

Authorities are quick to stress, however, that these are not compulsory and that individual school systems are free to adapt them as they choose. In spite of rather rigid strictures imposed by several states through indirect means (the Regents' Examinations in New York State, state-wide textbook adoption in California, etc.) it is fair to say that most states, at the present time, do leave the final word on curriculum to local school boards. However, it would be unrealistic to expect any but the largest boards to mold their own local curricula to any great extent. Smaller school districts and smaller centres simply do not have the personnel and planning resources required to do anything other than copy either the state guidelines or the guidelines laid down by adjacent large systems.

It will be obvious why my original thought -- that approaches to state authorities would provide as neat and ready access to state curricula as would be true of approaches at the provincial level in Canada -- had to be abandoned. Adjustments were also required in the earlier assumptions that available textbooks had a universal influence on curriculum and that this sector was readily approachable. I decided early -- very early -- that textbook publishers should not be approached with any suggestion that their works were in any way inaccurate, but rather with the more positive approach that it might prove possible to provide writers of their future textbooks with ready access to even wider resources. In spite of this "soft sell", the fact that the approach was made at all was generally viewed with apprehension and with some suspicion.

In the United States, the textbook industry is even more highly competitive than in Canada. Most Canadian textbook publishers are subsidiaries of either American or British firms and many Canadian textbooks are simply adapted or unadapted editions of volumes produced for the parent firms' markets. U.S. publishers naturally tend to "key on" the larger markets, California being a notable case in point not only because of its vast population but also because of its practice of state-wide adoption of textbooks. As new