WHAT EFFECT IS USING A TEXT YOU AUTHORED LIKELY TO HAVE ON HOW STUDENTS VIEW YOU?

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Many professors who author textbooks use them as required texts for courses that they teach. They usually do so because they regard them as the most appropriate for the purpose. However, is doing so likely to affect how they are viewed by their students? Do students tend to view a professor differently who uses his or her own book as a text than they do one who uses someone else's? While there has been considerable speculation about the answer to this question, we are not aware of any attempts to answer it empirically. A study is reported here in which we attempted to do so.

We administered a semantic differential task to 56 students in a public speaking course. All were undergraduates. The fields in which they were majoring included business, engineering, communication, and education. The semantic differential consisted of 27 pairs of bipolar adjectives (see Figure 1). Most were generated from a list that students at Marquette University use for rating professors in the University's Course Evaluation Questionnaire. The ordering of the adjective pairs and whether the "negative" or "positive" adjective appeared on the left side was determined by a table of random numbers. One-half of the students rated the word "PROFESSORS" on each of the adjectival pairs and the others rated the words "PROFESSORS WHO USE THEIR OWN TEXT" on them.

The median rating for each adjectival pair was determined for each of the two groups. They are displayed in the Figure 1: The Xs in it represent those for "PROFESSORS" and the Os those for "PROFESSORS WHO USE THEIR OWN TEXT."

Assuming that the findings of this study are reliable (they, of course, need to be replicated), they suggest that students tend to view professors who use their own text a little more negatively than those who do not do so. (The tendency for them to do it was significant beyond the 0.05 level of confidence on the Sign Test.) Those who do so may be rated lower than they would have otherwise on university end-of-course evaluation forms, which could adversely affect decisions regarding their promotion-and-tenure.

Can professors who use their own text do anything to minimize the effect of doing so on how they are viewed by students? The answer probably would be "yes" if they could convince them that they are doing so not to make money, but to have the text be as relevant as possible to course material and objectives.

McGUFFEY AWARD COMMITTEE SEEKS NOMINATIONS

The first William Holmes McGuffey Award for Textbook Longevity will be presented at the 1994 TAA Convention, so the McGuffey Awards Committee is now accepting nominations. The early nominations include some works first published in the 1970's and some that date as far back as the 1930's. The deadline for nominations is January 1, 1994.

The McGuffey Award was established to honor authors whose textbooks have stood the test of time and proved their enduring worth. The initial copyright date of an entry must be before 1980, so materials with copyrights of 1979 or earlier are eligible. For works with multiple authors, at least one co-author must be a TAA member.

The Chair of the McGuffey Awards Committee is Dr. Lee Mountain.

To nominate a textbook for the McGuffey Award, fill out the form on page 12 and mail it to TAA Headquarters. The publisher will be contacted about paying the entry fee of $200.00 to enter it in the competition. The entries will be sent to the McGuffey Award Committee members who will serve as judges. The winner(s) will be honored at the TAA Convention in June of 1994 in Seattle.

Figure 1. The Semantic Differential Task.

helpful	___:___:**X O**:___:___:___:___	not helpful
ill-prepared	___:___:___:___:___:**X O**:___	well-prepared
not knowledgeable	___:___:___:___:___:**X O**:___	knowledgeable
fair	___:___:**X**:_**O**:___:___:___	biased
boring	___:___:___:**X O**:___:___:___	stimulating
good sense of humor	___:___:_**X**:_**O**:___:___:___	dull
enthusiastic	___:___:**X O**:___:___:___:___	unenthusiastic
inconsiderate	___:___:___:___:_**O**:_**X**:___	considerate
concerned	___:_**X**:_**O**:___:___:___:___	disinterested
inexperienced	___:___:___:___:___:**X O**:___	experienced
scattered	___:___:___:___:___:**X O**:___	organized
cold	___:___:___:___:_**O**:_**X**:___	warm
committed	___:**X O**:___:___:___:___:___	lack of dedication
in-touch	___:___:**X O**:___:___:___:___	out-of-touch
close-minded	___:___:___:_**O**:_**X**:___:___	open-minded
growing (learning)	___:___:_**X**:_**O**:___:___:___	stagnated
broad perspective	___:___:_**X**:_**O**:___:___:___	narrow perspective
lectures from text	___:___:_**O**:___:_**X**:___:___	varies lecture
values research	___:___:___:_**O**:_**X**:___:___	values students
impractical	___:___:___:_**O**:_**X**:___:___	practical
rich	___:___:___:**X O**:___:___:___	poor
motivating	___:___:**X O**:___:___:___:___	discouraging
ineffective	___:___:___:___:**X O**:___:___	effective
incoherent	___:___:___:___:**X O**:___:___	understandable
confident	___:**X O**:___:___:___:___:___	nervous
unnatural	___:___:___:___:**X O**:___:___	natural
approachable	___:_**X**:_**O**:___:___:___:___	unapproachable