

AN EXAMINATION OF PERCEPTION AND KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING THE
VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT
HUGO CHAVEZ

by

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ABSTRACT

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This study examines the perception and knowledge of American undergraduate students regarding the Venezuelan Government under the leadership of President Hugo Chavez. A perception and knowledge survey covering various and relative aspects of the Chavez Administration in Venezuela was given to undergraduate students seeking a degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice. It was proposed that undergraduate students seeking Criminology and Criminal Justice degrees would compare with Americans overall in having low perceptions and little knowledge of Venezuela, the President of Venezuela, Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias, and the current Venezuelan

Government and its role in the global community confirming the lack of awareness among Americans regarding issues outside of U.S. borders. Race/Ethnicity is used by the researcher to examine responses to survey items to determine if President Chavez's influence among minorities or Caucasians in America is significantly different. The research found a significant difference in minority compared to majority responses to survey items. Further, there was an overwhelming correlation among many knowledge and perception items confirming that knowledge of the Venezuelan Government under the leadership of Chavez may effect one's perception of Venezuela. Data from the survey results were used as a support instrument in applying David Matza and Gresham Sykes "Techniques of Neutralization" to Hugo Chavez and his radical socialist ideologies and activities. The author provided suggestions, and posited implications of Chavez's policies to provide a new perspective among Americans concerning his threats to the national and economic security of the U.S.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Global alliances, oil prices, motivations for anti-western terrorist regimes, and cooperation between countries are ever-changing in the 21st Century. The War on Terror is more complex than any other war experienced by mankind with ever-changing policies, broad communication through satellite, cell phones, and the Internet, and rapid and efficient transportation. It is also characterized by a lack of certainty about who comprises allies or foes. Americans, in general, are culturally egocentric, illiterate to foreign cultures, and ignorant in their perceptions and knowledge of the global community and politics associated with America's War on Terror.

The President of Venezuela, Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias, has nationalized the Venezuelan oil sector, forcing dependence from the economy and social structure of Venezuela, promotes an integration of Latin America, and chronically denounces the U.S. in regards to its foreign policy, power, government, and economic structure. Chavez befriends anti-American characters such as Cuba's Fidel Castro, Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, China's Hu Jintao, and at one time, Iraq's Saddam Hussein. The author, in agreement with the U.S. government, suspects Chavez of funding and supporting radical Muslim and Latin American anti-western terrorist organizations.

This study examined the perception and knowledge of the Chavez Administration in Venezuela among undergraduate students seeking degrees in

Criminology and Criminal Justice in the United States. A perception and knowledge survey covering various and relative aspects of the Chavez Administration in Venezuela was given to the students. It was hypothesized that undergraduate students seeking Criminology and Criminal Justice degrees would compare favorably with non-student Americans by having low perceptions and knowledge of Venezuela, the President of Venezuela, Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias, the current Venezuelan Government and its role in the global community, thus confirming American ignorance regarding issues outside national borders. The words “American” or “Americans” in this paper represent U.S. citizens. Demographics such as race, age, and GPA were surveyed, together with additional questions, to study a possible pattern in responses relating to specific demographics. Data from the survey results will be used as a support instrument in applying David Matza and Gresham Sykes “Techniques of Neutralization” (1957) to Hugo Chavez and his radical socialist ideologies and activities.

Knowledge gained from this research may be applied to many areas of interest. Through awareness among the American public and policymakers regarding President Chavez, policymakers in the United States Government may make more efficient decisions among areas of diplomacy, intelligence, and defense.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A lack of research exists in the literature regarding the perception and knowledge by Americans of foreign heads of state or their histories. To the author's knowledge, there has been no research concerning President Hugo Chavez and the current Venezuelan Government, however, many articles have recently been published regarding Chavez and the Venezuelan Government. Post 9/11, a profusion of analyses and inquiries emerged that directly targeted terrorism and how to combat the ensuing "War on Terror." Throughout the following research, there are subdivided areas of interest that may be studied and explored separately, such as: perception, knowledge, various forms of terrorism, Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias, Venezuela, the Chavez Administration, Latin American current events, and Neutralization Theory. It is important to first grasp the depth and far-reaching connotation of each subdivided areas of interest before synthesizing them together to gain a broader perspective, and to understand the outcome of their relationships.. With this in mind, the author delineates each of the above mentioned fields and surveys the given research and information available for each of these subdivisions.

2.2 Perception

Webster's Dictionary defines 'perception' as, "the ability to perceive; a mental grasp of objects, qualities, etc. by means of the senses and awareness; comprehension; insight or intuition of understanding, knowledge, etc" (Agnes 2004). Awareness and recognition are common synonyms for perception.

2.2.1 Cultural Perception

Research shows that cultural perception differs from culture to culture due to "differing visual environments of cultural groups and the differing visual inference habits that these environments reinforce" (Segall, Campbell, & Herskovits, 1966). These researchers suggest that if differences in perception are to be found from culture to culture, it is most likely to stem from culturally mediated differences in experience, rather than biological differences. Another necessary component of this research was knowledge, which the author covers in the next section.

2.3 Knowledge

Webster's Dictionary defines 'knowledge' as, "the act, fact, or state of knowing; acquaintance with facts; or awareness" (Agnes 2004). Regarding this definition of knowledge, a person who is knowledgeable is someone who "has or shows knowledge or intelligence" (2004). Knowledge may represent an understanding or comprehension of an area of interest. With an understanding of perception and knowledge, the author discusses areas of this study in which a certain perception and knowledge was measured by the instrument found in Appendix A.

2.4 Terrorism/International Terrorism

Clifford Simonsen and Jeremy Spindlove (2004) give a simple definition of terrorism as “violence or threatened violence intended to produce fear of change.” Walter Laqueur (1987) refers to terrorism as “the use or threatened use of force designed to bring about a political change.” From a political and military context, the United States Department of State definition is: “The term ‘terrorism’ means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience. The term ‘international terrorism’ means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country. The term ‘terrorist group’ means any group practicing, or that has significant subgroups that practice international terrorism.”

2.5 Terrorism Funding

The financial resources of terrorist regimes are underrepresented in the literature. James Adams(1986) is infamous in the literature of terrorist financing. He proposes that terrorism shifted between the 1960’s and the 1980’s. The problem with this shift is that “the United States defense policy has been aimed at uncovering state-sponsored terrorism” (1986). Adams supports the notion that this defense ideology results in a misunderstanding of the structure within terrorist groups. “The best way to attack terrorism is to attack the financial structures that support independent terrorist organizations” (Adams, 1986). According to Adams, “terrorism grew from the revolutionary violence in the 1960’s.” Adams concludes that “Behind the structure of every large terrorist group lies a financial network. A terrorist campaign can be stopped

by undermining a group's economic ability to wage a campaign.” Yoseff Bodansky (1999) furthers Adams' study with a detailed analysis of Osama bin Laden's financial network and support. In summary, terrorist activities continue to support Adams' 1986 thesis.

2.6 Nationalism/Nationalistic Ideology

Nationalism represents a “doctrine that national interest, security, etc. are more important than international considerations” (Agnes, 2004).

2.6.1 Socialism

Nationalism, Socialism, Communism, and Marxism have universally become coinciding terms. Encyclopedia Britannica defines socialism as: “[A]System of social organization in which private property and the distribution of income are subject to social control; also, the political movements aimed at putting that system into practice” (2006). According to Agnes (2004) socialism is “...any of various theories or systems of the ownership and operation of the means of production and distribution by society or the community rather than by private individuals, with all members of society or the community sharing in the work and the products, and often as system for establishing such a system.” Among the most popular socialists was Karl Marx. The next section provides the reader with an understanding of Marx and his ideology.

2.6.2 Marxism

Karl Marx is one of Chavez's most beloved and admired authors and molders of his leftist ideology. Marxism represents “any economic theory or system based on the ownership of all property by the community as a whole”, with unreachable goals of “a

classless and stateless society and the equal distribution of economic goods, and to be achieved by revolutionary and dictatorial means” (Agnes, 2004).

Most countries or dictators falling under this system establish, or wish to establish, a one-party political structure. To date, all governments under this particular system or ideology have failed; however, the Soviet Union could possibly be the most successful example of Marxism attempted. Chip Berlet (1998) states, “Die-hard Marxists use communism as a surrogate religion and contend that capitalists conspire to oppress the masses through manipulation of the economic system.” Venezuela is currently categorized as a socialist country. Following is a discussion of the current state of Venezuela under the direction of President Hugo Chavez.

2.7 Venezuela

2.7.1 Current Events

In oil-rich Venezuela, a volatile leader has befriended bad actors from the Mideast, Colombia, and Cuba, according to Robinson (2003). Robinson posits that the oil-rich, but politically unstable, nation of Venezuela is emerging as a potential hub of terrorism in the Western Hemisphere, providing assistance to Islamic radicals from the Middle East and other terrorists. Shifter (2006) adds that: “Venezuela is the world’s fifth-largest producer. Middle Eastern terrorists groups are operating support cells in Venezuela and other locations in the Andean region.” Two-month studies by U.S. News, including interviews with dozens of U.S. and Latin American sources, confirm terrorist activity, according to Robinson. He states: “Thousands of Venezuelan identity

documents are being distributed to foreigners from Middle Eastern nations, including Syria, Pakistan, Egypt, and Lebanon.” In addition, Robinson comments that Venezuela is supporting armed opposition groups from neighboring Colombia. These groups are on the official U.S. list of terrorist organizations, but also have direct ties to drug trafficking. Maps obtained by U.S. News and cited in the Robinson article, as well as eyewitness accounts, pinpoint the location of training camps used by Colombian rebels, the location of a top rebel leader, and other Venezuelan armed groups. In addition, Cubans are working inside Venezuela’s paramilitary and intelligence apparatus. The coordination between Cuba and Venezuela is the latest sign that Venezuelan President Chavez is modeling his government on Castro’s Cuba.

Robinson also noted that the Venezuelan Government, with influence from Chavez, has issued thousands of *cedulas*, the U.S. equivalent of Social Security cards, to people from places such as Cuba, Colombia, and Middle Eastern nations that play host to foreign terrorist organizations. Middle Eastern countries of interest include Syria, Egypt, Pakistan, and Lebanon. It is believed that some of these *cedulas* are subsequently used to obtain Venezuelan passports and even American visas, which could allow the holder to elude immigration checks and successfully enter the United States. *Cedulas* are also being used by Colombian subversives and by some Venezuelan officials to travel covertly.

A Venezuelan analyst who recently visited Margarita Island, a free zone on the north coast of Venezuela run largely by Arab merchants from Lebanon and Iran, described the Venezuelan-Arab Friendship Association as a “fortress” with armed

guards. Robinson cited General James Hill, who observed that support “cells” for the groups Hamas, Hezbollah, and Islamiyya al Gammat are active on Margarita Island. Hill said: “These groups generate funds through money laundering, drug trafficking, or arms deals, and make millions of dollars every year via their multiple illicit activities. These logistic cells reach back to the Middle East” (2003). Venezuela is actively aiding two Columbian armed militias, the FARC and the ELN, according to Hill. Both groups are on the U.S. Department of State’s terrorist list, which continues to be a fervent complaint by Colombia. Many leaders from these two alleged terrorists groups have been indicted in the U.S. for the killings and kidnappings of Americans, and for drug trafficking.

The primary camp for FARC in Venezuela, Resumidero, is located in the Perija Mountains according to provided maps and testimonies from various FARC deserters. This particular location doubles as a disguise for Resumidero as an old Indian village. Robinson comments: “The Resumidero base is home to one of the FARC’s top leaders, Ivan Marquez, and can accommodate 700 people. Marquez commands 1000 fighters, and according to one deserter’s account, oversees the training of hundreds more would-be guerillas” (2003).

A clandestine FARC radio station is located about 30 miles away on the Colombian-Venezuelan border. Resumidero has over 100 huts and three houses for Marquez and other leader. Another camp, Asamblea, located near the city of Machiques is an estimated two-day walk from Resumidero. Asamblea is located just 35 miles inside the Venezuelan border. Asamblea is used as a prime fighter-training site,

with 25 houses and Internet access. Robinson observes: “Some 60 Venezuelan soldiers, plus two Venezuelan officers, provide training to the FARC rebels at the Resumidero camp” (2003). Drug money is credited for the majority of the funding for this training. Another FARC deserter reported that he witnessed a FARC logistics chief trade 8 kilograms of cocaine and cash for guns from a Venezuelan colonel, who arranged the shipments from Venezuelan Army stocks (2003). General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also cited by Robinson in US News, went as far as to suggest that Venezuela’s support for terrorists in Colombia is like Syria’s support for terrorist groups in Iraq (2003).

Following the 1992 coup attempt by Chavez, the government fell into a depression. “Out of prison, Hugo Chavez pulled together a loose, anti-imperialist ‘Bolivarian’ alliance for the 1998 presidential elections, which he won convincingly” (New Internationalist, 2006). The movement is named for Simon Bolivar, the 19th-century hero who defeated the Spanish in South America” (Robinson, 2003). In 1999 a new ‘Bolivarian’ Constitution was approved with strong efforts stemming from Chavez. Amidst a tragic mudslide, killing 50,000 Venezuelans, and a strike in the oil industry, a Presidential recall referendum was brought about. This questionable recall referendum in 2004 was easily won by Chavez.

The New Internationalist comments that, during this time, oil prices skyrocketed. “Despite persistent corruption, ‘missions’ began to deliver healthcare, education, water and land rights to the neglected barrios” (2006). Phillips (2003) adds that Venezuela is one of the top three suppliers of foreign oil to the U.S. (Canada and

Saudi Arabia are the other two) (2003). “The history of Venezuela tells us something, though in an overheated political atmosphere, it tends to evaporate. Yet another researcher commented that Venezuela came relatively late to liberal democracy, escaping from a prolonged and peculiarly nasty form of military dictatorship, only within living memory, in 1958” (Ransom, 2006).

A pact known as the *Punto Fijo* (Fixed Point) was signed by liberal democrats such as the Venezuelan elite, with hopes of deterring communist filtration in the future. “In 1976, the oil industry was nationalized and a trickle from its enormous wealth began to fill the coffers of the State. Revenues from oil became a direct taxation” (The New Internationalist, 2006). According to Ransom (2006), though he denies it, Chavez’s rise to power is an obvious product of the Fourth Republic. “His Movement of the Fifth Republic (MVR) is a loose electoral alliance of political factions excluded from the Punto Fijo, its ranks swelled by a good number of political careerists jumping ship. As with the Fourth Republic, oil revenues have enabled Chavez to skirt around the creaking structures of state and society – and, incidentally, the diktats of the World Bank and IMG. Should the price of oil ever fall, or were he himself to be struck by a bus, his welfare reforms could well vanish, leaving only endemic corruption and violent crime.”

Ransom continues: “As for Latin America, the Bolivarian project is well under way claiming an almost ‘snowball effect’. The current transformation of Venezuelan healthcare and education is a result of the barter agreements between Venezuela and Cuba of oil for doctors. The barter of Venezuelan oil for Argentinean goods enabled Argentina to implement a successful alternative to neoliberal orthodoxy. “Cuba,

Venezuela, and Argentina have been joined in some sort of loose ‘Bolivarian’ alliance by Uruguay, Bolivia, and Chile, and in turn may soon be joined by Peru, Nicaragua, and Mexico” (Ransom, 2006). President Lula of Brasilia remains skeptical and refuses to negotiate with Chavez. What brings these countries together is, apparently, the tumultuous movements against the neoliberal agenda. This neoliberal agenda concerns the Free Trade Area of the Americas. “From a continent that has, over the years of betrayal and repression, gained a little more immunity to false dawns, the true identity of Latin America is finally beginning to emerge. There is an overwhelming majority of Latin Americans transforming the mixed ethnic origins of an Evo Morales in Bolivia or a Hugo Chavez in Venezuela from political liability to political asset” (2006).

2.7.2 History

The Aztecs, Mayans, and Incas were among the original inhabitants of present day Venezuela. Inspired by the French Revolution and the North American War of Independence, Venezuela found itself at the center of the independence movement, according to the New Internationalist (2006). In 1813, Simón Bolívar was named the ‘Liberator of the Second Republic’ following the capture of Caracas, Venezuela. Bolivar struggled for a few years, but was elected President of the Third Republic in 1819 by an established congress. Bolivar was also named President of Colombia, and liberated Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Columbia and Venezuela were primarily considered ‘Bolivarian’ regions under Bolivar’s dictatorial control. “Bolívar was put to death in 1830” (2006).

2.7.3 *Simon Bolivar*

Simón Bolívar is venerated across Latin America as the Liberator of five of its republics: Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia, according to Ransom, (2006). Born in Caracas, Bolivar grew up in a wealthy family with an impeccable bloodline. He was an admirer of the North American Revolution, but a stern critic of the French Revolution. He dreamed of creating a U.S.-style federation between all the newly independent republics of Latin America (2006). Many years after his death, Bolivar has proved to motivate Latin American leaders such as President Chavez. Much of Chavez’ ideology and dialogue, stemming from Bolivar, can be seen through his policy implications and speeches which is discussed in the following section of this chapter.

Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías

2.8.1 *Introduction*

Hugo Rafael Chavez Frias is the 53rd and current President of Venezuela. He leads his “Bolivarian Revolution” promoting his vision of democratic socialism, Latin American integration, and anti-imperialism a term coined by Chavez. Democratic socialism is defined as, “a broad political movement propagating the ideals of socialism within the context of a democratic system” (Wikipedia). Venezuela remains unstable under his presidency, yet still remains popular via elections, in spite of conflict after conflict and a radical anti-U.S. and socialist ideology. Chavez is an overtly radical critic of neoliberal globalization and U.S. foreign policy. Neoliberal globalization

refers to “a political-economic philosophy that de-emphasizes or rejects government intervention in the domestic economy” (Wikipedia).

Chavez personally founded the leftist Fifth Republic Movement after a failed 1992 coup d’etat against President Carlos Andres Perez. A coup, in a political/military perspective, refers to the overthrow of government. Chavez was elected President of Venezuela in 1998. Chavez was popular for his promises of aiding Venezuela’s poor majority. He was reelected in 2000 and again in 2006. Domestically, he has launched massive Bolivarian missions, in which he states the primary goals are to combat disease, illiteracy, malnutrition, poverty, and other social ills. Chavez has shown opposition to the Washington Consensus, and asks cooperation from the world’s poor nations, especially those present in Latin America. The Washington Consensus are “policies proposed to introduce various free market oriented economic reforms which are theoretically designed to make the target economy more like that of First World countries such as the United States” (Wikipedia).

Some foreign governments see Chavez as a threat to global oil prices and regional stability, but others welcome his bilateral trade and reciprocal aid agreements. In some eyes a socialist liberator or an authoritarian demagogue, Chavez remains one of the most controversial figures in present-day politics. Michael Shifter noted in June’s edition of *Foreign Affairs*: “He (Chavez) is bravely fighting for Latin American solidarity and standing up to the overbearing United States. With charisma and oil dollars, he is seizing an opportunity to correct the power and wealth imbalances that have long defined Venezuelan and hemispheric affairs” (2006).

2.8.2 *Roots/Early Life Up To Presidency*

Hugo Chavez was born July, 28 1954 in Sabaneta, Barinas. He was the second born to two Venezuelan schoolteachers. He is of mixed Amerindian, African, and Spanish decent, much like Bolivar. He was raised in a thatched palm leaf house on the outskirts of Sabaneta. He was sent to live with his paternal grandmother in Sabaneta when a young boy. His grandmother, Rosa Ines Chavez, is given credit for the raising of Hugo and his older brother. While living with his grandmother, Chavez pursued painting, singing, and baseball. During this time, Chavez attended Julian Pino Elementary School in Sabaneta. He was forced to relocate to Barinas to attend Daniel Florencio O’Leary High School. At 17 years of age, Chavez enrolled at the Venezuelan Academy of Military Sciences. Chavez graduated in 1975 as a sub-lieutenant earning a degree in Military Arts and Science. Chavez entered the Venezuelan military for several months following graduation, before entering the Political Science Graduate Studies program at Simon Bolivar University in Caracas. Chavez and close peers developed a left-nationalist doctrine they termed “Bolivarianism”.

The initial evolution of Chavez’s political ideology was influenced by 19th century Venezuelan Revolutionary, Simon Bolivar, Peruvian dictator Juan Velasco, and teachings from various socialist and communist leaders. Chavez, a great baseball player, played for *Criollitos de Venezuela* at the Venezuelan National Baseball Championship in 1969. Also, during this time, Chavez authored many poems, stories, and theatrical pieces. Chavez never received his degree from Simon Bolivar University. Departing from the university life, Chavez initially reentered active-duty military

service as a member of a “counter insurgency” battalion, stationed in Barinas. This first major duty was located just miles from Chavez’s childhood home. Chavez led a 17-year military career holding command and staff positions, eventually rising to lieutenant colonel. While in the military, he taught classes at the Military Academy of Venezuela. This stage of Chavez’s life is when his peers acknowledged his fiery lecturing style and unusually radical critique of the current Venezuelan government and society.

During these years, Chavez established the Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement-200. The Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement-200, or MBR-200, marks the beginning of Chavez’s “Bolivarian Revolution”. The 200 represents the 200th anniversary of Simon Bolivar’s birth. Chavez founded the MBR-200 on July 24, 1983. Following his military service, he rose to fill a number of sensitive high-level positions in Caracas and was a highly decorated military figure.

Chavez led a coup against Carlos Andres Perez, the 46th and 49th President of Venezuela, repetitiously deemed unpopular for economic decline and a violent repression known as El Caracazo. On February 4, 1992, five army units under Chavez’s command invaded Caracas with the mission of assaulting and overwhelming key military and communications installations throughout the city. Included targets were: Miraflores Presidential Palace, the defense ministry, La Carlota Military Airport, and the Historical Museum. The ultimate goal of the coup was to intercept and take custody of Perez, who was returning from an overseas trip. The coup failed due to numerous betrayals, defections, errors, and other unforeseen circumstances. Chavez and a small group of rebels were left cut off in the Historical Museum. As the coup

unfolded, the coup plotters were unable to intercept Perez. Although failing to take Caracas, they were successful in overtaking Valencia, Maracaibo, and Maracay. Chavez gave himself up. He was allowed to make a national broadcast to cease all hostilities. Upon doing so, Chavez quipped that he failed... “*por ahora*” (for now). Chavez became even more famous for this remark. Until this broadcast, Hugo Chavez was not a recognized character throughout Venezuela.

Chavez was sentenced to time in Yare prison. While in prison, Chavez developed a medical condition termed “carnosity” of the eye, spreading to his iris. His eyesight clarity slowly deteriorated. Chavez underwent treatment and operations for his eye condition, but Chavez’s eyesight was permanently weakened. After serving two years in prison, President Rafael Caldera pardoned Chavez in 1994. Upon release, he immediately reconstituted the MBR-200 as the Fifth Republic Movement (MVR – *Movimiento Quinto Republica*).

2.8.3 Presidency

The presidency of Hugo Chavez could be argued to be the most popular and controversial of any Venezuelan President. In 1998, Chavez began his campaign for the presidency. His agenda drew heavily from his Bolivarianism ideology. Chavez and followers described their aim as “laying the foundation of a new republic” to replace the existing one. Chavez’s campaign was largely funded by Spain’s *Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Argentina* (BBVA) and *Banco Santander* (BSCH), each owners of Venezuela’s largest banks. Chavez was charismatic and flamboyant in his public speaking style, winning over the trust and favor of the poor and working classes.

On December 6, 1998, Chavez won the 1998 Presidential election with 56% of the vote. Chavez took the oath of office on February 2, 1999, mandating a reverse in Venezuela's economic decline and a strengthening of the role of the state in the economy. Two ultimate goals were established at the beginning of Chavez's presidency: 1) dismantling the "*puntofijismo*" via new legislation, and a new constitution, and 2) allocating government funds for new social programs. Soon after, there was an economic recession triggered by historically low oil prices and soaring international interest rates. With a depleting federal treasury, Chavez had few funds to support his promised massive anti-poverty measures.

In April 1999, Chavez ordered all branches of the military to devise programs to combat poverty and to further social and civic development in Venezuela's vast slum and rural areas. This civilian-military program was coined, "Plan Bolivar 2000." Goals of this plan were road building, housing construction, and mass vaccination. This would prove to be the first of many "plans" implemented by the Chavez Administration beginning around 2000 and continue to the present. The plan failed nearing the end of 2001 due to accusations and revelations of corruption by military officers.

Following the disappointment of "Plan Bolivar 2000", Chavez began to work towards a nationalization of Venezuela's oil sector and holding in the aluminum industry. Chavez wanted to promote the redistribution of wealth, increasing regulation, and social spending. President Chavez made clear that he wanted no place in foreign direct investment (FDI). He feels that FDI results in capital flight and inflation. In trying to elevate total oil revenues, Chavez lobbied other OPEC countries to cut their

production rates as well. He attempted a comprehensive negotiation of 60-year-old royalty payment agreements with oil giants Phillips Petroleum and ExxonMobil. Chavez was unsuccessful in his negotiation attempt.

In 1999, Chavez created an assembly with the task of framing a new Venezuelan Constitution that “hewed” more closely to Chavez’s socialist/Bolivarianism ideologies. The referendum for a new constitution passed with 72% of the vote. The 1999 Constitutional Assembly consisted of 95% of Chavez’s allies. Also in 1999, this Constitutional Assembly established a “judicial emergency committee”, enabling the Assembly to remove judges from power without consulting other branches of government. Over 190 judges were eventually suspended on charges of corruption. Also a “legislative emergency” was declared, thus dismantling the National Assembly. This disabled Chavez’s legislative opposition.

The Constitutional Assembly drafted the new 1999 Venezuelan Constitution, which is one the world’s lengthiest constitutions. The new Constitution changed the official name of Venezuela from “Republic of Venezuela” to “Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela”, with great influence coming from Chavez. The new constitution increased presidential terms from five to six years, and allowed for two consecutive terms rather than one. The new Constitution enhanced presidential power. It converted the former bicameral National Assembly into a unicameral legislature, stripping it of many of its powers. Judges could no longer be appointed by the National Assembly. Many of Chavez’ desired structural changes were enshrined in the new Constitution. Later in

December of 1999, mudslides killed an estimated 30,000 Venezuelans. Critics claim that Chavez was distracted by “his” referendum, ignoring emergency reports.

Chavez was re-elected on July 30, 2000 claiming 60% of the vote. During the 2000 elections, the “Enabling Act” was passed giving Chavez “rule by decree” for one year. During this year, Chavez enacted 49 decrees.

Protestors numbering 500,000 swarmed the streets of Caracas on April 11, 2002 in defense of the recently fired management of Petroleos de Venezuela S.A. (PDVSA). They crossed paths’ with citizens attending a pro-Chavez rally near the Miraflores Presidential Palace. Gunfire and violence erupted between the two groups of demonstrators. During the upheaval, Lucas Rincon Romero, Commander in Chief of the Venezuelan Armed Forces announced that Pedro Carmona, president of the Fedecamaras, was Venezuela’s interim president. Carmona reversed all major social and economic policies composed of Chavez’ “Bolivarian Revolution”, back to the pre-Chavez levels. Carmona also dissolved the National Assembly and Venezuelan judiciary, while also reverting the nations name back to “*Republicas de Venezuela.*” Chavez was held at a military base during the few days that this took place. Pro-Chavez Venezuelan soldiers successfully initiated a counter-coup and Chavez retook presidency on April 13, 2002.

Chavez asserted that the coup was sponsored by the U.S. On May 14, 2002, President Chavez alleged that he had definitive proof of U.S. military involvement in April’s coup. He claimed radar images of U.S. military naval vessels and aircraft in Venezuelan waters and airspace. U.S. Senator, Christopher Dodd, Democrat from

Connecticut, led an investigation and found Chavez's allegations false. Following the attempted April 2002 coup, Chavez replaced the upper echelons of the Venezuelan armed forces with pro-Chavez personnel. In late 2002, Chavez sought to take total control over PDVSA. Chavez faced a strike from resistant PDVSA workers. Soon after, PDVSA's upper-echelon management was fired by the Chavez Administration.

In 2003, Sumata, a grassroots volunteer civilian voter rights organization began collecting millions of signatures for a presidential recall. In August 2003, 3.2 million signatures were presented but rejected by the pro-Chavez majority in the "*Consejo Nacional Electoral*". In November 2003, 3.6 million signatures were collected over four days. Chavez claimed fraud of the signature collectors and rejected the petition once again. Upon each submission of signatures, the original list of signatures were kept by the Chavez government with numerous copies being made. Credible evidence emerged that Chavez and allies were penalizing those who signed by denying them various government jobs and services.

Finally, a recall referendum took place in June 2004. The actual recall vote took place on August 15, 2004, with Chavez claiming victory. Immediately after, Chavez's government charged the founders of Sumata with treason and conspiracy. Following his referendum victory, Chavez made progress regarding his primary objectives of fundamental social, economic transformation, and redistribution. Chavez placed the "Bolivarian Missions" at the head of his political agenda. Venezuela's extra foreign-exchange reserves reached excess of billions of dollars due to dramatic

increases in global oil prices. Chavez had primary control and access over the new monetary resources.

Despite the possible presidential term of 12 years newly established by Chavez, he has made suggestions that he will remain in power for at least 25 years. “Chavez has denied this” (Holland, 2006) as a misinterpretation of his intentions. In February 2006, on his renowned Sunday show *Alo Presidente*, Chavez threatened his opposition that if a candidate was not selected to run against him in the December 2006 elections, he will sign a decree to have a referendum for a third term. A third term would extend Chavez’s presidency from 1998-2013. Chavez states that the rebuilding of Venezuela is a complex project that will last until at least 2021. Many Venezuelans believe this to be a predictor of his intentions for establishment of more presidential terms. The British Broadcasting Channel (BBC) has noted that Chavez “has made no secret of the fact that he is in favor of amending the constitution so that he can run again for President in 2012” (Wikipedia). In June 2006, President Chavez placed a bid for a “non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council” (Wikipedia). Washington officials supported Guatemala for this seat instead of Venezuela.

President Chavez has made efforts to appeal to the lower socioeconomic classes in America. Beginning in 2005, Chavez has supplied cheaper heating fuel for low income families in several areas of the United States. This Chavez-initiated program supplies fuel for four New York City boroughs, and reached 25 million gallons of fuel for low-income families in 2006. This was the amount used in New York City only.

His motives for this program have been questioned, and he had received a new nickname: “oil pimp.”

The Venezuelan National Assembly approved yet another enabling act in January 2007. This act granted the Venezuelan President to rule by decree for 18 months, in which he intends to nationalize further key sectors of the Venezuelan economy. Chavez has made clear that, during this legislation, he will successfully transform Venezuela into a socialist society. Some may argue that Venezuela is experiencing a “radical lurch towards authoritarianism by a leader with unchecked power” (Wikipedia). As of April 30, 2007, Chavez withdrew Venezuela from the IMF and World Banks with the intention of creating a regional bank, the Bank of the South. The most recent development in his march toward total socialism in Venezuela came in May 2007 when he refused the license renewal of Venezuela’s most popular television station. Chavez alleged that the company took part in the 2002 coup d’etat.

President Chavez won the December 2006 presidential election with 63% of the vote. Following his victory, he promised a more radical focus towards socialism. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Mohammad Ali Hosseini, made this comment shortly following the December 2006 Chavez victory, “The victory of freedom seekers and independent characters in Venezuela and Latin America indicates the growing tendency of the people in that region to be really independent and keep their distance from the American arrogant attitudes” (Reuters, 2006). Chavez has won seven relatively clean elections since December 1998. No other political figure in the world is more drastically approved, at least by conventional measures” (Ransom, 2006). *Anti-*

chavistas, mostly Creole (white, descending from dynastic oligarchies across Latin America, bear an extreme hatred for Chavez representing the essence of the ancestral racism infested in the Creole culture. “Chavez is like most Venezuelans, a zambo, a man of mixed race. As a result, he is viewed with contempt by those who harbor the conviction that their country has been stolen from them – and mean to get it back” (2006). The foreign policy implications for Venezuela under President Chavez is an area of concern and interest among many countries. This can be seen through the rapid increase by Chavez in international news. In the following section, the author discusses President Chavez’s foreign policy agenda.

2.8.4 Foreign Policy

Chavez initiated his new bilateral and multilateral agreements to promote Venezuela’s foreign policy in 2004 and 2005. Chavez remains successful in many of these agreements. Numerous foreign leaders directly supporting Chavez’s agreements include Argentina's Nestor Kirchner, China's Hu Jintao, Cuba's Fidel Castro and Iran's Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

“On March 4, 2005, Chavez publicly declared that the U.S.-backed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) was ‘dead’” (Wikipedia). Chavez notes that in order to improve trade and relations between Venezuela, Argentina, and Brazil an anti-capitalist model of agreements and trade would need to be devised.

Throughout 2004 and 2005, the Venezuelan military rapidly began to reduce weaponry and military ties with the United States at Chavez’s command. As a result, Chavez’s Venezuela purchases arms from other sources, such as Brazil, Russia, China

and Spain. This lack of agreement has caused a strain between the U.S and Venezuela and Chavez has ended all cooperation among the militaries of the two countries. The final straw resulted when Chavez asked all U.S. active military soldiers to leave Venezuela. In 2005, Chavez initiated creation of an enormous military reserve, the Mission Miranda program. Chavez supported this plan by promoting the need for defensive measure against foreign intervention or invasion. “Additionally, in October 2005, Chavez banished the Christian missionary organization "New Tribes Mission" from the country, accusing it of "imperialist infiltration" and harboring connections with the CIA” (Wikipedia).

Chavez capitalizes on every opportunity to promote his workings of neoliberal globalization on the international stage. During a speech at the 2005 United Nations World Summit, Chavez blamed development models such as capital flow liberalization, privatization, and removal of trade barriers for impoverishment among the world’s developing countries. Additionally, on November 7, 2005 at the Fourth Summit of the Americas in Mar del Plata, Argentina, when referencing the stalling of the FTAA, he stated: “The great loser today was George W. Bush. The man went away wounded. You could see defeat on his face” (Parma, 2005). Chavez also took this opportunity to praise his trade alternative, the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA- *Alternativa Bolivariana para America*), inaugurated by both Venezuela and Cuba on December 14, 2004. Chavez came away from the 2005 Summit in Argentina confident claiming a “taste of victory” (Parma, 2005) over the United States and their allies.

Through the implementation of bilateral trade and reciprocal aid agreements, Chavez has been able to refocus Venezuelan foreign policy on Latin American economic and social integration. Included among these aid agreements is Chavez's "oil diplomacy". Chavez was quoted in a Venezuelan newspaper, "Clarín," stating: "Venezuela has a strong oil card to play on the geopolitical stage. It is a card that we are going to play with toughness against the toughest country in the world, the United States" (Blum, 2005). A major role in Chavez's bilateral trade relationships to promote Latin American integration have been the increasing arms purchases from Brazil, agreements with Cuba for trade of oil for doctors and expertise, the *ex gratia* oil pipeline that provides discounted natural gas to Colombia, funded by Chavez, and the barter agreements with Argentina consisting of petroleum for meat and dairy products. Chavez denounces current and prior U.S. foreign policy in Iraq, Haiti, and the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Chavez toured various OPEC countries in 2000 to promote his policies, including Iraq. Chavez was the first head of state to meet directly with Saddam Hussein since the Gulf War in 1991.

Chavez has recently become more overt regarding his foreign policy conduct and anti-Bush ideology. Chavez gave a public speech on January 23, 2005 referring to U.S. President George W. Bush as a *pendejo* ("dumbass"), and Condoleezza Rice as *un analfabetismo completo* (translated "complete illiterate") regarding her comprehension of Latin America. Mexican President Vicente Fox lingers among the few Latin American leaders who refuse to join Chavez in his efforts. The two have had heated disputes, the biggest of which over allegations from Chavez concerning Fox's support

of U.S. trade interests. The ongoing disputes produce a strain on the diplomatic relations between Venezuela and Mexico. In the 2006 Peruvian Presidential elections, Chavez openly supported Ollanta Humala, while slandering his opponent. Chavez received admonishment from the Peruvian Government for overtly interfering in their affairs. Chavez “has forged close ties with Cuba’s Fidel Castro, and has befriended some of the U.S.’s other notorious enemies, traveling to Saddams’ Iraq and Qadhafi’s Libya. Following the survival of an attempted “coup and a nationwide petition demanding his recall, Chavez is flirting with terrorism, and Washington is watching with increasing alarm” (Robinson, 2003).

Robinson concluded: Chavez’s popularity has plummeted, and Venezuela’s economy is troubled. As mentioned earlier, armed Colombian groups are helping Chavez create a force loyal to his regime. “The FARC and ELN were “instrumental” in the formation and training of a 200-man Venezuelan armed group called the Frente Bolivariano de Liberacion that operates in western Venezuela” (2003). Cubans play a strong role in Chavez government. Chavez’s ‘Bolivarian Circles’, an urban organization set up to defend and promote his revolution, has been trained by the FARC. Castro and Chavez speak daily via phone, and his personal bodyguard detail is made up of Cubans. Cuba provides military training to many pro-Chavez organizations. Citings of Castro have been in speeches by Chavez in 1994 and 1998. In addition, Chavez is sending some 53,000 barrels of oil daily to help Castro’s cash-strapped Cuba, and large numbers of Venezuelan military personnel have been sent to Cuba for training” (2003).

According to Carrillo (2001), on Saturday, November 10, 2001, at the 56th General Assembly of the United Nations, Hugo Chavez Frias gave a forceful speech condemning terrorism and calling on the international community to – while combating terrorism – continue the fight to reduce the extremes of poverty that have, at times, given rise to terrorism in the world. Chavez voiced that he was not backing down from his statements of disappointment made October 7, 2001 in which he disagreed with the U.S. bombings of Afghanistan. This statement was made after the missile attacks striking Afghanistan. Chavez said, “We’re going to have to change the current model we have for politics...we should revise the political models that we have today. Yes to democracy! we say in the Americas. But in Venezuela, we say: ‘What kind of democracy are you talking about?’” He continued: “We no longer want this kind of democracy in Venezuela – and we can be certain we won’t have that kind of democracy in Venezuela anymore. Democracies have to be what the people want; they have to be ethical – to promote justice and equality” (Carrillo, 2001).

The following relates to a February 4, 2006 Chavez speech at which the author was present.

Hugo Chavez, wearing his ‘trademark’ red beret and shirt, stands beneath a giant portrait of himself. He sings, quite tunefully, a patriotic song... ‘What an immense crowd!’ he mutters, as if to himself, feigning surprise. He recites from a volume of poetry by Venezuelan women, then from the sparse writings of Simon Bolivar, the Liberator from Spanish colonial rule. He launches into a familiar assault on Mr. Danger, The Donkey – President Bush. He announces

the formation of a reserve force of a million Venezuelans against a threat of invasion from the Evil Empire of the North (Ransom, 2006).

Anti-chavistas point out that during this speech on February 4, 2006, Chavez chose to mark not the 7 years since he was first elected President, but the 14 years since he staged an abortive military coup. He insists this launched his ‘Bolivarian Revolution’” (Ransom, 2006). Ransom again cites Chavez during the latter’s February 4, 2006 speech: “Not for the first time, he issued instructions for local coordinating committees and assemblies to form the skeleton of what he called a ‘protagonist’ government of the streets” (2006). During this speech, Chavez routinely recalled Simon Bolivar and his failed ambition for a unified Latin America, and the fresh ‘Bolivarian’ effort. The difference between Chavez’s ambitions and Bolivar’s is that the new ‘Bolivarian Revolution’ is aimed against the United States instead of Spain. According to Ransom: “Chavez is no fool. He understands the evolving strength of the social movements in his country, created in the political vacuum left by the Punto Fijo” (2006). As his movement grows, Chavez is becoming more radical in his ideology and behavior. Ransom asks: “Can the Bolivarian Revolution provide them with a fresh and durable form of political expression?” (2006).

2.8.5 *Domestic Policy*

Domestic Policy in the Chavez Government relies heavily on Chavez’s “Bolivarian Missions.” These missions have become primarily focused on a radical alteration of the Venezuelan economy and cultural landscape.

2.8.6 Labor Policy

The nation's largest trade union confederation, the *Conderacion de Trabajadores* (CTV), has been in a combative relationship with Chavez. The CTV is historically aligned with the *Accion Democratica* (AD) party, Chavez's opposition. Since 2000, *chavistas* and members of CTV have not been friendly to one another. To offset the CTV, *chavistas* have established the Union Nacional de Trabajadores (UNT), translated as "National Union of Workers." Once a neutral union, the CTV has rapidly lost members due to the growing discord between the two. *Chavista* unions that were once part of the CTV have withdrawn and affiliated with UNT, claiming concern for the anti-Chavez activism promoted by the CTV. In 2003, UNT was sent to an annual ILO meeting for the first time instead of CTV at the direction of Chavez. In 2005, Chavez nationalized Venepal, a paper and cardboard manufacturing firm, extended a line of credit to workers, and ordered that Venezuelan educational missions purchase their products from Venepal. President Chavez has sternly disregarded western economic structures such as the U.S.. The next section surveys the economic policies of President Chavez.

2.8.7 Economic policy

The keystone of Venezuela's economy has and remains their oil products. OPEC refers to Chavez as a "price hawk" for his stringent enforcement of production quotas and higher target oil prices. At an OPEC meeting in June 2006, Venezuela was the only country calling for lowered production to propel oil prices higher. Venezuela seeks the lower quota because PDVSA cannot meet their current quota. Developing

countries such as Argentina, Brazil, China, and India have supported Chavez's efforts and broadened Venezuela's customer base. Chavez has forced the Venezuelan economy to become dependent upon his government and the oil sector due to the record oil prices. The abundant funds from the oil prices have established more funding to promote social programs. Venezuela's private sector's role in the economy has largely diminished. Higher oil prices and nationalization appear to have lowered the unemployment rate in Venezuela, which dropped from 20% in 2003 to 10% in 2006.

After the attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11 2001, and with preparations for war in the U.S., Latin America could not compete for international media coverage. Moises Naim, a former Venezuelan Minister of Trade and Industry and editor of *Foreign Policy* magazine, argued in early 2003 that the world could no longer afford to ignore Venezuela's deterioration. He stated that Washington had mattered little in the Venezuelan crisis, and that "Fidel Castro's Cuba ... (had) been far more influential in Caracas than George W. Bush's mighty U.S.," with sustained and effective attention towards its goal of keeping Chávez in power.

According to Economist (2006), with the nationalization of the Venezuelan oil supply "Hugo Chavez has gleefully exploited the fall of OPEC." The Venezuelan President has always supported oil as a tool of geopolitics, a tool to be used as a weapon against American "imperialism." "In 2004, he unilaterally raised the royalties on super-heavy crude production in the Orinoco belt from 1% to 16.6% - and may yet increase it to 30%. In 2005 he increased the tax rate paid by the foreign oil companies from 34% to 50%, and then hit them with huge bills for unpaid 'back taxes'" (2006). A recent and

drastic measure of Chavez has been his suggestion to 22 foreign oil companies under service contracts, to transform themselves to joint-ventures by December 31, 2005. Although unsuccessful for the most part, this would have placed the government in a position to take the largest share. “Chavez has used cheap oil and refined products as “solidarity” to secure the loyalty of countries in the region” (2006). Those in opposition to Chavez have been threatened with a cut in their oil and energy supplies. “Venezuela has bought almost \$1.7 billion in Argentine bonds, helping Nestor Kirchner, its President, break free of the International Monetary Fund” (2006).

Phillips revealed that: “In November,, Chavez announced an initiative, PetroSur, at the Congress of Andean Parliaments, which would combine Venezuela’s oil assets with those of Ecuador, Brazil, and Trinidad, integrating the continent’s oil resources” (Phillips, 2003). Venezuelans at the bottom of their society may adore Chavez, who is negro y indio (black and Native American) like them, but the middle and upper classes despise Chavez and blame him for their loss of privileges and wealth. “In the wealthier districts of Caracas, people queued around the block to sign the petitions to recall Chavez. In the barrios, the petition stations were virtually empty” (2003).

2.8.8 Bolivarianism and Chavismo

Bolivarianism, coined by Chavez, draws heavily from Simon Bolivar’s ideals, but not entirely. In creating Bolivariansim, Chavez was also influenced by the writings of Marxist historian Federico Brito Figueroa, and the Argentinian political scientist Norberto Ceresole. Chavez was well acquainted with Latin American Socialist ideologies of Jorge Eliecer Gaitan and Salvador Allende at a young age by following

Cuban revolutionaries Che Guevara and Fidel Castro. Simon Rodriguez and Ezequiel Zamora have influenced his political ideology. Noam Chomsky, and the recorded teachings of Jesus in the Bible, are among Chavez's favorite readings. Chavez declares Jesus as the world's first socialist. In present day Venezuela, citizens either refer to themselves as chavistas or pro-Chavez, supporters of Chavez and his government, or anti-chavistas, those in opposition of Chavez. Through President Chavez's hasty increase in power and popularity, he has acquired many critics.

2.8.9 Criticism

Critics of Chavez report that crime and corruption are an epidemic in Venezuela. There is also speculation about possible fraud during the 2004 recall referendum. In March 2005, the Chavez Administration sought to end the criticism and slander of government officials by implementing media regulations in which persons will be criminalized for such acts. Punishment for breaking the media regulations for actions such as character defamation of Chavez, or any government officials, results in the possibility of 40 months in prison. Venezuelan doctors went on strike soon after the passing of the media regulations for different reasons. The doctors alleged that Chavez was siphoning public funds from existing Venezuelan institutions for his new Bolivarian institutions, which are run by Cuban doctors. Many opposition leaders in Venezuela, such as Maria-Corina Machado, are facing time in prison for their lack of support for President Chavez. Hurd remarks: "This is a country where anyone who dares to think and speak differently from the government, is seen as an enemy" (2007), a statement made by Machado.

2.8.10 Personal

President Chavez has been married twice. His first wife, Nancy Colmenares, came from a poor family in Chavez's hometown of Sabaneta. Chavez and Colmenares were married for 18 years, and the two had three children, Rosa Virginia, Maria Gabriela, and Hugo Rafael. They separated after Chavez's 1992 coup attempt. During this particular marriage, Chavez had an affair with historian Herma Marksman. Chavez is currently separated from his second wife, journalist Marisabel Rodriguez de Chavez. Chavez had his third daughter with Marisabel, named Rosa Ines. Chavez's mistress, Herma Marksman, wrote a book "*Chavez me Utilizo*", translated into "Chavez used Me". The book detailed her views and opinions about Hugo Chavez. Her beliefs are that Chavez is a person without values, that he is ambitious, disloyal, and uses others to later discard them: "... he has turned into an assassin" (Wikipedia). Chavez came from a Roman Catholic family. Chavez keeps his faith a private matter, but has become increasingly open to discussion of his religious views. He claims that his interpretation of Jesus' personal life and ideology has impacted his leftist and progressivist views. (Wikipedia). The author feels that the Neutralization Theory is a plausible explanation for Chavez' characteristics and behavior. The next section discusses understanding of the Neutralization Theory proposed by David Matza and Gresham Sykes.

2.9 Matza and Sykes' Neutralization Theory

David Matza and Gresham Sykes's theory, "Techniques of Neutralization" is primarily aimed at juvenile delinquency, but can adequately be applied to Socialist

'dictators' such as Chavez. Applications of theories such as Matza and Sykes's study can lead to an understanding of the ideology and activities of certain heads of state in the world. Observing President Chavez using Neutralization Theory may better explain the root of his actions and style of thought, other than labeling him as "evil" or "insane."

Matza and Sykes comment: "It is now largely agreed that delinquent behavior, like most social behavior, is learned, and that it is learned in the process of social interaction" (1957). This statement derives from Sutherland's theory of differential association, stating that "criminal or delinquent behavior involves the learning of a) techniques of committing crimes, and b) motives, drives, rationalizations, and attitudes favorable to the violation of law" (1957). There has been little research on the content of what is learned in relation to the process by which it is learned. A delinquent is believed to exist in a delinquent sub-culture. The primary characteristic of the delinquent sub-culture "is a system of values that represents an inversion of the values held by respectable, law-abiding society" (1957). Extending their argument, the authors use Cohen's perspective in "the process of developing a delinquent sub-culture as a matter of building, maintaining, and reinforcing a code for behavior which exists by opposition, which stands in point-by-point contradiction to dominate values, particularly those of the middle class" (1957). The researchers refer to delinquency as a behavior based on competing or countervailing values and norms that appear to suffer from a number of serious defects. They focus on the very nature of these effects and the resulting modified explanation.

Given a situation where a delinquent behavior is defined as “right” by the individual, it is “both empirical and theoretical” (1957). In a delinquent sub-culture where the individual views his/her behavior as morally correct, it is safe to assume that the person exhibits no shame or guilt. “The major reaction would fall in the direction of indignation or a sense of martyrdom” (1957). On this heightened scale, terrorists and radical political leaders may be justly applied. Interestingly, researchers have noted that the delinquent frequently admires and respects law-abiding persons. “It can be noted that the delinquent may exhibit great resentment if illegal behavior is imputed to ‘significant others’ in his immediate social environment, or to heroes in the world of sport and entertainment” (1957). The President of the U.S. is an unquestionable world leader and hero to many. Given that Hugo Chavez finds actions of U.S. President George W. Bush to be unjust, and his own to be in opposition, Matza and Sykes could very well have predicted future behavior. Though a delinquent is supposedly committed to his/her deviant paradigm, they “appear to recognize the moral validity of the dominant normative system in many instances” (1957). When ‘neutralizing’ their actions, delinquents draw a fine line between their victims and those who should not be victimized. Certain groups “are not be viewed as ‘fair game’ in the performance of supposedly approved delinquent acts, while others warrant a variety of attacks” (1957). When factors such as kinship, friendship, ethnic group, social class, age, sex, and gender are considered as limitation of victims, it is readily suspected that the essence of delinquency is far from unquestioned. “An understanding of how internal and external

demands for conformity are neutralized may be crucial for understanding delinquent behavior” (1957).

Moral injunction against killing is an example used by the researchers. This deterrent is not applied to the enemy in time of war, but the morality against taking another person’s life steps back into play in the circumstance of a captured enemy. Moral culpability can be avoided, avoiding negative sanctions, if the delinquent can justify his/her action, or prove the lack of criminal intent. “It is our argument that much delinquency is based on what is essentially an unrecognized extension of defenses to crimes, in the form of justifications for deviance that are seen as valid by the delinquent but not by the legal system or society at large” (1957). These criminals or delinquents rationalize their behavior in order to shield self-blame and the blame of others in the sub-culture following a delinquent act. This rationalization allows for the delinquent to “have his cake and eat it too.”

Matza and Sykes apply five major types to what they coin as the “Techniques of Neutralization.” The first listed is the *Denial of Responsibility*. This particular technique of neutralization is summed up by the statement: “By learning to view himself as more acted upon than acting, the delinquent prepares the way for deviance from the dominant normative system without the necessity of a frontal assault on the norms themselves” (1957). *Denial of Injury* is the second mentioned technique. Delinquents may question authority about whether or not there was clearly an injured party. “The moral indignation of self and others may be neutralized by an insistence that the injury is not wrong in light of the circumstances” (1957). This statement is

given regarding the *Denial of the Victim*, where actions are given as a form of just retaliation or punishment. The fourth mentioned technique of neutralization is the *Condemnation of the Condemners*. This technique is applied where:

The delinquent shifts the focus of attention from his own deviant acts to the motives and behavior of those who disapprove of his violations. His condemners, he may claim, are hypocrites, deviants in disguise, or impelled by personal spite. This orientation toward the conforming world may be of particular importance when it hardens into a bitter cynicism directed against those assigned the task of enforcing or expressing the norms of the dominant society (1957).

Delinquents are able to repress their actions by attacking the actions of their opposition by converting the subject in their conversational dialogue. The final technique of neutralization presented is the *Appeal to Higher Loyalties*. This occurs when a delinquent acts on behalf of the smaller society over which he presides, or his associated sub-culture. “They had it coming to them,” or “Everybody’s picking on me,” and “I didn’t do it for myself” are quotes used by the authors to portray this final technique of neutralization. The authors conclude by arguing that “techniques of neutralization are critical in lessening the effectiveness of social controls in that they lie behind a large share of delinquent behavior” (1957).

Robert Agnew supports the Matza and Sykes study in his article “The Techniques of Neutralization and Violence” conducted 37 years later. Agnew’s study

used violence as its primary focus. He concluded that “Techniques of neutralization are, in fact, a crucial component of ‘definitions favorable to crime’” (Agnew, 1994).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The process of developing the research instrument and an overview of the research process is detailed in this chapter. The study was a cross-sectional, one-shot case study. There was a single randomly selected sample group. Subjects in the study were given a survey regarding perception and knowledge of the Chavez Administration in Venezuela. A quantitative analysis was implemented to assess survey statement responses. Upon data collection and analysis, the researcher used Matza and Sykes Neutralization Theory as an application to Hugo Chavez for an explanation of his radical, leftist, and socialistic ideology. This is an ideology in which he possesses an extreme hatred of the U.S., the Bush Administration, and capitalist societies. Chapter 2 was an analysis in which interviews, speeches, writings, and past behavior were examined. ‘The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior’ and the strength/power of Chavez appears to growing rapidly.

Measurement

The perception and knowledge of Americans regarding the Chavez Administration in Venezuela and the possible threat to the U.S. and others in the global

community was the primary measurement of interest. The 'Survey of Perception and Knowledge of the Chavez Administration' was given to each volunteer in the study. The survey was comprised of three parts. Eleven of the first 22 statements represented knowledge of the Chavez Administration, and the final 11 statements represented perception of the Chavez Administration in Venezuela. The last section was comprised of demographics. Subjects were given an opportunity to respond to the first 22 statements regarding perception and knowledge on a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 'Agree Strongly' to 'Agree' to 'Neutral' to 'Disagree' to 'Disagree Strongly'. The name of Venezuela's current President was not visible to research subjects anywhere on the questionnaire because one statement inquired as to the subject's knowledge of the name of Venezuela's current President. The independent variable in this study was represented by the subjects in the study and their given demographics. The dependent variables were the subjects' responses to the survey. Data from all surveys was coded and run using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), second edition.

Prior to administration and data collection, the study was submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Texas at Arlington. The subjects are undergraduate students over 18 years of age. Each participant had the option of not responding to any or all of the research items. Upon IRB approval, the researcher communicated with the undergraduate faculty in the Criminology and Criminal Justice Department at the University of Texas at Arlington to establish an appropriate and convenient date for data collection.

Sample

Subjects were randomly selected. Subjects stemmed from two core undergraduate courses in the Criminology and Criminal Justice Department in the spring semester of 2007, i.e., Theoretical Criminology and Juvenile Justice Systems. A total of 84 subjects were eligible to participate in the study and all participated. The given number of subjects agrees with Cohen's power sampling in that enough students participated to ensure validity. Participants consisted of both males and females. Sample selection did not discriminate in regard to any general demographics such as: age, race, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, physical and mental handicaps, and sexual orientation. The surveys were implemented within the same week during the same semester. The two classes that participated in the current study were a Theoretical Criminology course and a Juvenile Justice System course. Each course is a requirement among undergraduate students seeking a degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Methodology

Upon confirmation from each professor of a date for data collection, the researcher developed a 'research packet' for administration. Each subject of the investigation was given a 'research packet,' which included a consent form, a Survey of Knowledge and Perception Relevant to the Chavez Administration, and a demographics sheet.

The researcher explained that a research project was being conducted. The researcher/test administrator read the first page of the packet (consent form) to the

subjects. All students participated in the experiment simultaneously. Prior to the subjects entering the classroom, the researcher ensured appropriate lighting, temperature, sound, and overall setting to eliminate as many fallacies as possible during data collection. The questionnaire was administered at the beginning of each class for purposes of participant alertness and attention span. The actual data collection was not timed as participants were informed prior to receiving permission to begin. As the participants reviewed the survey, the researcher situated himself in a location and manner that promoted lack of hindrance to the research. As the subjects completed their research packet they remained seated as they continued their scheduled class meeting, following collection of data. The process for data collection was conducted in the exact same manner for both classes.

Following data collection, the data was coded and statistically tested in SPSS, an advanced statistics program for purposes of empirical social research. Once the data was coded, the researcher analyzed the data via t-tests and Pearson's R correlations. T-tests were run to measure for significant differences between variables. Pearson's R was run for the purpose of seeking a strong correlation between variables, and also to correlate responses to perception statements from knowledge statements in the Survey of Knowledge and Perception of the Chavez Administration. Upon completion of data analysis, relative graphs and tables were produced and implemented for sufficiency.

Design

The study was a cross-sectional, one-shot case study. Each subject was given identical surveys. There was a single sample group. All data was coded and run in

SPSS to find relative differences and strengths among survey responses from each subject. T-tests were conducted between survey statements to measure for differences in responses to certain statements. Using SPSS, the researcher was able to show the strength of relationships between survey statements by utilizing Pearson's R. Pearson's R and t-testing analysis are both features of SPSS. The researcher has training for such tasks and has experience using this particular analysis software.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this chapter, the author focuses on giving the reader an understanding of findings from the current study via illustrations and explanations of research data. Four tables are given in which elements such as demographics, significant differences in statement responses, and relative significance among various knowledge and perception statements from the research survey are broken down. Below are four tables with an explanation for each. The final table, Table 4, gives a Pearson's R Matrix comparing the Knowledge statements from the survey (Questions 1 – 11) to the Perception statements (Questions 12 – 22). This particular table is also followed by a detailed description of the table.

Table 1 illustrates various demographics from the sample. Of the 84 subjects participating in the study, 45% of were female and the other 55% were males. An overwhelming number of participants fell within the 18 – 27 years of age range at 91%. The remainder of the sample was between the ages of 28 – 50 years of age. Very few subjects reported that they were current with international news, with only 3.6% marking 'Agree Strongly' on the survey, although, 23% of the subjects marked 'Agree' on the same statement regarding their currency with international news. More participants marked 'Neutral' than any other possible response at 31% (24% of

participants marked 'Disagree' and 16% marked Disagree Strongly). From this data it was inferred that the majority of participants do not remain current with international news.

The majority of participants were single at the time of data collection (81%). There were more participants who were married (13 %) than those who are divorced (4%). On the demographics section of the research survey, there was an inquiry of each subjects' current grade point average (GPA). Forty-six percent of the participants reported to have a current GPA that fell under 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, and 54% reported a GPA between 3.0 – 4.0 on a 4.0 scale.

On each survey, participants had the option to mark one of the following races/ethnicities: African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic, Caucasian, Middle Eastern, or Other. Due to President Chavez' growing desire to appeal to the minority and lower socioeconomic classes in the U.S. to assist in his global ambitions and infiltration of the American Capitalists' Society, and others, as noted in Chapter II, the author narrowed this section into two categories. Any subject that reported to be in any other race or ethnicity than Caucasian was placed into a 'minority' category, yielding categories of 'Caucasian' and 'Minorities.' Thirty-nine percent of participants were Caucasian, and 60% of participants were among one of the other races or ethnicities aside from Caucasian.

In addition, academic level was reported on each survey. A significantly large number of participants were in their junior year of undergraduate studies at 43% (19% sophomores and 36% seniors). All subjects are undergraduate degree-seeking students.

Table 4.1 - Demographics

<i>Demographic</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Percentage of Respondents</i>
Gender:	Male	45%
	Female	55%
Age:	18 – 27	91%
	28 – 50	10%
Currency w/ International News:	Agree Strongly	4%
	Agree	23%
	Neutral	31%
	Disagree	24%
	Disagree Strongly	16%
	-1	4%
Marital Status	Single	81%
	Married	13%
	Divorced	4%
	-1	2%
GPA	<2.0 – 3.0	46%
	3.0 – 4.0	54%
Race/Ethnicity	Caucasian	39%
	Minorities	60%
	-1	1%
Academic Standing	Sophomore	19%
	Junior	43%
	Senior	36%
	-1	2%

Following is an explanation of Table 2 (below). Table 2 records the difference in means among Caucasian respondents and minority respondents, as well as the differences among the two groups to satisfy the researcher's desired goal of finding whether or not an individual's race or ethnicity make a significant difference in responses to the perception and knowledge survey concerning the Chavez Administration of Venezuela and its relations with the U.S., The researcher chose to run t-tests on each survey item with race/ethnicity as a control. Demographic variables were used to control for t-tests, and race/ethnicity was the appropriate demographic variable in this case. The two independent variables in each t-test were, 1) mean of Caucasian responses, and 2) mean of minority responses. The two dependent variables for each t-test were the responses from Caucasians on a specific survey item compared to the responses of minorities on the like survey item. Variables that are statistically significant represent those in which there is a considerable difference in Caucasian responses to a survey item compared to minority responses on the same survey item.

Hypothetically, if a surplus of Caucasian respondents knew Chavez wrote a new Venezuelan Constitution once being appointed as President, when compared to minority respondents who may not have known President Chavez wrote a new Venezuelan Constitution once being appointed President, there is a possibility that there is a significant difference on this particular item with race/ethnicity being a control. In order to determine if there is a statistically significant difference, a t-test, as previously mentioned, was conducted. This difference is given in the form of a P-Value. A lower P-Value shows more of a statistical difference than a higher P-Value. A P-Value of .05

or less is considered to be a determinant of comparisons that have a significant difference. The lower a P-Value, such as .01, is considered to be highly significant.

Using SPSS, the researcher measured the mean of responses by Caucasians to each survey item by filtering minority responses. This allowed the researcher to obtain response means of all Caucasians with no regard for minority responses. The researcher then documented the mean of all minority responses to each item. In the same manner as above, the researcher filtered the Caucasian responses. The researcher entered the mean for Caucasian responses into the “Test Value” box prior to running the t-test on each of the 22 survey items. All survey items were ordinal except for the last section, which consisted of demographics.

Two items on the research survey showed a significant difference in Caucasian responses compared to minority responses. The majority mean for Caucasian responses on Item 6: “The current President of Venezuela has referred to George W. Bush as a *pendejo* (dumb)” was 1.88, and the mean for minority responses on the same item was 2.32. When these two means were compared with a t-test, there was a P-Value of .029. Therefore, this item shows a significant difference at the .05 level when comparing Caucasian to minority responses. The following survey item showed an even higher significant difference: “The current President of Venezuela and his government lengthened the presidential term as well as adding consecutive terms.” When the majority mean (2.03) was compared to the minority mean (2.62) via a t-test, a P-Value of .003 was recorded. This P-Value falls below the .01 significance level making this particular difference in responses more significant than the previous item that was

significant at the .05 level. It may now be assumed that when responding to the statements “The current President of Venezuela has referred to George W. Bush as a *pendejo* (dumb.” and “The current President of Venezuela and his government lengthened the presidential term as well as adding consecutive term.” Caucasian responses differed from those given by minorities.

Table 4.2 - Difference of Means Relating to Knowledge

<i>Questionnaire Item</i>	<i>Majority Mean</i>	<i>Minority Mean</i>	<i>P-Value</i>
Item #1	2.30	2.46	.488
Item #2	2.58	2.76	.394
Item #3	3.33	3.06	.273
Item #4	2.30	2.46	.511
Item #5	2.27	2.32	.823
Item #6	1.88	2.32	.029*
Item #7	2.03	2.62	.003**
Item #8	2.82	3.00	.423
Item #9	3.58	3.74	.496
Item #10	2.73	2.62	.634
Item #11	2.33	2.62	.157

* Significant at the .05 level

** Significant at the .01 level

(Items 1 – 11 are equivalent to first 11 items on research instrument found in Appendix A)

In Table 3, much of the same format as Table 2 is evident; however, this particular table concerns perception questions from the survey. In order to acquire the researcher’s desired knowledge of whether or not an individual’s race or ethnicity make a significant difference in responses to the perception and knowledge survey concerning the Chavez Administration of Venezuela and it’s relations with the U.S., the researcher

chose to run t-tests on each survey item with race/ethnicity as a control. Demographic variables were used to control for t-tests and race/ethnicity was the appropriate demographic variable in this case. The two independent variables in each t-test were: 1) mean of Caucasian responses, and 2) mean of minority responses. The two dependent variables for each t-test were the responses from Caucasians on a specific survey item compared to the responses of minorities on the like survey item. T-tests for perception items were conducted in the exact same manner as the knowledge items as noted above. Results from t-tests conducted on the perception items of the survey are shown below in Table 3. No significant differences were found when comparing Caucasian responses to minority responses. As to a more subjective understanding of the comparisons, majority and minority respondents differed slightly in their responses to perception questions.

Table 4.3 - Difference of Means Relating to Perception

<i>Questionnaire Item</i>	<i>Majority Mean</i>	<i>Minority Mean</i>	<i>P-Value</i>
Item #12	2.91	3.28	.081
Item #13	2.91	2.78	.455
Item#14	2.64	2.76	.572
Item #15	2.48	2.58	.565
Item #16	2.82	3.00	.363
Item #17	2.27	2.46	.322
Item #18	2.18	2.24	.744
Item #19	2.76	2.82	.723
Item #20	2.18	2.46	.136
Item #21	2.45	2.38	.672
Item #22	2.45	2.72	.161

(Items 12- 22 are equivalent to second 11 items on research instrument found in Appendix A)

In Tables' 4.1 and 4.2, a statistical correlation of perception questions and knowledge questions are recorded. Items 1 – 11 (knowledge), which are listed vertically along the left side of each table, were correlated with items 12 – 22 (perception), which are listed horizontally along the base of Tables' 4.1 and 4.2. Just as differences in participant responses were measured on .05 and .01 significance levels, correlations between responses to knowledge questions and perception questions were measured in an equivalent method.

Question 1: “The current ideology of the President of Venezuela relates to the teaching of well-known Communist/Socialist Dictators” showed a significant correlation with perception Questions 15 and 17 (“The current President of Venezuela funds anti-western terrorists movements” and “The current President of Venezuela befriends American foes” accordingly) at the .05 level. Question 1 also had a strong correlation with perception Question 14: “Venezuela poses a threat to the United States” at the .01 significance level. Knowledge Question 2 “The current President of Venezuela wrote a new Venezuelan Constitution once appointed” has a strong correlation with all but one of the perception questions, which is Question 14 (“Venezuela poses a threat to the United States”). “The current President of Venezuela changed the official name of Venezuela” (Knowledge Question 3) is significantly correlated with perceptions questions “The current President of Venezuela has a desire and potential for an ‘American Ethnic Cleansing’, much like Hitler’s holocaust,” “The current President of Venezuela funds anti-western terrorist movements,” and “The current President of Venezuela is successfully launching a ‘Bolivarian Revolution’” (Questions 12, 15, and

16 accordingly) at the .05 level. Question 3 was also strongly correlated with three other perception questions, 14 and 17 as shown above, as well as 19 (“The current President of Venezuela seeks to find allies for a violent anti-western movement, ‘Bolivarian Alternative’, with the United States at the receiving end”) at the .01 significance level. A strong correlation at the .01 level is noted when Question 4, “The current President of Venezuela has nationalized the Venezuelan oil industry” is associated with perception questions 12, 13, 15, and 18 – 22 (Question 13, “Terrorists training camps are housed on Margarita Island, just off the coast of Venezuela”; Question 18, “The current President of Venezuela overtly and boorishly disagrees with U.S. Foreign Policy”; Question 20, “The current President of Venezuela grows bolder in his active anti-American campaign”; Question 21, “The current President of Venezuela desires an unified and socialist Latin America”; and Question 22, “The current President of Venezuela has visions of a 20 plus year presidential term, a term that was once a single four year term”). Question 5, which reads “The current President of Venezuela suspended government positions that were held by persons in opposition” correlated at the .01 significance level with all perception questions, minus Questions 14 and 17. Question 6, “The current President of Venezuela has referred to George W. Bush as a *pendejo* (dumb)”, significantly correlates with Questions 12 and 19. Furthermore, an even stronger correlation is shown on this same question with perception questions 13, 16, 18, and 20 – 22, which may be observed in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 below. A strong relationship is revealed between Question 7, “The current President of Venezuela and his government lengthened the presidential term as well as

adding consecutive terms” and all perceptions questions except for “Venezuela poses a threat to the United States.” When perception questions 13 and 22 are correlated with “The current President of Venezuela redesigned the Venezuelan flag” (knowledge Question 8) a significance of .05 exists. Perception Questions 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20 also correlate with this question, but at a higher statistically significant level. “Vicente Fox is the current President of Venezuela”, which is a false statement is strongly correlated with four perception questions (12, 13, 16, and 19). This same question (Question 9) when correlated with Question 18, “The current President of Venezuela overtly and boorishly disagrees with U.S. Foreign Policy” gives our only negative correlation of $-.075$. This statistic may also be found in Table 4.2. Of the 11 knowledge items on the survey, this particular item was the only false statement, which is a possibility for the lack of significant correlations with other perception questions.

As illustrated in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, knowledge Questions 1 and 9 (“The current ideology of the President of Venezuela relates to the teaching of well-known Communist/Socialist Dictators” and “Vicente Fox is the current President of Venezuela” accordingly) when correlated with perception questions, showed the least amount of significant correlations. Shown in Tables 4.1 and 4.2, Questions 10 and 11 strongly correlate with all perception questions with the exception of Question 14, giving an identical pattern of correlations with perception questions as Question 7. Respondents that ascertained a certain level of knowledge on the following items: “The current President of Venezuela and his government lengthened the presidential term as well as adding consecutive terms”, “The current President of Venezuela converses with

Fidel Castro daily”, and The current President of Venezuela profits directly from Citgo sales in the U.S. as well as abroad”, portray a comparable perception.

Given the high number of strong correlations in response to the knowledge and perceptions items from the research survey, it is conceivable that one’s level of knowledge may likely effect perception in a specific area of interest, or vice versa.

Appendix A contains the knowledge and perception survey used in this study for necessary reference.

Table 4.4 - Knowledge and Perception Correlations

Knowledge	Q11	.576**	.535**	.017	.491**	.364**	.538**
	Q10	.317**	.423**	.164	.397**	.342**	.362**
	Q9	.294**	.280**	.073	.088	.355**	.101
	Q8	.417**	.277*	.094	.315**	.446**	.308**
	Q7	.384**	.399**	.158	.522**	.400**	.459**
	Q6	.248*	.308**	.048	.200	.335**	.183
	Q5	.306**	.372**	.145	.343**	.605**	.214
	Q4	.338**	.292**	.178	.364**	.151	.160
	Q3	.221*	.191	.459**	.219*	.240*	.290**
	Q2	.520**	.610**	.026	.508**	.395**	.416**
	Q1	.182	.158	.447**	.277*	.158	.240*
		Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17
Perception							

* Significant at the .05 level

** Significant at the .01 level

Table 4.5 - Knowledge and Perception Correlations continued

Knowledge	Q11	.521**	.444**	.459**	.534**	.509**
	Q10	.431**	.445**	.383**	.458**	.405**
	Q9	-.075	.316**	.082	.036	.086
	Q8	.177	.358**	.305**	.209	.248*
	Q7	.581**	.457**	.554**	.584**	.515**
	Q6	.439**	.254*	.389**	.377**	.478**
	Q5	.414**	.379**	.480**	.499**	.516**
	Q4	.385**	.365**	.322**	.337**	.310**
	Q3	.200	.287**	.209	.198	.042
	Q2	.358**	.427**	.298**	.450**	.425**
	Q1	.175	.174	.089	.165	.178
		Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21	Q22
Perception						

* Significant at the .05 level

** Significant at the .01 level

(Q1 – Q22 are equivalent to first 22 questions on research instrument found in Appendix A

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

Chavez has hoisted himself into a political spotlight in today's world. His intentions, country ties, and ideology pose a threat to the well-being of the U.S. and its citizens. Policymakers, academia, and every American citizen may benefit from recent entries into the body of knowledge concerning President Chavez and Venezuela. Policymakers, which will afford a better understanding of the root of Hugo Chavez's ideology and directional desire of 'his' Venezuela, thus more aptly making decisions regarding defense, intelligence, and diplomacy in Latin America and contact with the Chavez Administration in Venezuela. Research now shows that Chavez has an impact on U.S. citizens, which could assist in the progression of his power and goals. More specifically, the Venezuelan President has made some progress with, and had an impact upon the minority classes in America. Chavez took the same approach of gaining trust with the lower classes in Venezuela when attempting to win support for his presidential race in 1998, and has done so ever since.

As concluded from the findings in Chapter 4, there is a significant difference in the knowledge and perception of minorities versus Caucasians in the U.S., regarding President Chavez. It could be suggested by the researcher that President Chavez is succeeding in his effort to implement his ideology into the minds of Americans. In the

same manner as in his 1998 presidential campaign, Chavez seeks to appeal to the minority and lower socio-economic classes, but has taken his campaign across international borders. Chavez boasts successful experience in winning the hearts of the working class of Venezuela. It appears that Chavez is following the same initiative in his efforts to terminate the U.S. government in the same manner with which he rose to power in Venezuela by gaining the respect of the lower classes.

Academia in related fields may benefit by applying this knowledge to appropriate curriculum (i.e. Criminology, Terrorism, Political Science, International Relations). This study may assist as guidance for future research in this area for graduate students showing interest in foreign policy, terrorism, Latin America, Hugo Chavez, Criminology, and other areas within this particular research. A strong point to this study is that every American may use the given results. Americans must become more aware of their overall ignorance and lack of knowledge concerning foreign cultures and current events throughout the world. Little by little, this can lead to a massive diplomatic effort to remold the perceptions other cultures and countries have of America, and vice versa.

There is a strong correlation between responses to perception items and responses to knowledge items on an overwhelming number of the research survey items. It may be recognized that knowledge of a certain subject such as the Venezuelan government under the direction of President Hugo Chavez has an impact on perception of that subject. The more awareness among Americans of Chavez' goals and intentions

regarding the U.S., the better perception and understanding citizens will have of the threat Chavez could pose to the U.S..

As mentioned at the end of chapter 2, Matza and Sykes could have predicted world leader's future behavior through their Neutralization Theory. Of the five types of "techniques of neutralization," President Chavez' distaste for President George W. Bush and the U.S. government may be explained by each. It is the author's opinion that the technique of *appealing to higher loyalties* most readily gives an explanation as a source for Chavez' anger towards America, among other capitalist societies.

A strong suggestion by the researcher is to more effectively implement curriculum into America's education system concerning President Chavez' international activity, along with Venezuela's stance among crucial international issues and endeavors. This would allow American students to be aware of possible threats to our nation and comfortable way of life stemming from affairs outside U.S. borders. It is imperative to progress as a culture, society, and nation. Research allows a more valid understanding, or the discovery of certain elements, that may not already be known.

In accordance with U.S. interest in countries such as China, Cuba, North Korea, the Holy Land, and other areas of the Middle East such as Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq, it is necessary to understand other areas of the globe so tensions may decrease in nature. To understand the hidden truth behind President Chavez' behavior and "acts of kindness" toward the lower socioeconomic classes of the U.S., readers should acquire a knowledge of such a dictator to have a more plausible perception of the direction of

Venezuela and his 'Bolivarian Revolution'. Also, by doing so, one may understand the possible outcome should President Chavez' revolution succeed.

Should the U.S. and our allies be concerned with the fact that President Chavez has recently purchased 100,000 Russian AK-47's or his plan to increase Venezuelan Army reserves from 50,000 to 1.5 million? The researcher, among others that follow Chavez closely, feel that we should be concerned.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTION OF THE CHAVEZ
ADMINISTRATION OF VENEZUELA

1. The current ideology of the President of Venezuela relates to the teaching of well-known Communist/Socialist Dictators.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

2. The current President of Venezuela wrote a new Venezuelan Constitution once appointed.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

3. The current President of Venezuela changed the official name of Venezuela.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

4. The current President of Venezuela has nationalized the Venezuelan oil industry.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

5. The current President of Venezuela suspended government positions that were held by persons in opposition.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

6. The current President of Venezuela has referred to George W. Bush as a *pendejo* (“dumb”).

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

7. The current President of Venezuela and his government lengthened the presidential term as well as adding consecutive terms.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

8. The current President of Venezuela redesigned the Venezuelan flag.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

9. Vicente Fox is the current President of Venezuela.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

10. The current President of Venezuela converses with Fidel Castro daily.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

11. The current President of Venezuela profits directly from Citgo sales in the U.S. as well as abroad.

Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

12. The current President of Venezuela has a desire and potential for an ‘American Ethnic Cleansing’, much like Hitler’s Holocaust.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
13. Terrorists training camps are housed on Margarita Island, just off the coast of Venezuela.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
14. Venezuela poses a threat to the United States.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
15. The current President of Venezuela funds anti-western terrorist movements.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
16. The current President of Venezuela is successfully launching a “Bolivarian Revolution”.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
17. The current President of Venezuela befriends American foes.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
18. The current President of Venezuela overtly and boorishly disagrees with U.S. Foreign Policy.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
19. The current President of Venezuela seeks to find allies for a violent anti-western movement, “Bolivarian Alternative”, with the United States at the receiving end.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
20. The current President of Venezuela grows bolder in his active anti-American campaign.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
21. The current President of Venezuela desires a unified and socialist Latin America.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*
22. The current President of Venezuela has visions of a 20 plus year presidential term, a term that was once a single four year term.
Agree Strongly *Agree* *Neutral* *Disagree* *Disagree Strongly*

Circle the response that best applies to you.

23. Gender: Male Female

24. Age: 18-22 23-27 28-33 34-39 40-50

25. I remain current with International News.

Agree Strongly Agree Neutral Disagree Disagree Strongly

26. Marital Status: Single Married Divorced Widowed

27. GPA: < 2.0 2.5 – 3.0 3.0 – 3.5 3.5 – 4.0

28. Race/Ethnicity: African-American Asian-American Hispanic
 Caucasian Middle Eastern Other

29. Academic Standing: Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Joshua Prescott was born in Odessa, TX and grew up in the small East Texas town of Diboll. He attended Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, AR on a football and academic scholarship. While at Henderson, Prescott received NCAA Div. II First Team Academic All-American honors in 2004, Gulf South Conference Student-Athlete Academic Honor Roll each semester, Dean's List, Reddie Ambassador and served in three honor societies. He graduated in May 2005 from Henderson, Cum Laude, with a cumulative GPA of 3.7 majoring in Psychology and a double minor in Criminal Justice and Spanish. Mr. Prescott continued his studies at the University of Texas at Arlington towards an MA in Criminology/Criminal Justice. His graduate studies were conducted within the same manner in addition to nomination and service as Vice President of Alpha Phi Sigma, a graduate honor society for graduate students in the Criminology field. Upon graduating with a master's degree and successful completion of his thesis, Prescott intends to relocate to College Station, TX where he will obtain a PhD in Political Science with special interest in Foreign Policy/International Relations from Texas A&M University.

Currently, Prescott is an Adult Community Supervision Officer in Tarrant County, Texas (Fort Worth) supervising a medium/maximum felony and sex offender caseload.