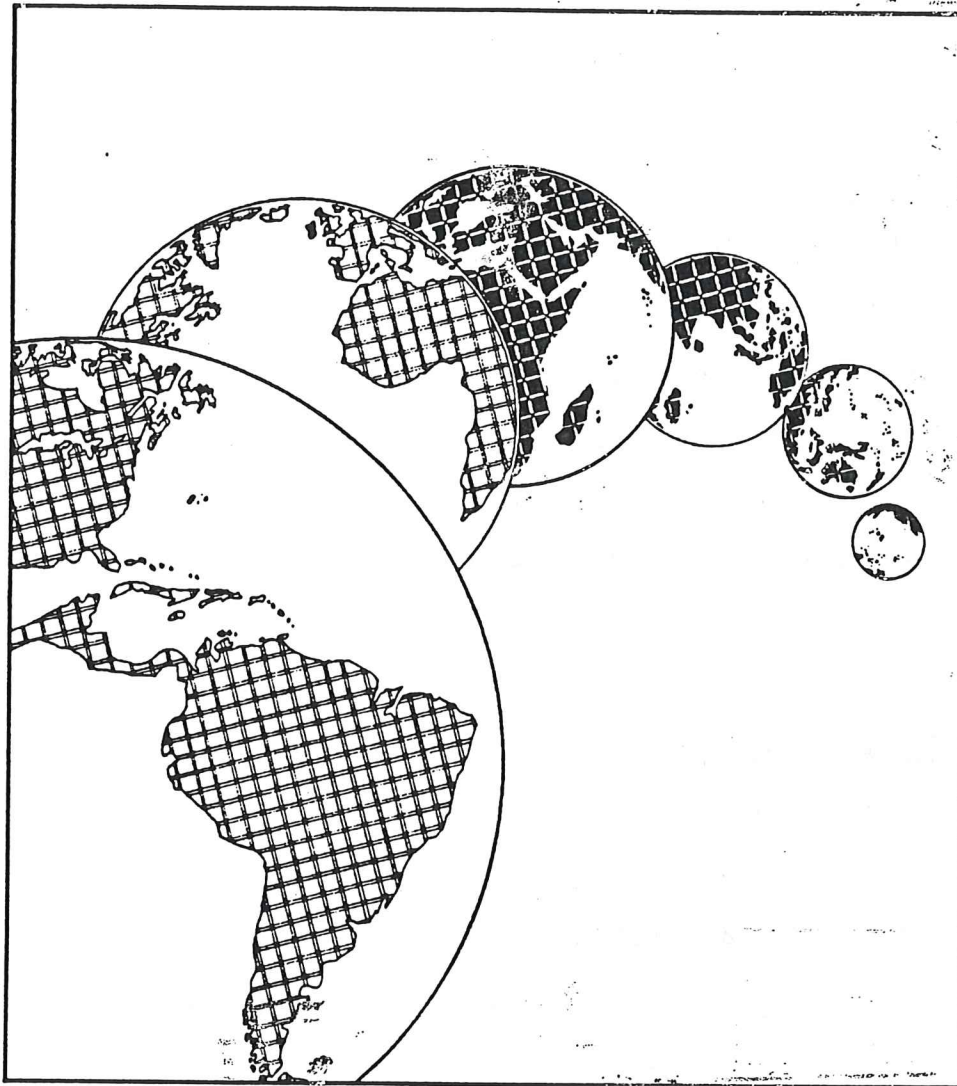


Africans in L.A.

Level: High School / College

Latin America and the Caribbean from a Global Perspective



A Resource Guide for Teachers

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Latin American and Caribbean Center
Florida International University
1991

(Originals in gray loose-leaf binder)

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Perspective Consciousness

ENCUENTRO

Rationale

Columbus's landfall on Samana Cay in 1492 led to one of the most profound cultural encounters in human history. The conquest of Native Americans and the subsequent, importation of black slaves from Africa forged Latin America's complex, rich, and diverse triple heritage: European, Native American, and African. In this lesson, students explore the concept of perspective by examining three distinct perspectives on the Columbus Quincentenary.

Objectives

The student will:

1. describe how colonialism, which resulted from the voyages of exploration, affected the peoples of the non-European world, specifically the American Indians and Africans;
2. explain the contributions that Native American and African civilizations made to contemporary Latin America;
3. explain the contributions that Spanish Portuguese culture made to contemporary Latin America;
4. recognize that a person's experience and world view influence their interpretation of historical events.

Key Concepts

Quincentenary, perspective, cultural diffusion

Infusion Area

World history, Latin American history

Materials Needed

"A Legacy of Slavery"
"Encuentro - Data Sheet"

Suggested Time

Three class periods

Learning Activities

Suggested Activities for Day 1:

1. Begin lesson by asking students if they know why the year 1992 is an important date in human history. Allow time for student responses (if students have difficulty, you might want to remind them that its importance has to do with an event that occurred 500 years before).

Once students have identified the event in question, ask them to think of reasons that make Columbus's voyage to the Americas an important event in human history (list student responses on the board). You might want to emphasize some of the following:

- a. the courage and pioneering spirit of Columbus and his crew;
 - b. the beginnings of a global economy as a result of the linkages established by Columbus and subsequent explorers between the Americas and the rest of the world;
 - c. the shift in economic and political power from Mediterranean to Atlantic states;
 - d. the spread of European influence throughout the world as a result of the expansion of trade and commerce.
2. Distribute "A Legacy of Slavery" and ask students to read the article. Ask students to respond to the article and conduct a general discussion based on the following questions:
 - a. How might you summarize the central argument of the article?
 - b. What facts does the writer use to support his argument?
 - c. In your opinion, is this argument valid? Why/why not?

Suggested Activities for Day 2:

1. Review the concept, of perspective consciousness found in Robert Harvey's essay, "An Attainable Global Perspective." Discuss the concept of perspective with the class giving emphasis to the fact that often our "view of the world".or of a particular event in history is "shaped by influences that often escape conscious detection, and that others have, views...that are profoundly different from one's own." Conduct a general discussion on the problem of perspective based on the following questions:
 - a. Where and how did you first learn about Columbus's voyage to "America?"
 - b. What do you remember learning about this event?
 - c. How does the perspective presented in the article, "A Legacy of Slavery," compare to your own perspective about Columbus's voyage?
 - d. What factors might explain the differences between the two?
2. Establish a grouping criteria that will facilitate discussion, reading, writing, and oral reporting. Divide class into small groups (4-5 students per group). Inform students that each group is to play the role of a Quincentenary Task Force, whose task it is to review data associated with Columbus's voyage to the Americas and make recommendations regarding the proper way to commemorate this important historical event.

Distribute "Encuentro - Data Sheet" and allow students sufficient time for analysis, discussion, and writing of group recommendations. During this time, the teacher should assume the role of facilitator monitoring group interaction, clarifying ideas, keeping students on task, etc. When every group has completed their list of recommendations ask the representatives of each group to present their list to the class.

Suggested Activities for Day 3:

1. Conclude lesson with a general discussion based on the following questions:
 - a. What were some of the major strengths/weaknesses of the recommendations presented by each of the groups?
 - b. How did the information provided on the data sheet affect your group's final list of recommendations?
 - c. How many different perspectives on the Quincentenary were supported by the data sheet? How would you describe each?
 - d. How might perspective affect our understanding of Columbus's voyage? How important is it to understand the meaning and significance of the Quincentenary from multiple perspectives?

Assessment

Ask students to select one of the three perspectives discussed in the lesson (European, Native American, African) and write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper about the meaning and significance of the Quincentenary from the perspective he/she has chosen.

Additional Activities

Ask students to conduct research on one of the following questions:

1. The origin and effect of the "Black Legend."
2. Foods eaten today that originated in the New World.
3. The ways in which Latin American countries celebrate Columbus Day (*Día de la Raza*).
4. Present-day countries that Columbus visited during his four voyages.
5. People that Columbus encountered in the lands he explored.

Students may want to write to the consulates of Latin American countries in order to get further information on the Quincentenary.

Encuentro - Data Sheet

"From 1400 to about 1750, Europeans engaged in a series of daring sea voyages that changed the history of the world....In just two and a half centuries, bold European seafarers, backed by governments and trading companies, transformed unknown seas into highways of commerce and conquest, and established a worldwide network of trade" (Stearns, Schwartz, and Beyer, 1989:349).

"'Voyages of discovery' should really be called voyages for profit" (Harrison, 1984:39).

"The inhabitants have neither iron, nor steel, nor arms, nor are they competent to use them, not that they are not well-formed and of handsome stature, but because they are timid to a surprising degree....They never refuse anything that they possess when it is asked of them; on the contrary, they offer it themselves...and they are firmly, convinced that I came from heaven...." (excerpt from Columbus's log in Stearns, Schwartz, and Beyer, 1984:351).

"Columbus only discovered that he was in some new place. He didn't discover America. There were incredibly complex indigenous cultures...five hundred different cultures, seven different language families, four or five hundred languages spoken, and many different religions...." (Moyers, 1989:462).

"The Mayan people, who occupied the Yucatán peninsula, southern Mexico, and most of present-day Guatemala, began to build their civilization around 500 B.C. The most famous achievements of this group were cultural--not only the building of exquisite temples, but also pioneering accomplishments in architecture, sculpture, painting, hieroglyphic writing, mathematics, astronomy, and chronology (including the invention of calendars)" (Skidmore and Smith, 1989:14).

"In its final form, Aztec society was rigidly stratified. At the bottom were slaves and at the top was a hereditary nobility. Education, marriage, and labor were meticulously programmed, and the economy was owned communally. Kings, such as Montezuma II, exercised immense political power. Despite centralization of authority, however, conquered states in neighboring areas were not incorporated into the empire. They were treated as tribute-paying vassals, and some--such as nearby Tlaxcala--were allowed to maintain a perpetual state of war with

Tenochtitlán. One reason for this warfare was that the Aztec religion required human sacrifice, and prisoners of war could be served up for the bloody rituals" (Skidmore and Smith, 1989:15).

"Technically, the Incas were capable of feats of civil engineering, some of which were in advance of Western capabilities of the period. Their royal highway stretched 3,250 miles down the Andes from Ecuador to Chile, sometimes carved into the solid in flights of steps, sometimes spanning rivers with corbel arched, pontoon or suspension bridges. There were way stations every four to twelve miles for the couriers who carried royal messages in quipu strings, knotted in patterns more complex than most written languages" (Harrison, 1984:39).

"Aside from the Mayans, Aztec, and Incas, there were many other Indian cultures. In the area of modern-day Mexico alone there were over two-hundred different linguistic groups. Estimates of the size of Latin America's indigenous population have varied widely. One scholar has set the figure at 90 to 112 million, with 30 million each in central Mexico and Peru" (Skidmore and Smith, 1989:15).

"Even at this early stage the exploitation of non-Western societies played a key role in the emergence of Western capitalism. Indeed without that exploitation, one may doubt whether the West would ever have industrialized in the first place" (Harrison, 1984:40).

"How did they do it? How could a few hundred Spaniards overthrow empires with millions of Indians?...One explanation for their feat was the superiority of Spanish equipment and tactics--gunpowder (for muskets and cannon), horses, organization, and the confidence to stay constantly on the attack. Another factor was the propensity for Aztecs to identify Cortez and his followers with the god Quetzalcoatl, whose return to the valley was predicted by myth. Important also was the role of non-Aztec peoples, such as the Tlaxcalans, who had grown restive under Aztec domination and who supplied the Spaniards with troops and advice on appropriate military tactics. Finally, and perhaps most important, an outbreak of smallpox, previously unknown in the Americas, ravaged an Indian population lacking natural immunity" (Skidmore and Smith, 1989:17).

"Cortez subdued the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán, with just 600 men, seventeen horses and ten cannon. Following his example, Pizarro took over the vast Inca empire with only 102 foot soldiers and sixty-two horsemen" (Harrison, 1984:42).

"It wasn't the first time that one civilization discovered another, which has always been terrible and brutal. The basic difference is that

the American Indians had no idea of another civilization. They had no repertory of categories for conceiving of other cultures. Like all cultured civilizations, they had the category of barbarian, in this case, "Chichimec." There was also the Toltec category of the cultured and sedentary man. The Spaniards did not fit into the category of barbarians, or Chichimecs: they weren't nomads, and besides, they arrived on horseback bearing firearms. The only other category left was that of divine beings. It was this weakness, this great lack of the idea of another civilization, that explains the fascination and the route of the Mexican Indians" (Martínez, 1989:9).

"The central foundation for this economy was Indian Labor, obtained from the natives by one form of coercion or another....Since cheap labor was so critical, the Spanish crown, colonists, and clerics fought bitterly for control of the Indians. In 1542, seeking to curtail the colonists, the king decreed the "New Laws," aimed at protecting the Indians by removing them from direct tutelage of the conquistadores and bringing them under the direct jurisdiction of the crown. By 1600 the crown had largely succeeded in this task, at least in legal terms. In reality, however, these changes altered only the legal form of oppression; the fact of oppression persisted" (Skidmore and Smith, 1989:20).

"A debate amongst theologians at Salamanca in 1550 had decreed that American Indians were not slaves. Although African natives were" (Moore, 1987:77).

"The *encomienda*, a grant of people for the purpose of tribute, was often used as a guise for indentured servitude, if not outright slavery, should the tribute not be paid" (Sánchez, 1989:17).

"For the Indians, the Conquest meant above all a drastic fall in population...the most reliable studies of central Mexico place the pre-conquest population, as of 1519, at around 25 million; for 1523 the figure is 16.8 million, for 1580 it is 1.9 million, and for 1605 it is 1 million--a total decline of 95 percent! Data on Peru are less complete, but they also show continuing decline, from 1.3 million in 1570 (forty years after the Conquest) to less than 600,000 in 1620, a drop of more than 50 percent. However, uncertain the exact magnitude, the Conquest clearly resulted in demographic calamity, largely attributable to diseases such as smallpox, measles, and influenza" (Skidmore and Smith, 1989:20).

"There were diseases that existed in Europe, Asia, and Africa that had never come to the Americas before. The first time a European, Asian, or African came over here and sneezed, these diseases and bacteria were introduced into the networks of the Americas, and most

Indians were gone before the Europeans had any conception they were there" (Moyers, 1989:462).

"To operate the mills and tend and cut the cane required slave-labour. Sugar and slavery were, from the beginning, intimately associated. In Brazil the natives were nomadic, shy and primitive and their enslavement was forbidden. There were no such problems with African negroes, and the inland slave markets in the Black Monarchies of Angola provided a suitable source. Boats on an outward voyage from Lisbon shipped slaves at Louanda, sailed to Bahia on the trade winds, and returned to Portugal, again with the wind behind them, filled with refined sugar. It was an ideal navigational and trading pattern" (Moore, 1987:77).

"Between 1441 and 1443, the Portuguese began to transport the blacks to Europe for sale. It was only by force, that the blacks left their continent, and the intercontinental slave trade initiated and for centuries carried on by the European marks one of the most inhumane chapters of world history" (Burns, 1977:20).

"The precious metals, shipped back to the old Continent, financed Spain's empire in Europe and helped to fuel a general increase in demand" (Harrison, 1984:42).

"A majority of the 3 million slaves sold into Spanish America and the 5 million sold into Brazil over a period of approximately three centuries came from the west coast of Africa between the Ivory Coast and South Africa, a stretch of territory exceeding 3,000 miles. These numbers do not reflect the millions of Africans killed in the process of transportation and "seasoning," a genocide of dismal proportions" (Burns, 1977:20).

"Many [black] women practiced abortion to avoid bringing children into such a horrible life" (1977:22).

"In the 16th century, blacks outnumbered whites in Lima, Mexico City, and Salvador da Bahia, the three principal cities of the Western Hemisphere" (1977:20).

Blacks in Latin America quickly became "masons, smithies, lithographers, sculptors, artists, locksmiths, cabinet makers, jewelers, and cobblers. Around the plantations and in the cities, these black craftsmen, artisans, and mechanics became an indispensable ingredient in the New World society" (1977:21).

"Whoever takes a look at the history of this country will verify the value and contribution of the Negro to the defense of national territory,

to agriculture, to mining, to the exploitation of the interior, to the movement for independence, to family life and to the development of the nation through the many and varied tasks he performed. Upon his well muscled back rested the social, cultural, and material development.... The black is still the principal producer of the nation's wealth, but many are the contributions of that long suffering and persecuted race which has left unperishable proofs of its singular valor. History in all its justice has to respect and praise the valuable services which the black has given to this nation for more than three centuries. In truth it was the black who developed Brazil" (1977:22).

Manuel Querino (1851-1923) - first black historian of Brazil

"Originally, Santería was a new world synthesis of various animist religions from southwest Nigeria. When threatened by Spanish slave owners for practicing heathen rites, African slaves clothed their beliefs in the protective coloring of Catholicism, and a new synthesis occurred. Today, the two religions share the same alters, the same images, sacred dates, and even prayers" (Valdez, 1989:31).

"Each orisha, or santo, bears both an African Yoruba name and a Catholic name, as well as unique personalities and powers. Obatala, for example, is unimpressed by money. Oshum, on the other hand, adores it, although she prefers a good party" (1989:31).

"Wherever the Africans went in the New World, they modified the culinary and dietary habits of those around them. Many of the rice and bean dishes so common in Latin America have African origins. Yams, okras, cola nuts, and palm oil are but a few of the contributions of the African cooks" (Burns, 1977:23).

"The Africans introduced thousands of words into the Spanish and Portuguese languages and helped to soften the pronunciation of both. Their proverbs, riddles, tales, and myths mixed with those of Europeans and Indians to form the richly varied folklore of Latin America" (1977:23).

"The samba, frevo, and merengue descend from African imports" (1977:22).

"That sin, in its simplest form, is composed of the submission and rupture of the indigenous cultures and by the bloody struggle for domination carried out by the conquistadors, forming a new social, political, and cultural reality" (Pietri, 1989:13).

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A legacy of slavery

To The Editor:

To criticize Christopher Columbus is like attacking motherhood. All school children are taught to exult in the exploits of the discoverer of the New World. *The Herald's* Nov. 11 article quotes scholars on where Columbus landed in 1492 and what he wore and ate on that memorable voyage.

Yet Columbus was the first European to bring slavery to the New World. Columbus captured 1,500 Tainos on the island of Hispaniola, site of present-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic. He took them to Spain and forced them into the slave market in Seville. Within 30 years Spain had destroyed the Tainos, once estimated at one million to two million people. In the

same fashion, the colonizers exterminated the Arawaks and the Caribs.

Following Columbus's lead, Spain introduced African slaves in Hispaniola by 1502. The trade expanded rapidly throughout the Caribbean after 1510. At its height until the middle of the last century, there were more than nine million slaves on the U.S. mainland.

While Columbus remains a valiant historic figure in our history books, he remains responsible for a legacy of slavery, colonialism, and the destruction of native cultures.

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Robert G. Hanvey

An Attainable Global Perspective

The need for education that promotes a global perspective is increasingly apparent. What is less clear is just what constitutes such a perspective, particularly one which young people might actually be able to attain in the course of their formal and informal education. In what follows, I will describe certain modes of thought, sensitivities, intellectual skills, and explanatory capacities which might in some measure contribute to the formation of a global perspective.

What is a global perspective? As conceived here a global perspective is not a quantum, something you either have or don't have. It is a blend of many things and any given individual may be rich in certain elements and relatively lacking in others. The educational goal broadly seen may be to socialize significant collectivities of people so that the important elements of a global perspective are represented in the group. Viewed in this way, a global perspective may be a variable trait possessed in some form and degree by a population, with the precise character of that perspective determined by the specialized capacities, predispositions, and attitudes of the group's members. The implications of this notion, of course, is that diversified talents and inclinations can be encouraged and that standardized educational effects are not required. Every individual does not have to be brought to the same level of intellectual and moral development in order for a population to be moving in the direction of a more global perspective.

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With these thoughts in mind we can identify five dimensions of a global perspective. These are:

1. Perspective Consciousness
2. "State of the Planet" Awareness
3. Cross-Cultural Awareness
4. Knowledge of Global Dynamics
5. Awareness of Human Choices

Perspective Consciousness

The recognition or awareness on the part of the individual that he or she has a view of the world that is not universally shared, that this view of the world has been and continues to be shaped by influences that often escape conscious detection, and that others have views of the world that are profoundly different from one's own.

Few of us in our lives can actually transcend the viewpoint presented by the common carriers of information and almost none of us can transcend the cognitive mapping presented by the culture in which we grew up. But with effort we can at least develop a dim sense that we have a perspective, that it can be shaped by subtle influences, and that others have different perspectives. This recognition of the existence, the malleability, and the diversity of perspective we might call perspective consciousness. Such an acknowledgement is an important step in the development of a perspective that can legitimately be called global.

One must make a distinction between opinion and perspective. Opinion is the surface layer, the conscious outcropping of perspective. But there are deep and hidden layers of perspective that may be more important in orienting behavior. For example,

in the deep layers of Western civilization has been the assumption that human dominance over nature is both attainable and desirable. This, until recently, has not been a matter of opinion but assumed as a given.

One of the interesting things that reform and protest movements do is to carry out mining operations in the deep layers. They dredge to the surface aspects of perspective that have never before seen the light of day. Once made visible, these may become the foci of debate, matters of opinion. The environmental movement surfaced the assumption of man's right to dominion over nature and thus posed some philosophical choices that had previously escaped notice. The feminist movement raised the consciousness of women and men with respect to "women's place." They labeled the most commonplace behaviors and attitudes "chauvinist," and thus revealed the deeper layers of perspective in action.

I have suggested that with effort we can develop in the young at least a dim sense, a groping recognition of the fact that they have a perspective. And this is very different from knowing that they have opinions. At the present time the schools and the media socialize all of us to be traders in opinion. We learn this through discussion and debate, through the contentious format of forums and organizational meetings, through talk shows and newspaper columnists. We learn, especially, that the individual is expected to have opinions and to be willing to assert them. And we learn tacit rules about "tolerating" differences in opinions so asserted.

We can also learn, if we approach the task with a sure sense of purpose, how to probe the deep layers of perspective. A variety of specialists and social commentators regularly operate in these realms and there are well-developed methods and techniques. Some of these methods can be learned and practiced. For example, some (but not all) values clarification exercises can heighten awareness of otherwise unrevealed aspects of perspective. At the very least it should be possible to teach almost any young person to recognize a probe of the deep layers when he sees it. Such probes come in many forms, from the ironic humor of a "Doonesbury" cartoon strip to the pop sociology of a book like *Future Shock*.

"State of the Planet" Awareness

Awareness of prevailing world conditions and developments, including emergent conditions and trends, e.g. population growth, migrations, eco-

nomie conditions, resources and physical environment, political developments, science and technology, law, health, inter-nation and intra-nation conflicts, etc.

For most people in the world, direct experience beyond the local community is infrequent—or nonexistent. It is not uncommon to meet residents of Chicago's neighborhoods who have never traveled the few miles to the central business district, or sophisticated New York taxicab drivers who have never been further south than Philadelphia. If this is true for a geographically mobile society like the United States, it is even more a fact for other parts of the world. Tourism, urban migrations, commerce, and business travel notwithstanding, most people live out their lives in rather circumscribed local surroundings.

Communication Media and Planet Awareness

Direct experience is not the way that contemporary peoples learn about their world. Nonliterate village or suburban housewife, it doesn't matter that one stays close to home. Information travels rapidly and far through the mass media. News of a border crisis in the Middle East reaches within hours the shopkeeper in Nairobi, the steel worker in Sweden, the Peguvian villager. There is now a demonstrated technical capacity for simultaneous transmission of messages to almost the entire human species. The character of the messages is something else again. Here we must ask, do the messages received on those millions of transistor radios and television sets contribute meaningfully to a valid picture of world conditions? That question matters because it is difficult to imagine a global perspective that does not include a reasonably dependable sense of what shape the world is in.

Generally speaking, the media in almost every country will transmit news from around the world. Unfortunately, the fundamental quality of news is its focus on the extraordinary event. An outbreak of influenza is news; endemic malaria is not. A rapid decline in values on the world's stock exchanges is news; the long-standing poverty of hundreds of millions is not. So, there are significant limits and distortions in the view of the world conveyed by news media. Nonetheless, the prospect is not entirely bleak. For one thing, the characteristic interests of the news media can be exploited; events can be staged in such a way as to call attention to world conditions not ordinarily judged newsworthy. A world conference can be convened on food or population or pollution problems. The conference

self is news. More importantly, the condition that gives rise to the conference takes on a new level of visibility—worldwide. And the news media are the instruments of this increased awareness.

Limits to Understanding

There are other sources of distortion. Political ideology chokes off the flow of some information, the defense and security syndrome of nations blocks still other information, and the selective disinterest of audiences constricts yet other channels. As an instance of the first, Americans until recently have had little access to information about Cuba under Castro. As an example of the second, the testing of nuclear weapons by the French and the Indians in recent years produced few hard details about site, yield, fallout, etc. (Governments have ways to obtain the information; publics do not.) As for patterns of audience interest and disinterest, consider how little attention is paid to the affairs of small nations, or to conditions in the rural areas of the world; and with no complaint from the audience.

Finally, there is the matter of the technical nature of world data. There are now unprecedented resources for generating information about the state of the planet, and for sharing and processing the information in order to obtain a sense of the important patterns. But the procedures are highly technical and the results expressed in technical terms. A certain level of education is required to see the full significance of the data.

Overcoming the Limitations

This is an instance where the energies of the schools, properly directed, might resolve the question in favor of the general populace. If from the earliest grades on students examined and puzzled over cases where seemingly innocent behaviors—the diet rich in animal protein, the lavish use of fertilizer on the suburban lawn and golf course—were shown to have effects that were both unintended and global in scope, then there could be a receptivity for that kind of technical information necessary to understand many global issues. Situations such as the depletion of ozone in the atmosphere from aerosol sprays would not seem forbidding, it would be another instance of a model already documented. Students would have a framework within which to handle it. As for the technical aspects of something like the ozone situation, these do not seem beyond the reach of science and social studies departments that focus cooperatively on the technical dimensions of significant planetary conditions. It may be true that school programs are

not typically organized for such a task, but it is not outside the boundaries of our predilections or our capacities.

Cross-Cultural Awareness

Awareness of the diversity of ideas and practices to be found in human societies around the world, of how such ideas and practices compare, and including some limited recognition of how the ideas and ways of one's own society might be viewed from other vantage points.

This may be one of the more difficult dimensions to attain. It is one thing to have some knowledge of world conditions. The air is saturated with that kind of information. It is another thing to comprehend and accept the consequences of the basic human capacity for creating unique cultures—with the resultant profound differences in outlook and practice manifested among societies. These differences are widely known at the level of myth, prejudice, and tourist impression. But they are not deeply and truly known, in spite of the well-worn exhortation to "understand others." Such a fundamental acceptance seems to be resisted by powerful forces in the human psychosocial system.

Several million years of evolution seem to have produced in us a creature that does not easily recognize the members of its own species. That is stated in rather exaggerated form but it refers to the fact that human groups commonly have difficulty in accepting the humanness of other human groups.

The practice of naming one's own group "the people" and by implication relegating all others to not-quite-human status has been documented in nonliterate groups all over the world. But it is simply one manifestation of a species trait that shows itself in modern populations as well. It is there in the hostile faces of the white parents demonstrating against school busing. You will find it lurking in the background as Russians and Chinese meet at the negotiating table to work out what is ostensibly a boundary dispute. And it flares into the open during tribal disputes in Kenya.

There was a time when the solidarity of small groups of humans was the basis for the survival of the species. But in the context of mass populations and weapons of mass destructiveness, group solidarity and the associated tendency to deny the full humanness of other peoples pose serious threats to the species. When we speak of "humans" it is important that we include not only ourselves and our immediate group but all four and one half billion of those other bipeds, however strange their ways.

This is the primary reason for cross-cultural awareness. If we are to admit the humanness of those others, then the strangeness of their ways must become less strange; must, in fact, become believable. Ideally, that means getting inside the heads of those strangers and looking out at the world through their eyes. Then the strange becomes familiar and totally believable. This is a most difficult trick to pull off, but there may be methods that will increase the probability of success. Further, there are lesser degrees of cross-cultural awareness than getting inside the head; these more modest degrees of awareness are not to be scorned.

Knowledge of Global Dynamics

Some modest comprehension of key traits and mechanisms of the world system, with emphasis on theories and concepts that may increase intelligent consciousness of global change.

How does the world work? Is it a vast, whirling machine spinning ponderously around a small yellow sun? Is there a lever we can push to avert famine in South Asia, or one that will cure world inflation, or one to slow the growth of world population? Is it our ignorance of which lever to move that results in tragedy and crisis? Is it our ignorance of how the gears intermesh that causes breakdowns in the stability of the system?

Or is the machine useful as a metaphor? Is it perhaps better to think of the world as an organism, evolving steadily in response to the programming in its germ plasm? Are wars and famines merely minor episodes in the biological history of a planet serenely following a script already written?

The latter view is not a comfortable one for people in industrial societies, raised to believe that almost anything can be engineered, including the destiny of the world. But the machine image doesn't quite work, either, although we continue (as I have done) to speak of "mechanisms." The idea of a machine suggests an assembly of parts that interconnect in a very positive fashion, so positive that when you manipulate one part you get immediate, predictable, and quantifiable response in other parts. That does not seem to describe the world as we know it.

But both machines and organisms are systems of interconnected elements and it is the idea of *system* that now prevails. How does the world work? As a system. What does that mean? It means we must put aside simple notions of cause and effect. Things interact, in complex and surprising ways. "Effects" loop back and become "causes"

which have "effects" which loop back . . . It means that simple events ramify—unbelievably.

But let's begin to talk in more concrete terms. What exactly might the schools teach about global dynamics? The answer proposed here is very selective, with the criterion of selection being, does the particular learning contribute to an understanding of global change; because the control of change is the central problem of our era. There are changes we desire and seem unable to attain. There are changes we wish to constrain and, as yet, cannot. There is also another kind of change: in spite of our difficulties we are growing in our capacities to detect and manipulate change. A global perspective that fails to comprehend both the problems of change and promise of improved control will not be worthy of the name.

Three categories of learning about change suggest themselves:

1. Basic principles of change in social systems
 - the ramifications of new elements in social systems
 - unanticipated consequences
 - overt and covert functions of elements
 - feedback, positive and negative
2. Growth as a form of change
 - desired growth in the form of economic development
 - undesired growth in the form of exponential increase in population, resource depletion, etc.
3. Global planning
 - national interests and global planning
 - attempts to model the world system as related to national policy formulation

Awareness of Human Choices

Some awareness of the problems of choice confronting individuals, nations, and the human species as consciousness and knowledge of the global system expands.

Throughout I have talked of changes in awareness. Awareness of our own cultural perspective, awareness of how other peoples view the world, awareness of global dynamics and patterns of change. In this final section I wish to emphasize that such heightened awareness, desirable as it is, brings with it problems of choice. As an instance, in a "pre-awareness" stage the undoubted benefits of pesticides in agriculture, forestry, and the control of diseases such as malaria provide clear justification for prolific application.

But then information about the dangers of pesticides begins to accumulate. DDT is found in the tissues of organisms far removed from the points of application. Some species are threatened with extinction. Risks not only to present human populations but to future generations are identified. In some countries the use of certain pesticides is halted altogether. A change of awareness has occurred and new behaviors have resulted—in some parts of the world.

Where is the problem of choice? It lies in the fact that pesticides like DDT are still in use. Widely. Hundreds of millions of people depend on DDT to control malaria and agricultural pests. Ask someone in the developed countries if DDT is still in use and he will likely say no, answering in terms of his own country's practices. But pose the question on a world basis and the answer is yes. Viewed as a collectivity, the human species continues to use DDT.

This continued use constitutes a *de facto* human choice. In a conflict between the rights of living populations to control obvious and immediate threats to health and the rights of other living and future populations to freedom from subtle and long-term threats to health and subsistence, the former wins out. The immediate and the obvious triumph over the long-term and subtle. But although the choice seems to have been made, the *problem* of choice remains. There is a new cognition in the world. We now know that there are long-term and subtle risks. Once we did not. We now admit that other people and future generations have rights. Once we did not. This new knowledge has not had the power to halt the use of DDT where life and health are under severe threat, but it has had the effect of blocking its use in many other parts of the world. To put it simply, there are now two possible behaviors with respect to DDT:

- if it will solve a problem, use it
- even* if it will solve a problem, don't use it

The second of these behaviors originates in the new cognition, the new awareness of risks and rights.

The DDT situation is simply an instance, a small manifestation of the major cognitive revolution that is now under way. But it is a representative one. Many practices once essentially automatic, whose benefits were assumed, are now questioned. They are questioned because we know new things. We know how to measure minute quantities. We know that factors interconnect in complex ways. We know

there are limits to the resources and carrying capacity of the planet. In the context of the new cognition, action does not proceed automatically. Calculations of advantage and disadvantage become explicit and detailed. Choosing a course of behavior becomes a more reasoned process. That shift—from the automatic to the calculated—is a very important expression of the cognitive revolution we are now experiencing.

That cognitive revolution involves a shift from a pre-global to a global cognition. In the pre-global stage, rational consideration of goals, methods, and consequences tends to be limited to the near—the near in time and social identity. The preoccupation with the short-term and the neglect of the long-term has been particularly characteristic of Western industrial societies.

Pre-global cognition is characterized not only by a constricted view of the future but by a relatively simple theory of linkages between events, a linear theory in which some things are causes and other things are effects. This theory leads in its most exaggerated and magical form to the conclusion that conditions are the result of single causes, sometimes personified. In primitive societies this is the basis of witchcraft and ghost beliefs. In a sophisticated society like our own we have the recent example of two presidents who employed the CIA to locate the sinister foreign influence that must surely have been the root cause of the antiwar movement.

The emergent global cognition contrasts sharply with the pre-global. Long-term consequences begin to be considered. Linkages between events are seen in the more complex light of systems theory. Social goals and values are made explicit and vulnerable to challenge. And nations begin to note that their interests and activities are not separable from the interests and activities of others. Further, systematic attention is given to problems that transcend the national, regional, or coalitional human problems. A global cognition has certainly not been achieved. Pre-global forms of knowing continue to orient much of human behavior. But the transition is under way, driven by the convergent energies of a variety of social movements.

In summary, we are in a period of transition, moving from a pre-global to a global cognition. Global cognition is characterized by new knowledge of system interactions, by new knowledge in planning human action. As such, knowledge and its rational use expands, human choices expand. An awareness of this expanded range of choice con-

stitutes an important dimension of a global perspective.

I have discussed five dimensions of a global perspective. Are there more? I am tempted to be waggish and say no, this is it, the final crystalline truth. But of course there are more, as many more as anyone cares to invent. Such dimensions are inventions, constructs of the mind. This particular set is just one assemblage, a collage of ideas selected and shaped by one individual's proclivities and prejudices. This is not to say there are not

real changes under way in human consciousness. I am convinced there are and that they are in the direction of something that can be called a global perspective. But any particular description of that phenomenon is properly suspect. Even this one which is, by coincidence, my favorite.

Note: This essay is a summary of a more detailed discussion of global perspectives by the author available from Global Perspectives in Education, 218 East 18th St., New York, N.Y. 10003 at \$2.00 per single copy. Bulk rates available on request.

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