Frontier Theory and the Omission of Native Americans

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Background
• Frontier Thesis introduced at the 1893 Chicago World Fair
• Proposed by Frederick Jackson Turner
• Pushing the frontier helped contribute to the development of American democracy
• Consequently attributed little to minorities and Native Americans

Abstract
The purpose of this project is to highlight the issues and implications of Frederick Jackson Turner’s “Frontier Theory” proposed at the 1893 Chicago World Fair, and research the long-term effects that this theory has carried into the modern century through various editions of an entry level U.S. History textbook by way of quantitative content analysis.

Implications/Consequences
• Frequent omission of significant events regarding Native Americans in U.S. History
• Ethnocentric focus on primarily white males
• Exclusion of contributions by minorities
• Unintentional reform of lower education
• “Democracy” by pushing the frontier

Methodology
• Comparative, quantitative analysis of entry level U.S. History college textbooks
• America: A Narrative History by George Tindall and David Shi (multiple editions)
• Provide insight to the long-term effects of the frontier thesis in education
• What events were omitted/added?

References