mecklenburg Declaration’s existence. The day of the declaration’s signing, May 31, 1775 was made a state holiday, and the event was required to be taught in public schools (Nevins, 1938).

After talking to fellow historians, Spencer made the decision to downplay the Mecklenburg Declaration in her writing. She was influenced by her brother, Charles Phillips, a professor at the University of North Carolina who had written an article in 1853 pointing
out the fallacies in the story of the Mecklenburg Declaration (McKnitt, 1960; Nevins, 1938). Spencer gave credit to North Carolinians for leading the way to independence at Mecklenburg, but she did not make an effort to distinguish the Resolves from the Declaration. The fact that she suggested that Mecklenburg County led the way to independence at all was, according to one of her friends, nothing more than “a concession to public clamor and prejudice” (McIver, 1890). Spencer’s decisions regarding her treatment of this historical event caused divisions among her friends regarding their opinion of her textbook.

Although she was a Democrat, Spencer tried to placate leaders on both sides of the political debate. She wrote a letter to former North Carolina Governor Zebulon B. Vance, leader during the Civil War, apologizing to him if he believed he looked bad in her descriptions of the end of the war in the state (Spencer, 1889). She also wrote a letter to Governor Graham where she admitted that she struggled to address “some delicate issues” that occurred during former Governor David Swain’s leadership of North Carolina, writing that she did not want to hurt her friend’s reputation (Spencer, 1866). These letters suggest that Spencer worked hard to present a fair picture of North Carolina, even when her leaders made less than perfect decisions. Despite the controversy surrounding some of her writing decisions, Spencer still presented readers with an overall message extolling the greatness of North Carolina and supporting some of the same institutions that Wiley and Moore had written about before her. In fact, Spencer’s publishers advertised her book as having been “carefully, thoroughly and extensively revised and corrected by the author and the state board
of education” (Moore, 1892, p. 372). Publishers called Spencer’s book “most accurately and charmingly written, setting forth the story of our state with the fascination of a romance” (Moore, 1892, p. 372).

Shared Themes Among the Three Textbooks

Wiley, Moore, and Spencer wrote on common themes. Focusing on these common themes is not to minimize the variations among the three textbooks, but analysis shows that each textbook’s author shared a willingness to set objectivity aside when they wanted to use their textbook to achieve a certain goal for the readers. These goals included instilling respect for shared institutions like Christianity and encouraging their loyalty and love for their state. Even if one looks past shared goals for writing among Wiley, Moore, and Spencer and instead examines specific subjects in each book, a common thread connects the three authors in their attempts to interpret certain historical events in similar ways. For example, in writing of early attempts at colonization in Carolina, Moore wrote of Sir Walter Raleigh’s “noble qualities,” contrasted against Governor John White, who had neglected in “fulfilling his duty to the poor people at Roanoke who were waiting so anxiously for his return” (Moore, 1879, pp. 15, 27). Wiley and Spencer shared similar praise for Raleigh and disdain for White (Spencer, 1889, p. 17; Wiley, 1851, p. 97). On the subject of secession and Civil War, all three authors made a concerted effort to interpret historical events in a certain way for students. The authors’ treatment of the antebellum period reflects the similarities in their approaches. The following sections note the ways in which these similarities existed.
Similar interpretations of secession and war. Writing nine years before the secession of North Carolina from the United States, Wiley hinted that all classes of whites fared well in the state, suggesting that when “compared with… the inhabitants of some of the States! Every class and every interest will here be heeded, and protected, and fostered” (Wiley, 1851, p. 87). Although Wiley and his political party, the Whigs, were not secessionists, once North Carolina seceded from the Union, the question of politics became less of a priority than issues of “loyalty” and “patriotism” to his beloved state of North Carolina (Wiley, 1863, p. 3). Wiley understood the Confederacy’s way of life. He had grown up in a slave-owning family. He spent the years of the Civil War fervently fighting for schools to remain open despite the temptation to declare all such institutions frivolous in light of the military struggle taking place. One of the main motivations for this work, as Wiley explained to Governor Ellis and the citizens of North Carolina in his written public appeal to keep schools running, was that education was the best defense Southerners had for teaching their students why there was fighting and why they should support the Confederate cause. Even after Reconstruction had accomplished what the Civil War did not, namely the shutting down of the North Carolina public school system, Wiley appeared in 1863 to encourage teachers and educators to write textbooks that portrayed the southern cause in a positive light (Whitescarver, 2002). Wiley continued to believe that a strong education program was the key to building strong future citizens even during a societal upheaval like the Civil War. This belief, coupled with his loyalty to his state and its institutions, led Wiley to push for open schools during the war.
Wiley pushed for this goal not just because instructors could educate students, but because they could interpret a society under attack for them. Wiley had already done his part to convince students that their state and its traditions were to be celebrated, but since he did not revise his book after 1851, he did not have the opportunity to address the subject of war and Reconstruction in his text. As to the institution of slavery, Wiley did not write much about it in his textbook. He simply presented slavery as a given in North Carolina, and he encouraged students to support the world the slaveowners led. In listing advantages that people who moved to North Carolina would find, Wiley noted, “here the slave owner can find swamp lands where slave labour …will always be profitable” (Wiley, 1851, p. 85). Wiley never delved any further into explanations regarding an institution that he presented as established and without need of debate.

Neither Moore nor Spencer had the option of ignoring slavery and its effects, since they both wrote after North Carolina had experienced secession, war, Reconstruction, and Redemption. Yet they shared with Wiley a goal of presenting the Confederacy in a positive light and encouraging their readers to value a certain kind of leadership in the state’s history. Both Moore and Spencer were willing to acknowledge that, in hindsight, slavery had been morally questionable, but both authors hastened to point out to students that slavery had been guaranteed by the United States Constitution. Spencer acknowledged, “slavery is a blot,” before she added that “the Constitution of the United States allowed and protected it” (Spencer, 1889, p. 183). Moore suggested that observers had “studied the slavery problem from every possible stand-point, except the constitutional legality of it. That, at least, was
fixed” (Moore, 1879, p. 199). Spencer concluded, “whether slavery was morally wrong or not, the South had a legal right to prosper” (Spencer, 1889, p. 183). She even hypothesized that a slave in the American South had a life “infinitely better than any lot that could have been theirs in Africa, where they were savages enslaved by other savages” (Spencer, 1889, p. 183). Moore suggested that before readers condemn southern slaveowners, they should consider that “the violent and unreasonable criticisms and denunciations of the northern reformers” were due at least equal condemnation (Moore, 1879, p. 184). Moore continued that, “had time and opportunity for gradual manumission and exportation offered, North Carolina would have been a free State… of her own accord” (Moore, 1879, p. 199). Moore and Spencer both struggled with the acknowledgement that slavery was morally wrong and instead focused on the legality of the institution. As Moore wrote, any questions slaveholders had about the morality of slavery could be “between himself and his God, and not between himself and his Northern brother” (Moore, 1879, p. 183). Despite the ambivalence Moore and Spencer showed as they addressed slavery’s morality, they were much more overt in their depictions of what happened in North Carolina after slavery. Both authors revealed biases against Reconstruction, freed African Americans, and the Republican Party in their writings about post-Civil war North Carolina.

Spencer and Moore both reminded their readers that North Carolina was the last state to secede from the Union. They suggested that this fact was true because while North Carolinians supported slavery and states’ rights, they knew that secession would only bring trouble to the state. Spencer theorized, “the heart of our North Carolina people was not in the
war” (Spencer, 1889, p. 212). The real trouble that came to the state, according to Spencer and Moore, was Reconstruction after the loss of the war. Moore argued that the program for “forcible reinstatement” of formerly Confederate states as well as legal protections for newly freed African Americans was “the most futile and abortive scheme ever proposed in America” (Moore, 1879, p. 263). He went on to suggest that Reconstruction, especially in its quest to “confer political power upon the negroes, and in that way establish a new system of rule and social life in the Southern states…was a great and cruel mistake in policy” that “entailed trouble and suffering on both races” (Moore, 1879, p. 263). Spencer noted that congressional legislation meant to reform the South was a “penalty” that native, white North Carolinians resisted because it “added to all the mourning caused by the war….our slaves were now not only freemen, but were at once elevated to civil equality” (Spencer, 1889, p. 229). She added, “as a rule…Southern white people… fell into strict lines of opposition to the republicans, who at once began to educate and drill the negroes in their political views, forseeing the importance of their vote (Spencer, 1889, p. 231).

Moore shared Spencer’s view that the blame for the ills of Reconstruction belonged to outsiders and the Republican Party. Moore lamented that “strangers from other States, and men entirely unused to legislation, had effected many alterations in our government and laws” in a way that “proved distasteful to a proud race that had so lately withstood” war (Moore, 1879, p. 245). Spencer suggested that African Americans would not have joined the Reconstruction movements had they not been manipulated. She explained, “The colored race, if let alone, were not disposed to be malicious or vindictive, but at the instigation of
their new friends, and under the excitement of their sudden elevation they had taken a wrong turn” (Spencer, 1889, p. 235). Moore shared this view, writing that in these “dismal” conditions, whites were barred from voting while African Americans were encouraged to vote and thus lead the state in the wrong direction (Moore, 1879, p. 219). Spencer and Moore both dedicated multiple chapters to their goal of revealing how horrible conditions in North Carolina were during Reconstruction. Both authors went on to conclude that it should be of no surprise to readers that native, white North Carolinians revolted against these conditions and, in what is now known as Redemption, restored North Carolina’s elite, conservative leaders to the leadership positions.

In explaining the Ku Klux Klan violence that accompanied this change in power, Spencer and Moore wrote that these events were not unexpected, given the realities of Reconstruction. Spencer wrote that “it was not to be expected that a high spirited people would not protest against” the policies of Reconstruction (Spencer, 1889, p. 229). It was in this context, Moore suggested, that the Ku Klux Klan formed. Both Moore and Spencer explained the group’s existence as a natural outgrowth of conservative whites’ unhappiness with the “unbearable” acts of Reconstruction (Moore, 1879, p. 271). Spencer compared the Ku Klux Klan to the “Regulators before Revolution” who had fought for freedom, noting that the Klan mainly punished “criminals whom the law had failed to punish” (Spencer, 1889, p. 236).

The tones of both Moore and Spencer suggested that readers should be grateful for the leaders of North Carolina who helped to bring reconstruction to an end by restoring
proper government and leadership to the state, whatever methods they employed. Spencer noted that the government, leaders, and institutions that defined the state had formed when “one by one the restrictions and humiliations put upon the South were removed” after Reconstruction (Spencer, 1889, p. 248). She hailed this “new era” of good leaders and strong education programs (Spencer, 1889, p. 250). Both Moore and Spencer wrote their textbooks when the state leaders with whom they associated had retaken political power after Reconstruction. In the way they described Reconstruction and its aftermath, the authors made it difficult for readers to feel anything but gratefulness and respect for these leaders. Wiley, Moore and Spencer shared a need to support current leaders especially in light of disruptions caused by slavery, secession, war, and Reconstruction. They also sought to show how North Carolinians’ responses to these events were logical and not to be considered extreme by readers. This theme of moderation in North Carolina’s history occurs often in each of the textbooks in this study.

**North Carolina as Moderate but Caught Between Extremes.** In all three textbooks, the idea of moderation is consistently praised. The authors defined moderation as being in the middle of extremes. In their writing about the social structures in society, economic norms, morality, slavery, and race relations, the authors found ways to highlight how North Carolina’s leaders usually chose a middle way of moderation. Continuing to highlight the uniqueness of North Carolina, all three authors pointed out how the state’s historical moderation stood apart from other states, where extremism was more likely to take root. Geographically, the authors presented North Carolina as caught between two extremes.
Above them were the aggressive states of the north that completely forsook a balanced agrarian lifestyle in favor of urbanism and manufacturing. Below them were the aggressive Deep South states that believed that cotton was king and that only the continuation of slavery would save the Union.

The theme of moderation appears early in all three books. Moore introduced the state’s climate as similar to its people in being “mild and equable” (Moore, 1879, p. 1). Spencer introduced the state as one whose “moderation has stood her in good stead” (Spencer, 1889, p. iv). She went on to suggest that it was a general moderation in life between the extremes of oppressive government and lack of freedom that allowed early settlers of North Carolina to avoid “harsh laws” and “great severity” of treatment that they received in other colonies (Spencer, 1889, p. 40). Because so many settlers simply wanted to live without the turmoil they had experienced in places like “unneighborly Virginia,” North Carolina saw few “quarrels and tumults,” according to Spencer (Spencer, 1889, pp. 39, 171). Moore agreed that it was North Carolina’s local leaders’ “sensible and moderate rule” that made settlers flourish in the state (Moore, 1879, p. 46). For example, he applauded the first governor of the independent state of North Carolina, Richard Caswell, for helping to find a moderate role for government between the absolute monarchy imposed by Britain and unbridled democracy suggested by others. Moore wrote, “between these two champions of opposing theories stood Richard Caswell, a man of excellent discretion and great practical common sense” (Moore, 1879, p. 116). Wiley suggested that the lack of turmoil during the early days of the state could be attributed to leaders and citizens who were moderate in
political and economic status. Wiley saw in the state “no appearance of waste or extravagance; but, on the contrary, the whole of the large population seem to be making enough to support to themselves” (Wiley, 1851, p. 50). Wiley believed it was the fact that North Carolina was economically diverse that made it more appealing than a state like Virginia, which held a much larger population of wealthy planters.

All three authors noted that many early settlers came to North Carolina to freely practice religion and that many of them fled other colonies where they had not been able to do so. “Religious persecutions were practiced in most of the American colonies” other than the more tolerant colony of North Carolina, Moore informed readers (Moore, 1879, p. 35). Even in discussing contentious topics like slavery, secession, and Civil War, Moore and Spencer highlighted the more moderate attitudes they believed existed in North Carolina. Moore suggested that if patience could have prevailed, the moderate “sense of the people” of North Carolina might have helped to avoid secession and war (Moore, 1879, p. 219). Spencer also noted that North Carolina delayed seceding from the United States in the hopes that there could be “reason among the furious parties” involved in the conflict (Spencer, 1889, p. 119). In their quest to acclaim the history of North Carolina, all three authors suggested that a moderate political and social atmosphere, when compared to other states or colonies, was a strong attribute. They attributed this atmosphere of moderation to the character of North Carolina’s first settlers who came to the land in order to enjoy more freedom and absence of extremism.
Authors’ treatment of Native Americans. All three authors vacillated in their
depictions of Native Americans. On the one hand, they noted the generosity of Native
Americans who tried to help settlers. On the other hand, the authors depicted Native
Americans as war-like, which in their view, helped to explain why Europeans took
possession of the land. These shifts in tone were dramatic and often jarring. For example,
Spencer called the Native Americans “revengeful and murderous” in one context, and then
on the same page, “kindly” savages (Spencer, 1889, p. 12). She presented Native Americans
as noble and ignorant when they were learning from the white settlers and hostile when they
were attacking them. Moore contrasted the good, white settlers of North Carolina with the
“treacherous” Tuscarora Indians who would eventually attack the town of Bath, North
Carolina (Moore, 1879, p. 10). He suggested that the Native Americans, unlike other North
Carolinians, led lives “filled with terror and apprehension,” hinting that white settlers brought
calm to the region (Moore, 1879, p. 11). Moore wanted students to believe that white
settlers’ aggression against Native Americans was usually a justified and necessary step
toward the growth of civilization. Given this created context, Moore suggested that it was
the calm and civilized settlers who tried to keep violence curtailed as they attempted to deal
with the less calm Native Americans. Wiley presented Native Americans in a manner similar
to Moore and Spencer, often noting Native American attacks or “treachery” (Wiley, 1851, p.
96). Yet, he also noted that for the first fifty years of North Carolina’s colonial existence,
there were no “open hostilities” between whites and Native Americans (Wiley, 1851, p. 120).
Wiley attributed this peace to the “acts of kindness and honest dealings” that North
Carolinians employed in their dealings with Native Americans, “paying them honestly” and “abstaining from acts of violence or hasty vengeance” (Wiley, 1851, p. 120). Although Spencer acknowledged the horror of warfare between white settlers and Native Americans, she noted that it was the “ruthless” Native Americans who made warfare so terrible (Spencer, 1889, p. 9).

All three authors projected a kindness and sympathy for the Native Americans, but within the context of the destiny of the European Christian settlers to own the land that was, according to Spencer, “apparently waiting for the white races of Europe to come and take possession of it” (Spencer, 1889, p. 8). Spencer opined that none of the colonizing European nations who met Native Americans believed that these natives “had any special right to the land,” but she also noted that “white men were peaceable and gave them presents” in order to fairly take some of the land (Spencer, 1889, p. 9). Moore argued that “the sixteenth century of the Christian era was one of the most wonderful periods in the world’s history” because it was the time period in which Christian Europeans settled the lands that became Carolina (Moore, 1879, p. 17). Moore’s implicit approval of the North Carolina settlers’ Christian beliefs was consistent among all three authors, particularly with regard to their willingness to favor and almost endorse the religion in their writings.

**Similar Treatment of Christian Religion and Beliefs in God.** The authors made few attempts to cover their approval and even advocacy for the Christian religion. They did not write as if they desired to convert students, but as if they assumed students would already respect Christian religious beliefs and Christian contributions to both history and present
society. For example, Wiley wrote of the physical geography of the state as having been “blessed by Heaven” (Wiley, 1851, p. 90). He described the first settlers of North Carolina as “impracticable, unaccountable, despised, and obscure people who desired to worship God” (Wiley, 1851, p. 133). Moore also noted ways in which North Carolina’s first settlers worshipped God, and he went so far as to note that it was a good thing that historical figures in the state had adhered to religion. In a passage noting the growth of the Presbyterian Church in North Carolina, Moore explained, “this church was especially active and efficient in refuting the teachings of the French atheists,” which he implied was a good achievement (p. 180). Spencer seemed to share Wiley’s and Moore’s veneration for North Carolina’s early settlers’ religion. As she described how North Carolina looked to early European explorers in the 16th century, she wrote that it “seemed as if the Creator had intended it for the abode of a great and prosperous and powerful Christian people” (p. 8). In her description of Sir Walter Raleigh, the explorer who had first attempted to put a permanent English settlement in North Carolina, she included in her praise that he was “a good Christian” (p. 20).

Wiley connected the colonial settlers’ religious beliefs to his students’ when he suggested that they should fear the same God their ancestors had worshipped. In a chapter on the importance of communal bonds in society, Wiley connected a belief in God to community, explaining, “no rational bad man can live in solitude and be happy: he who is placed in such a situation, at once feels himself to be in the awful presence of the Deity, and a sense of his own unworthiness overwhelms him” (Wiley, 1851, p. 136). In one of his
strongest endorsements of the Christian religion’s importance to North Carolina’s history and future, Wiley suggested, “true Christianity is the parent of rational freedom” (Wiley, 1851, p. 143). Moore also sought to connect the history of Christianity in North Carolina to current society when he referred to recent leaders, many of whom were still leaders when Moore published his textbook, as “the best men in all the land, many of them venerable for age was well as respected for personal integrity and Christian character” (Moore, 1879, p. 273). He later suggested that both past and present North Carolina’s leaders’ integrity and Christian character helped to explain why they placed such importance on education. An honest and religious man, Moore implied, was also an educated one. It was this belief that guided his desire to write his textbook in the first place. In this context, Moore believed that North Carolinians should take pride in the fact that some of their early, honorable leaders envisioned the need for a state-supported university in the nation.

**Shared Treatment of the University of North Carolina.** Wiley, Moore, and Spencer each noted the beginnings of the University of North Carolina in their textbooks. The authors treated this history in a similar manner, each seeking to highlight for students the benefits of a university in North Carolina. Each author praised the University of North Carolina as an example of the greatness of the state. Wiley described the University of North Carolina as “a richly endowed and flourishing college,” and he described the home of the university, Chapel Hill, as a place where students could “spend several days in examining the libraries, visiting the splendid halls of the societies, and in admiring the groves and grounds about the college, the tasteful and commodious buildings, and the general beauty of the
place” (Wiley, 1851, p. 49). Moore agreed with Wiley that the school was a “venerable institution,” and he noted that it “had given education to many men of renown” (Moore, 1879, p. 269). Moore described the university as “an institution of learning in which distinguished men were to be prepared for usefulness in almost every honorable employment among civilized men” (Moore, 1879, p. 163). Wiley believed that the university, which was supported by public funds, was a mark of civilized society in the state as well as good evidence that “the people of North Carolina have been fully awakened to the importance of this subject” of education (Wiley, 1851, p. 74). Spencer agreed that the university’s existence was evidence of a strong and honorable state fulfilling its own educational needs. In her account of the school’s founding by leaders during the revolutionary period of North Carolina, she wrote, “it is evidence of the high character and high purposes of these men that on the eve of a great war, in the midst of the tremendous responsibilities, embarrassments, and uncertainties of the time, they should bethink themselves of the importance of education and bind the new government to provide for it” (Spencer, 1889, p. 121). She later wrote that these early leaders’ efforts paid off, concluding that “the State University, conducted on liberal principles and keeping clear of political and theological disputes, attracted a large patronage from all the Southern and South-western States,” especially in the years leading up to the Civil War (Spencer, 1889, p. 193). Wiley perhaps best captured the pride each author expressed in their state’s university, writing “the university of Chapel Hill, beautifully located, and in a healthful region, is now one of the most distinguished literary institutions in the world. It is in a very flourishing condition” (Wiley, 1851, p. 74). All three authors were
deliberate in their efforts to ensure that their readers viewed North Carolina’s state-supported university as another reason to be proud of their state. Each of the three authors saw many reasons for their readers to take pride in the history of their state.

**North Carolina as the First to Defend Liberty.** Wiley, Moore, and Spencer focused considerable time in their textbooks trying to convince students that it was a fulfillment of destiny that European settlers colonized North America. They noted that in this new world, settlers found a place where they could flee oppressive governments and live in freedom. As Wiley, Moore, and Spencer described the freedoms that early North Carolinians embraced, they expressed similar desires to present North Carolina as active in the defense of personal liberties. The authors repeatedly presented the historical decisions of North Carolinians and their leaders as being connected to a deep attachment to individual liberties and their defense. From the initial settlement of North Carolina through the Revolution and into new statehood, all three authors suggested that North Carolina’s leaders and people were fervent in their quest to defend their personal liberties. For example, Wiley suggested that North Carolina owed its character to independent farmers looking for more freedom than they had in Virginia, and he wrote that North Carolina was often on the front of battle lines defending freedom. Wiley expressed hope for the future of his state in the “unconquerable love of liberty, and a strong religious sense” that he believed would continue to make North Carolina great (Wiley, 1851, p. 222). Moore included a note to educators in his preface in which he suggested that students must learn at an early age to value liberty. Spencer shared Wiley’s goal to encourage students to defend their liberty as their ancestors
had. She urged readers to “be prepared to honor and defend it [North Carolina] always” (Spencer, 1889, p. 2). Each of the three authors noted the bravery of the first Carolinian settlers’ defenses of liberty.

In characterizing the early settlers of Carolina, Wiley wrote “a fondness for political as well as religious freedom was a characteristic of them” (Wiley, 1851, p.102). Spencer introduced the first permanent settlers of North Carolina as people who came to “avoid bad government and religious persecution” in other settlements because “they wanted to be free” (Spencer, 1889, p. 22). Moore noted, “the people who were constantly enduring dangers and privations in Albemarle at once resolved that they would have no part” of oppressive government (Moore, 1879, p. 43). Moore agreed with Spencer’s contention that many of these citizens of Albemarle were former freedom-loving Virginian citizens who had fled to where “the tyrant of Virginia had no jurisdiction” (Moore, 1882, p. 38). He later wrote of North Carolina’s early settlers, “these men of the woods never wavered in their determination to be free (Moore, 1882, p. 50). Spencer agreed that these settlers “first found freedom here, and they meant to stay free forever, and were ready to fight for it” (Spencer, 1889, p. 23). Wiley recounted with a tone of appreciation for the fact that even George Bancroft, a northern author whose general American textbook was popular for many years of the 19th century, claimed that “North Carolina was settled by “the freest of the free; by men to whom the restraints of other colonies were too severe” (Wiley, 1851, p. 114). Throughout his book, Wiley reminded readers of the “strong attachment to liberty” felt by North Carolinians, and he argued that its first settlement, Albemarle, “was literally the nursery for liberty” in the
United States (Wiley, 1851, p. 108). Wiley, Moore, and Spencer also pointed to North Carolina’s historic attachment to liberty in order to explain times of civil disobedience in the state’s history.

North Carolina experienced quite a few rebellions in the proprietary colonial period, usually because the presence of corrupt and tyrannical governors or conflict over taxes led to citizens’ revolting. Wiley suggested that these events “fomented the spirit of resistance to oppression” in North Carolinians (Wiley, 1851, p. 112). In this context, the settlers could only be viewed as patriots. Writing about Culpepper’s Rebellion in 1678, Wiley reminded readers that the illegal arrest of the governor was not the act of “a handful of refugees from justice,” but “of a people who had enjoyed rights, and learned by enjoyment to know they’re worthy” (Wiley, 1851, p. 113). Because original settlers had fled oppression and come to North Carolina, he argued, it was impossible for them to “look quietly” when oppressive government interfered with their private lives and threatened their valued liberty (Wiley, 1851, p. 113). Moore agreed with Wiley’s conclusions, noting that “a century went by before all of America” became as free as these early North Carolinians had attempted to be (Moore, 1879, p. 51). He argued that despite the fact that North Carolinians who rebelled against oppressive governors or leaders had a reputation as “unruly subjects,” they were, “in all truth, wise and resolute patriots” (Moore, 1879, p. 44). Spencer also contextualized rebellions and events in early North Carolina as being evidence of the state’s early reputation for loving liberty. She reminded readers how many settlers fled various persecutions in other colonies because they wanted to be in “free Carolina” where they could “live as free as the
birds on the trees” (Spencer, 1889, p. 25). It was because of these origins that settlers resisted, Spencer suggested. Borrowing a phrase from Moore’s book in which he characterized North Carolina’s early founders as freedom-loving men of the woods, Spencer wrote, “these free folks in the North Carolina woods” wanted to retain the freedom for which they had moved to the future state (Spencer, 1889, p. 34). Moore concluded a chapter on rebellion in the proprietary period of North Carolina history by writing “thus it was, in the earliest days of our history as a people, that the men of North Carolina found means to resist the execution of laws enacted abroad for their oppression, and commenced a struggle which was to continue for a century” (Moore, 1879, p. 47). This determination, according to Moore, remained strong even as North Carolina left the turbulent Proprietary period and entered the Colonial and Revolutionary Period. All three authors shared similar interpretations of settlers’ devotion to liberty during these times as well.

Wiley wrote that as conflicts between Great Britain and the colonies increased, “in no place was more attention paid to these matters than in North Carolina” (Wiley, 1851, p. 210). Wiley used these events to illuminate how North Carolina was among the first to act when liberty was threatened. After describing the trials that the Stamp Act presented citizens of North Carolina and the ways they rebelled against it, Moore wrote about the “joyful news” North Carolinians received of its repeal (Moore, 1879, p. 77). In his explanation of the trials of the Stamp Act, he took great pains to clarify that if the British Parliament could tax Americans without their being represented, “Americans were no longer free,” an intolerable condition for North Carolinians in particular (Moore, 1879, p. 87). Moore hastened to
remind readers that the decision to rebel against England “was regarded as one of great importance and great gravity, if not of great difficulty” (Moore, 1879, p. 93). Moore went on to suggest that students “need no other assurance than that afforded by the character of the men into whose hands it was committed” to understand the seriousness of early North Carolinians’ choosing to move toward independence (Moore, 1879, p. 93). Defending liberty was, according to Moore, “a bold and hazardous step” of men “who dared to be free” (Moore, 1879, p. 87). Like Wiley and Moore, Spencer made clear that North Carolinians responded to threats to their liberty. She wrote, “in North Carolina particularly the people were very restive, and quick to resist anything like injustice or oppression” during the Revolutionary period (Spencer, 1889, p. 36). Noting a failed attempt by England to officially establish the Church of England in North Carolina, Spencer reminded students, “North Carolina was considered a free state: her people had not resisted bad government and stood out for their rights so long” to give them up over something as personal as one’s religious choice (Spencer, 1889, p. 62). Settlers simply had to wait “till the good time came when North Carolinians took the law into their own hands and got rid of kings and lords forever” (Spencer, 1889, p. 64). None of the three authors left readers to wonder how they felt about the American Revolution and its conclusion. In fact, each author was overt in praising American revolutionaries at the expense of the British.

Wiley, Moore, and Spencer each made clear that America, and specifically North Carolina, had more noble leaders than the apathetic or unskilled British or loyalists. Wiley explained that some of the loyalists who did offer to stand with North Carolina’s royal
Governor Martin were “the scum of society” who adhered “to the side that paid most liberally” rather than sharing the ideology of a given group (Wiley, 1851, p. 194). He could not fathom any other reason that true North Carolinians would not have supported the independence movement. For Governor Martin’s role in the fight against the Revolution, Wiley wrote that Martin did not understand “the integrity and virtue of the common people” who he ruled and whose loyalty he anticipated (Wiley, 1851, p. 194). These people, who did support Revolution and Independence, “were ever distinguished for their zeal, unanimity, and courage,” Wiley wrote (Wiley, 1851, p. 193).

Moore agreed that the state’s revolutionaries deserved credit for delivering “North Carolina and America from the dominion of a distant King and Parliament” (Moore, 1879, p. 97). Moore did not use words quite like Wiley’s in recounting revolutionary events in North Carolina, but he described British fighting in North Carolina as a “British invasion” that included an “inglorious descent” by Cornwallis and his troops against the Americans (Moore, 1879, p. 109). Spencer shared with Wiley and Moore a tone of bias against Britain’s leaders. “Poor Governor Martin! He could not understand how the people could be allowed to rule,” Spencer wrote of North Carolina’s royal governor at the time of Revolution, reminding students that opponents to the Revolution must have been opposed to self-government and liberty (Spencer, 1889, p. 4). Spencer noted that Governor Martin “would have been regarded more kindly by our people and mentioned more respectfully in our history but for his recommendation that the slaves should be incited to rise against and murder their masters” (Spencer, 1889, p. 104). She did not see nearly as many flaws in the American
leaders, on the other hand, writing that “such times called for an immense amount of wisdom, patriotism, prudence, and foresight; and we may say of our leaders that they acted not only with great dignity and judgment, but with proper spirit” (Spencer, 1889, p. 103). After each author described this context in which revolutionary colonists were heroes against corrupt British officials, they suggested that their readers should feel ultimate pride in knowing how North Carolinian men led the path from resistance to independence.

In noting the ways leaders accomplished this goal, each author specifically noted the contributions of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Describing events during the colonial period, Wiley noted that while he did not mean to “distinguish some counties in preference to others” in North Carolina, “Mecklenburg County is associated with illustrious deeds” (Wiley, 1851, p. 65). This notoriety was due to the leaders of the county declaring independence from Britain in 1775, a full year before all the colonies did (Wiley, 1851, p. 65). Wiley wrote that these leaders deserved an “honorable distinction” in history for being first to make such a declaration, and later in the book he wrote that events in North Carolina actually “set the ball of Revolution in motion” (Wiley, 1851, pp. 65; 222). Moore agreed with Wiley that leaders in Mecklenburg County took a bold first step towards liberty by writing their own version of a declaration of independence from England. He wrote that “all America, while arming for the war, was still protesting loyalty to the King, but these men of Mecklenburg leaped to a conclusion, the expediency of which more than a year of blood was required to impress on the minds of their countrymen” that America should officially declare independence from England (Moore, 1879, p. 89). Moore wanted students to realize the
significance that these men of Mecklenburg County made this statement over a year in advance of the 1776 Declaration of Independence. Like Wiley and Moore, Spencer was sure to give the authorship of the Mecklenburg Resolves credit for being “a noble and daring act of patriotism. Nothing so bold had yet been said in America, nor was said for more than a year after,” Spencer wrote (Spencer, 1889, p. 99). She also noted that leaders who signed the Resolves shared a “love of liberty” (Spencer, 1889, p. 95).

Spencer continued to heap praise on these revolutionaries. Spencer applauded the “amount of wisdom, patriotism, prudence, and foresight” that North Carolina’s revolutionary leaders exhibited (Spencer, 1889, p. 102). Spencer also applauded the citizens, “a strong and daring population,” who ultimately supported the move for independence from Britain (Spencer, 1889, p. 125). “They had shed their blood freely, not only to establish themselves there, but to establish American independence,” she seemed pleased to note in her recounting of the Revolutionary War successes (Spencer, 1889, p. 161). Moore agreed that North Carolinians should celebrate these men. His writing, like Wiley’s and Spencer’s, hinted at his belief that North Carolina deserved much praise for this leadership during the Revolutionary War. “Success meant freedom, and would make them patriots,” he wrote of North Carolinian leaders’ revolutionary efforts (Moore, 1879, p. 93). When the entire state of North Carolina ultimately needed to vote on the issue of declaring independence, Moore noted that “the final plunge had come, and North Carolina was ready for it,” writing that “in the annals of the world there is no prouder record than the entry made on the journals of the Halifax Congress,” which declared North Carolina’s independence (Moore, 1879, p. 111).
Concluding his treatment of the Revolutionary War and its results, Moore wrote, “at last North Carolinians lived under a government of their own making,” a desire they had had since their first settlements (Moore, 1879, p. 106).

Each author shared a similar interpretation of the Revolutionary period in North Carolina. However, while they agreed that leaders in Mecklenburg County had aided greatly in the Revolution, they differed as to what they believed actually occurred there. Wiley and Moore suggested that the leaders of Mecklenburg went so far as to actually declare their independence a full year before all thirteen colonies agreed to do so in 1776. Spencer, on the other hand, noted that the leaders had passed the Mecklenburg Resolves, which stated their intent to declare the King’s laws null and void until some solution between the colonies and the British was met. She specifically noted that leaders did not pass a Mecklenburg Declaration, as Wiley and Moore wrote, because “they were not ready for steps so bold” in 1775 (Spencer, 1889, p. 103). It was this contention of Spencer’s that there existed in history a Mecklenburg Resolves but not a Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence that caused many critics to suggest her book was not patriotic (McIver, 1980; Spencer, 1890; Chapel Hill Daily Chronicle). Spencer included high praise for Mecklenburg County’s role in the Revolution, but even later editions of her textbook did not include an endorsement of the Mecklenburg Declaration (Spencer, 1892). Wiley and Moore gave credence to its existence in their book and avoided receiving the same criticisms that Spencer did.

Despite their differences as to the existence of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, authors generally interpreted historical events in similar ways. Whether they
were looking at early exploration, treatment of Native Americans, or the Civil War, the basic amount of information and tone changed little in each textbook.

**Findings Concluded**

A look at the findings of this study reveals more significant similarities than differences among the textbooks. Analysis reveals that there were common themes that remained intact in history textbooks regardless of the author or the year in which they were writing. The authors shared a similar goal to write textbooks that would present North Carolina’s history in a positive way meant to instill patriotism in public school students. All three authors put forth historical interpretations supporting a conservative, white elite viewpoint. They considered it a point of pride to have histories of North Carolina written by natives of the state, and each of their textbooks were eventually adopted by the Board of Education. Even in areas where authors differed, such as in their presentations of the Mecklenburg Declaration, they ultimately returned to their theme of North Carolina’s greatness.

The historical narratives presented by the three authors told a story of early, Christian settlers more attached to freedom than in any other colony. These settlers were, according to all three authors, destined to defeat Native Americans and build the eventual state of North Carolina. The narratives also highlighted what made North Carolina and the South unique, noting that slavery was constitutional and that the north generally mistreated and misrepresented the state. Moore and Spencer iterated the ways in which North Carolina was an unfortunate victim of Reconstruction. Each of the three authors concluded their textbooks
by stating their hopes that readers would grow to appreciate and support the traditions and institutions of North Carolina as patriotic and productive citizens. The three textbooks analyzed provide adequate evidence and support for conclusions stating what the textbooks tell readers about North Carolina history in the 19th century.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

Summary

This study analyzed three 19th century North Carolina history textbooks to determine if there were any changes in the historical narratives presented in these textbooks over the time of their publications from 1851 to 1889, and it sought to better understand the political and social contexts in which authors wrote. Although there were minor differences, a pattern of similarities defined the relationship among the textbooks. All three authors sought to put forward a positive and uplifting narrative of North Carolina history. Wiley’s work set the tone for later 19th century North Carolina textbooks. Through the publication of his 1851 textbook, Wiley established a precedent that North Carolina history textbooks would function to indoctrinate students in an interpretation of North Carolina history that reflected conservative, white, elite values. Following the Civil War, Moore and Spencer picked up on these themes from Wiley’s textbook. Even when Moore and Spencer dealt with new historical events, such as the Civil War and Reconstruction, they maintained a focus on conservative values and indoctrination. All three authors hoped to instill a sense of loyalty and appreciation for North Carolina among their young readers.

In this chapter, I summarize the findings presented in chapter four, focusing on how the authors’ treatment of North Carolina’s history reflected their shared desire to indoctrinate, rather than educate, students. In 1961, John Wilson argued that the difference between education and indoctrination lies in the issue of inquiry. Educated students are
encouraged to question sources while indoctrinated students are not. The three textbooks analyzed in this research fit in a tradition of 19th century educational indoctrination reported by numerous scholars (Barth & Shermis, 1980; Belok, 1968; 1981; Chaplin, 2003; Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995; Zimlet, 1972).

**Patterns in the History of Textbook Analysis**

Despite the similarities among Wiley’s, Moore’s, and Spencer’s textbooks, they were not mirror images of one another. For example, the three authors differed in terms of how they presented historical people and events. Both Wiley and Moore wrote in depth about Culpepper’s rebellion, while Spencer limited her coverage of this event to a few sentences, even arguing, “little came of it” (Spencer, 1889, p. 75). Yet each author noted that Culpepper’s rebellion illustrated the willingness of North Carolinians to defend their freedom. The authors also differed in their treatment of the Regulator Movement in North Carolina. Spencer wrote extensively about the Regulator conflict in the state, while Wiley and Moore treated the subject less thoroughly. However, all three authors emphasized the desire to expand personal freedoms as the ultimate goal for the Regulator Movement. Despite small differences such as these in coverage of various subjects, none of the authors constructed an entirely new narrative about North Carolina’s history or went in a new direction when interpreting it.

The similarities in purposes among the three authors are also important to note. Writing in the early 1850s, Wiley informed readers that his book would endear students to their land, its history, and its society. Moore and Spencer, writing 20 and 40 years later
respectively, promised the same results for readers. Wiley anticipated his book would garner support for the public school system by illustrating how education would help to develop patriotic citizens who loved their land. Wiley offered students an explanation of why North Carolina was such a desirable place to live. Although Moore and Spencer both had to interpret the Civil War and Reconstruction for students, they also aimed to develop students’ admiration for their state. Wiley, Moore, and Spencer left little room for ambiguity or debate among their readers as to how they should feel about their state.

Analyses of 19th century textbooks reveal similar trends in narratives about U.S. history. Nietz (1961) and Venezky (1987, 1990) noted that 19th century textbooks were often used to instill good morals, and a related conception of citizenship. Furstenberg (2003) noted ways that U.S. history textbooks changed after the American Revolution in order to provide students with anecdotes that celebrated the new nation and its triumphs. Belok (1981) concluded in his analysis of 19th century textbooks that the narratives in them were designed to guide students toward certain values while providing them a glamorous story of historical progress. The North Carolina history textbooks from Wiley, Moore, and Spencer fall into this tradition of national pride.

The fact that Wiley, Moore, and Spencer were unwilling to break with interpretations of the past that were designed to meet the needs of a small and powerful elite aligns with scholarship on 20th century U.S. history textbook narratives (Fitzgerald, 1979; Loewen, 1995). In his analysis of 12 high school U.S. history textbooks published in the 1990s, James Loewen (1995) found that the textbooks, much like those of a century earlier, omitted or
distorted parts of the past that detracted from a narrative offering a flawless and singular view of history that highlighted the deeds of members of privileged members of society. In an earlier analysis of U.S. history textbooks, Frances Fitzgerald (1979) came to similar conclusions that U.S. history textbook authors were more interested in communicating myths supporting narrow views of history while privileging an elite few. Loewen argued that textbook authors were careful to put forth a narrative highlighting great deeds of the nation that the “controlling top” of society wanted students to remember (Loewen, 1995, p. 302). Loewen noted the omission of events that portrayed the United States negatively. For example, he pointed out that abolitionist John Brown was generally portrayed as an extremist and violent “fanatic” because of his actions against slavery prior to the Civil War (Loewen, 1995, p. 170). For Loewen, this was a gross mischaracterization of John Brown. Loewen reminded his readers that Brown also wrote eloquently about the need to end slavery and espoused views similar to President Abraham Lincoln. He did not find evidence of this perspective in his analysis of the textbooks.

Wiley, Moore, and Spencer, writing a century before the textbook authors whom Loewen analyzed, exhibited the same tendencies to focus on positive events in North Carolina’s history. They defended events and actions of leaders in North Carolina’s history that others at the same time had interpreted as negative. For example, Wiley attempted to explain away the fact that participation in religious activities was minimal early in the history of the colony by saying that the leaders of the churches were corrupt. At the same time, he argued that North Carolinians still had a “strong religious sense” (Wiley, 1851, p. 22). In
another example of these tendencies to excuse any perceived failings of the state, Moore and Spencer explained that while slavery was a cause of the Civil War, it was a constitutional institution until after the war, suggesting that slaveholders deserved no criticism. Spencer even went so far as to defend a small group of North Carolinians when she took on an English visitor to the state for referring to them as “backwoods rebels” (Spencer, 1889, p. 116). As Loewen (1995) and Fitzgerald (1979) found of authors in the late 20th century, Wiley, Moore, and Spencer presented history as a general story of progress, beginning with brave settlers and led by honorable men.

In another study of history textbooks, Joyce Chaplin (2003) examined the treatment of westward expansion in U.S. history textbooks from the 1990s. She found that the textbooks presented this history as a story of exceptionalism and triumph. Wiley, Moore, and Spencer described North Carolina in similar ways. When writing about North Carolina’s historical defense of liberty, all three authors noted that the colony was exceptional in their protection of freedom. They each noted a natural propensity in North Carolina to resist oppression and love freedom, presumably more so than other people. They argued that God had bestowed a special blessing on the North Carolina colony, further marking it an exception among other colonies. Not only did Wiley, Moore, and Spencer promote North Carolina’s exceptionalism in their textbooks, they were overt in doing so, believing this made their textbooks more desirable than others. Wiley, Moore, and Spencer provide an antecedent for what Fitzgerald (1979), Chaplin (2003), and Loewen (1995) found in 20th century textbooks.
All three authors emphasized an attachment to their homeland, an appreciation for its history, and a willingness to defend it and support it in the future, even though each author followed a different path in their writing to get these goals across to their readers. For example, Wiley urged his readers to appreciate North Carolina for its “greatness and prosperity” (Wiley, 1851, p. 222). He reminded them that “the North Carolina character, much as it has been misrepresented, is unequalled by any in the world (Wiley, 1851, p. 222).

Moore wanted his readers to support their state and their country, concluding that North Carolina was “first of all the States to urge the independence of America, so may they ever be found sustaining the Constitution and the Union that guarantee its perpetuity” (Moore, 1882, p. 283). Spencer concluded her textbook with the reminder that North Carolina would continue to “do her share toward the maintenance of truth, justice, and religion,” as the state continued on its restrained and judicious path (Spencer, 1889, p. 265).

The purpose and motivation for writing these history textbooks did not change for the three authors. The authors believed that the best way to accomplish their goals of providing students with a positive bias of their state was to highlight specific themes in its history, focusing on how the state contributed to the growth of the United States. Fitzgerald (1979) found a similar positive bias in the textbooks she examined. Wiley, Moore, and Spencer also wanted to emphasize what they believed popular American textbooks had neglected. Wiley reminded students that the “fairest and sweetest blossoms of humanity” formed in North Carolina, even though “this character has been withdrawn from the gaze of mankind” (Wiley, 1851, p. 222). Moore noted that it was not well known enough that North Carolina was “the
first of all the states to urge the independence of Americans” (Moore, 1879, p. 312). Spencer shared the need to “recount [North Carolina’s] brave deeds” since authors of the more broadly published U.S. history textbooks neglected to do so (Spencer, 1889, p. 259). She reminded students, “we take great pride in our state” (Spencer, 1889, p. 259). All three authors worried that U.S. history textbooks tended to focus too much on Massachusetts and Virginia and that North Carolina’s role in the development of the country was unnecessarily minimized.

Throughout their textbooks, all three authors sought to point out the crucial role of North Carolina in U.S. history. Chaplin (2003) also identified the tendencies in history textbooks to glorify people and groups as a part of a larger narrative about progress. Each author noted with pride how the first attempts at permanent English settlement took place on the shores of North Carolina, and each of them put their objectivity aside in order to heap praise on visionaries like Sir Walter Raleigh who had led these early attempts. They even hinted that life in the early years of Virginia’s settlement was more troubled than it would have been had Raleigh’s first attempts at colonization in Carolina been successful, pointing to religious persecution and oppressive government in Virginia to back their supposition. While authors discussed events that were specific to North Carolina, such as conflicts with the Tuscaroran Indians or rebellions against proprietary government, they consistently situated these events in the context of North Carolina’s contribution to the nation. These treatments were in line with the patterns that Chaplin (2003) found regarding the exceptional character of the people portrayed in history textbooks.
Expanding on this notion of exceptionalism, each author saw multiple ways to emphasize North Carolina’s historic defense of liberty and contributions to the nation when writing about the American Revolution. When authors wrote of reactions to the Stamp Act and other events leading to revolution and independence, they were careful to suggest that colonists in North Carolina were just as quick to act to defend liberty as any other colony. When the historical record suggested otherwise, the authors offered explanations that focused on North Carolina’s involvement in the Revolution. For example, when other colonies sent representatives for a meeting about increasing hostilities with Britain, North Carolina sent a letter of support, but no representatives. Authors were careful to suggest that this absence had more to do with government conditions in North Carolina than a lack of support for colonial unity against Britain.

Loewen (1995) found that U.S. history textbooks emphasized events that promoted national pride, calling this a “feel-good history” where the good guys win, bad guys lose, and no one feels bad about themselves (p. 92). Similar patterns unfolded in the works of Wiley, Moore, and Spencer. For example, the existence of the Mecklenburg Resolves, a signed document advocating disobedience against the King, gave authors an opportunity to applaud North Carolina’s leadership role in American history. The patriot military success at the Battle of Moore’s Creek Bridge offered an additional chance to make positive connections between North Carolina and the American Revolution. Wiley, Spencer, and Moore each commented that there were few battles more significant than Moore’s Creek during the Revolutionary War. Wiley tended to take his account of North Carolina’s historical
contributions to the United States even farther, suggesting that in addition to being contributive, North Carolina was actually better than other states in the Union. However, the authors sometimes sounded defensive, as if they wanted to use their textbooks to prove North Carolina’s worthiness as a state. Whether promoting or defending the state, Wiley, Moore, and Spencer followed the same patterns in presenting their own ‘feel-good’ history.

All three authors shared a desire to present North Carolina as the ultimate example of moderation, a value that the authors saw as highly desirable. Chaplin (2003) noted that the textbooks she examined shaped their treatment of westward expansion around the perceived values of manifest destiny. For Wiley, Moore, and Spencer, moderation was their manifest destiny. When writing about topics as diverse as North Carolina’s Native American population, the state’s economy, its general history, or political viewpoints, all three authors wrote about the moderate path between two extremes. Wiley wrote at a time when many North Carolinians were growing up and choosing to leave their home state for what they believed were better opportunities elsewhere. In order to stress the advantages of staying home and making a life in North Carolina, Wiley pointed to the moderate lifestyle in the state. Even when Wiley wrote about rebellions against governors or conflicts within the state such as the Regulator movement, he tended to accuse harsh lawmakers of being so immoderate as to necessitate a rebellion. In this context, the rebelling North Carolinians did not look extreme when compared to the harsh conditions against which they were fighting. This fact was especially true, according to Wiley, when comparing North Carolina to other states.
Like Wiley, Moore and Spencer tended to characterize enemies of North Carolina as extreme, regardless of what particular action North Carolinians took. Even when they described actions of the Ku Klux Klan during North Carolina’s Reconstruction, Spencer and Moore, while condemning the violence, justified it as a natural reaction to the extremism of Reconstruction. Wiley hardly addressed the subject of slavery other than to note that the slaveowner as well as the less wealthy farmer could live a good life in North Carolina, since it was a state without economic extremes. Both Spencer and Moore acknowledged the woes of slavery even as they suggested that the true extremism was not in the South’s slavery and secession as much as it was in the North’s political bullying and extreme abolitionism. Spencer highlighted ways that North Carolina was different than what she saw as extremism on North Carolina’s borders. She suggested that most North Carolinians were against secession and war but too noble not to fight with the south. Moore suggested that cooler heads would have prevailed in North Carolina in the lead up to the Civil War if only the extreme politicians in the north would have given them a chance. So while Wiley, Moore, and Spencer had to deal with the institution of slavery at least to some extent in their writing, they tended to highlight ways that these issues were less stringent in their home state when compared to others.

As antecedents to 20th century history textbooks, all three authors emphasized exceptionalism, a positive story of progress, and a detectable bias in their treatment of history events. The textbooks contributed to a pattern of textbook production critiqued by Fitzgerald (1979), Loewen (1995), and Chaplin (2003). Wiley, Moore, and Spencer went so far as to
include their own commentary in their historical narratives, even if it was not always clear to
the reader when they were recounting historical fact or sharing opinion. These similarities
suggest that there was more continuity than change in North Carolina’s history textbooks
from 1851 to 1889.

The Historical Context

The findings of this study suggest that Wiley, Moore, and Spencer supported more
than just a consistent narrative of North Carolina’s history. The authors intended to support a
vision of North Carolina that supported an existing ruling elite. All of the authors were well
placed in this white, wealthy society, and their textbooks can be understood as attempts to
sustain power by garnering students’ support. Historians have noted the ways in which
conservative whites in North Carolina worked to retain their political control in the state, and
they have found that the state’s efforts in education were part of this larger goal (Bishir,
2000; Carroll, 1986; Ford, 1964; Whitescarver, 2002).

Through the presentation of North Carolina history as a story of progress, exception,
and triumph, textbooks from Wiley, Moore, and Spencer were used to garner students’
support of the traditional leadership in the state. With the publication of these textbooks, the
authors and their publishers wanted to endear students to their state’s history and to
encourage students’ future loyalty to the state. Each author attempted to influence students’
beliefs about contemporary issues. Writing in 1851, just ten years after the establishment of
public schools in North Carolina, Wiley wrote his textbook to address the problem of
population loss and economic stagnation in the state. Wiley wrote favorably of the
institution of slavery as well as the leaders of North Carolina who ultimately led secession and war. Keith Whitescarver (2002) studied Calvin Wiley’s leadership of North Carolina’s schools and concluded that Wiley was a Southern nationalist whose goal was to defend the state and its leadership against outside forces seeking change in the society by ending slavery, shifting the agrarian economy toward industry, and generally upsetting the status quos in society. The findings of this study confirm Whitescarver’s thesis. Wiley used his textbook as a way to achieve his nationalist goals. He noted that North Carolinians were “helpless” and “ignorant,” due to teachers having to rely on textbooks written about the state by authors not familiar with the attributes of it (Wiley, 1851, p. 11). He assured teachers that as state superintendent, he had notified northern textbook publishers that he would not support any textbooks that did not have favorable depictions of North Carolina. In his textbook’s preface, Wiley ultimately wrote of his decision to fight any omissions or unfavorable depictions of the state by writing his own textbook. His textbook was clearly part of his nationalist defense of his state.

Moore’s and Spencer’s textbooks also fall into the tradition of defending the South. They wrote just after Reconstruction, a time when public schools were being reestablished under the conservative leadership who had just retaken control of North Carolina. During this time between Reconstruction and the turn of the century, North Carolina’s leaders also faced a threat from the populist and fusionist movements. Like Wiley, Moore’s and Spencer’s textbooks offered support for the ruling elite. Catherine Bishir (2000) argued in her study of politics and race at the turn of the 20th century in North Carolina, that the
Wilmington Race Riot of 1898 set the stage for the overthrow of the existing Populist government and led to one party and conservative, Democratic, white leadership in North Carolina. She noted that the conservative forces in the state had been waiting for just such an event as the race riot to regain their leadership. Bishir (2000) illuminated ways that North Carolina’s leaders had begun to construct historical memory to confirm their assertion of power. In order to gain support for the white supremacist party that would ultimately control North Carolina well into the 20th century, Bishir wrote, citizens needed to view these leaders as redeemers who liberated the state from control by outsiders, Republicans, or African Americans. Moore and Spencer wrote during the time that the Populist Party was gaining support and threatening the elite. The fact that they used their writing to support conservatives as opposed to populists confirms Bishir’s thesis about the emergence of the redeemers as a political force. Moore’s and Spencer’s textbooks in particular corroborate Bishir’s findings that Democrats wanted to regain and maintain control of the state by pushing a certain narrative about its history. The North Carolina public school system offered leaders an opportunity to beat back threats from groups such as the populists, and history textbooks were a big part of that effort. Wiley, Moore, and Spencer each offered their textbooks as a means to achieve this end.

**Textbooks as Political Texts**

The idea that schools and textbooks can be used as political tools used by a controlling elite to keep power fits with arguments made by theorist Michael Apple (1992). Apple (1992) suggested that textbooks, regardless of the era in which they were written or
the audience for whom they were written, are ultimately society’s letters to their youth. They let students know how society hopes they will understand their past and look toward their futures. The textbooks from Wiley, Moore, and Spencer fit in this tradition. Each of them took care in their textbooks to ensure that North Carolina history students received a ‘letter’ that aimed to instill pride in their moderate state, an acceptance of its customs and societal rules, and an appreciation for a history steeped in defense of liberty while making notable contributions to the nation. Even the most monumental events like Civil War or Reconstruction had to be conformed to this overriding ambition to indoctrinate students.

Apple argued that textbooks, in the context of influencing youth in society, become instruments for social control. In his study of 20th century textbooks, Apple (1992) argued that information in the textbooks was presented with only one possible interpretation, supporting just one political, cultural viewpoint. Believing that schools are institutions in which power is inequitably distributed and favoring the elite, Apple argued that textbooks are tools for helping to ensure that power structures in schools, and by extension society, remain the same. He (1992) pointed to controversies in West Virginia and California to illustrate the political importance of textbooks. In both places, the privileged class felt their power threatened by proposed changes to textbooks therefore, Apple argued, controversy thus arose.

In this context, Wiley’s, Moore’s, and Spencer’s textbooks are high-level examples of the problem Apple noted. While Apple noted implicit and indirect ways that textbook authors continue to support certain historical narratives in the 20th century, Wiley, Moore, and Spencer were very direct in stating and supporting their goals. They did not apologize
for offering one way of interpreting North Carolina’s history; instead they celebrated it. Wiley went so far as to suggest that critics of his book, regardless of their complaint, simply disliked their state. He did not offer readers any historical sources to support his claims or a description of his research process because he believed that his purpose in creating a pride-inspiring story of North Carolina outweighed the need for good historical scholarship. Moore offered a limited description of his historical methods and the sources he used. Spencer actually wanted to exhibit quality scholarship so much that she was willing to endure criticism for not including the Mecklenburg Declaration in her textbook. Yet even with this slow evolution toward more disciplinary integrity, each of the three authors were overt in their attempts to write toward the goal of creating good citizens who supported the existing leadership.

Each author interpreted events so that the original story of North Carolina history continued, complete with mostly peaceful race relations, proper roles in society, and laudable historical events. Other studies of textbooks, whether situated in the 19\textsuperscript{th}, 20\textsuperscript{th}, or 21\textsuperscript{st} centuries, and regardless of the region, suggest that historical narratives persist in textbooks even as authors make necessary amendments to them after societal change. (Barth & Shermis, 1980; Belok, 1968; 1981; Chaplin, 2003, Fitzgerald, 1979, Loewen, 1995, Venezky, 1990; Zimlet, 1971). This study adds to existing research that suggests historical textbook narratives are conservative reflections of the past. There appears to have been little public opposition to the North Carolina history textbooks examined in this study precisely because
they did not challenge the narrative of the state’s history. Apple (1992) argued that changes to the existing historical narrative cause controversy and threaten existing power.

**Continued Conflict**

North Carolina’s educational leaders continue to deal with this textbook legacy today. In 2010, after examining what students in North Carolina should learn about U.S. history and how it could help them prepare for their future roles in society, some social studies leaders concluded that the course in U.S. history should begin in 1877. This newly structured year-long course would include more time for teachers and students to talk about 20th and 21st century issues. As one leader suggested, there is only so much time in one year of teaching, and it is impossible to begin in the 17th century and move all the way to the 21st (Henneberg, 2010). However, by structuring the course to begin in 1877, leaders removed historical content about the founders, the American Revolution, and the Civil War, to name a few topics. In other words, the narrative of American history changed “drastically” under this program (Bonner, 2010). Perhaps this realization explains the controversy that ensued as a result of the proposed changes. National news agencies questioned whether or not Abraham Lincoln was being removed from history, and other articles cited parents’ outrage over the idea that their children would not be taught basic American values and foundations (Bonner, 2010, Henneberg, 2010). There was so much outrage over this proposal that on February 17, 2010 educators announced their intention to rescind the idea (Midwurf, 2010).

Ultimately, the proposal for reducing U.S. history in North Carolina high schools to the period after 1877 was dropped. This controversy is just one of many related to the
purpose and function of history education and the uses of history textbooks in the United States. This study provides a historically grounded reminder that authors of history textbooks have often dealt with cultural or political shifts in society in their writing while still supporting an accepted narrative meant to teach students to be the kind of citizens leaders hoped they would become. In all three of the textbooks analyzed for this research, the authors reinforced positive notions about North Carolina, stressing that the state had made plenty of noteworthy contributions to the history of the United States and that citizens should feel honored to live in such a blessed and wonderful place. Each author subtly reinforced historical ideas about race and class to replicate existing structures in society, which privileged particular power elite. By explaining North Carolina’s history in a carefully constructed manner with positive explanations for the state’s actions, the authors aimed to shape students’ beliefs and perpetuate the status quo.

The textbooks examined in this study aimed to instill patriotism as well as a certain kind of unquestioning loyalty. That did not mean that the three authors were unconcerned about accuracy in their portrayal of the past. Future studies could better assess what evidence authors may have chosen to ignore or what issues they may have chosen to omit from their narratives. Other future studies could assess how 20th and 21st century North Carolina history textbooks compare to these 19th century counterparts.
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