

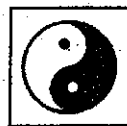
B. To Explore Vital Unifying Themes and Narratives of Human Experience

Another principle of selection, then, is to choose particulars that most dramatically illustrate universal historical themes. That they may "comprehend the forces for change and continuity that have shaped—and will continue to shape—human life," the Bradley Commission said, students should pursue overarching themes and narratives out of the entire human past across the globe. These appear in full on pages ten and eleven of *Building a History Curriculum*:



Civilization, cultural diffusion, and innovation—the evolution

of human skills and the understanding of nature and people; the cultural flowering of major civilizations in the arts, literature, and thought.



Conflict and cooperation—the causes of war

and the approaches to peace, and the human consequences of both. The relations between domestic affairs and foreign policy. Choices made between international conflict and cooperation, isolation and interdependence.



Human interaction with the environment—the relationship between geography

and technology and the effects of each on economic, social, and political developments. The choices made possible, or limited, by climate, resources, and location, and the consequences of such choices.



Comparative history of major developments—

the forces for revolution, reaction, and reform across time. Imperialism, ancient and modern. Comparative instances of slavery and emancipation, feudalism and central government, economic expansion and penury, growth of cities and their characteristics.



Values, beliefs, political ideas, and institutions—the basic principles

of influential religions, philosophies and ideologies. The interplay among ideas, moral values, and leadership, especially in the evolution of democratic institutions. The tensions between freedom and security, liberty and equality, diversity and commonality in human affairs.



Patterns of social and political interaction—

change and continuity of class, ethnic, racial, and gender structure and relations. Migration, immigration, forces for social mobility and immobility. The conditions and aspirations of common people, and those of elites, and their effects upon political power and institutions.