

Geographic Naming and Geographic Education

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Abstract: Geographic names have long been a major component of geographic education, oftentimes leading to criticism of the discipline. On the other hand, geographic naming and the processes that result in the names of places and environmental features (land and water) provide students with opportunities to study archival information, consider the foreign policy positions of countries, and engage in critical thinking regarding the origin and common usage of geographic names, and proposed names. This paper explores the ways that geographic naming entails critical analysis of information as well as providing opportunities for students to learn the process and significance of geographic naming. The paper includes several examples of naming and territorial disputes and how they may be used with students for critical analysis in geographic education.

Introduction

Names of places are as common as maps to geographers. However, while place names are considered significant for maps, their quantitative importance in geography education is not agreed upon by all geographers. There have been numerous proclamations in academic books that reflect this range of view and upon on the role of place names in geography:

“To most Americans, geography is about place names. Concern about geographic ignorance usually focus on people’s attention to locate cities, countries, and rivers on a world map, and geographic instruction is often equated with conveying information about remote parts of the world” (Rediscovering Geography Committee, 1997)(pp. 2-3).

There is little doubt that geographical education is expected, on the one hand, to teach students knowledge about places, including where they are located, while, on the other hand, preparing those same students to engage in critical analysis of geographical information. The challenge is to combine the two expectations so that common place knowledge has a deeper meaning than

basic locational and physical and cultural traits of particular places. One means is to begin the process by engaging students with the concepts underlying place naming (Lind, 1962).

Geographical naming is a process that reflects the historical, ethnographic, political, economic, territorial, and scientific attributes that are attached to a place. Names may be deeply embedded with cultural information, such as indigenous names, and may serve as the social memory of an event, such as the U. S. Civil War battle at Gettysburg. They may also be based on scientific evidence related to a particular ecological trait, such as the Sargasso Sea and its natural vegetation mats of *sargassum*.

Place Naming in Geographic Education

Does place naming, as distinguished from place names, represent an important element in geographical education materials, including textbooks, atlases, and other products? To address this question, textbooks were surveyed using a library collection for middle and high school grades. The publication dates for the textbooks ranged from 1980 to 2008 from 7 different publishers. There were no instances of place naming as a geographical topic in the sample of 14 textbooks published between 1980 and 2008, although there were many hundreds of names of places. Four textbooks from the 1930s were also examined to ascertain if geographic naming had been a pursuit for students in earlier generations. Similarly to the more recent textbooks, there were no examples of geographic naming in the earlier published textbooks. While place names are important components of geography books at the pre-college level, there was no specific attention to how names for places are derived or indications of their historical and geographical roots.

There are instances of renaming places to indigenous or pre-colonial names that are cited, but only occasionally. For example, Bombay is now Mumbai. The 1995 name change was quite modest in its diffusion outside India until it was refreshed through the popular media when viewers by the millions attending the award winning “Slumdog Millionaire” film became informed of the name Mumbai. The name change from Madras to Chennai did not have the benefits of a film, and thus was not as apparent to the general population outside of India who did not have the encounter with the media.

Geography textbooks in tertiary education are also nearly absent of naming as a topic. The names appear on the maps and in print, but there is no specific attention to what a name implies, how it was determined, and if there are any disagreements that accompanied the decision at the time or subsequently. Books at the tertiary level tend to focus on place as a cultural signature, perceptions of, attachments to, or a locational transition over time. Terms used to convey place in recent textbooks are placefulness, place construction, and post-modern place. Attachment to place, perceptions of place, and place based are terms that were infrequently presented. All in all, there is little evidence in textbooks or generally available print materials in geographic education that presents the history, politics, economics, and cultural significance of place naming.

Naming Geographic Features: Real and Imagined

While most people consider geography to be a grounded, or land based discipline, the spatial name features also extend to the atmosphere and to waters. The “Roaring Forties”, “Tornado Alley”, and “Bermuda Triangle” are names associated with geography and represent informal names. The first two refer to atmospheric or maritime conditions that are spatial, but

they lack the official imprimatur as geographical names. The third is oceanic, widely recognized by the public, and mythological. Geographers are mainly concerned with official names, or names that have a local usage that may not be widely applied, and often not accepted as the name of a place or maritime body. There are other names that are local, used by local inhabitants, and have little use beyond the place. Regional names such as Upper County, and dual feature names such as Ayers Rock / Uluru are examples of local references, historical preferences, and the assignment of English and Aboriginal names to geographical regions and features. Geographical naming is based upon and reflects the context of the local or regional culture in some cases, but most often represents names of geographical features as determined and agreed upon by an official naming committee or agency.

How are Geographic Names Determined?

Geographic naming occurs several different ways. A new name or a renaming may be based on the preferred names as expressed by the local population. New names may also be determined by contests, as exemplified by the following.

In 1975 a hydroelectric dam was completed near Libby, Montana, U.S., that formed a reservoir extending 90 miles upriver into the Canadian Province of British Columbia. It was a new, manmade lake that flooded the valley of the Kootenay River and adjacent canyons and lowlands. The name given the newly formed water body was Lake Koocanusa following a competition whereby local residents and others submitted suggestions and a rationale for their suggested name. The name Koocanusa is derived from the initial three letters of the Kootenay (alternately, Kootenai) River, Canada, and USA. It somewhat has the sound of a traditional language of the region, but the extent to which linguistics were considered is not known. It met

the criteria by the U.S. Board of Geographic Names (USBGN) established in 1890, and the Geographical Names Board of Canada (GNBC), established in 1897. It is officially Lake Kooacanusa.

The North American Great Lakes are also good examples of geological and geographical naming based on scientific evidence. Through post glacial periods beginning about 25,000 years ago, Lake Chicago became Lake Chippewa and then Algonquin, and it is now Lake Michigan; Lakes Duluth and Keewenaw are now Lake Superior; Lake Iroquois is Lake Ontario; Lake Maumee is Lake Erie; (Strahler, 1963); and Lake Stanley was an early stage of Lake Huron, as was Lake Saginaw (Hough, 1962). The waters were collectively named the Nippising Great Lakes about 4000 to 6000 years ago, and referred to as the Great Lakes today. Each of the naming sequences reflects a scientific baseline when they were sub-regions of the Great Lakes during the post-Wisconsin glacial period. Naming such as these carries both scientific and place significance for the researcher and the interested person. Scientific evidence has also been used as the basis for geographical naming, especially in the naming of ecoregions, marine, and terrestrial reserves.

A scientific naming question that arises from time to time in the Great Lakes region is based on hydrological criteria. In terms of water elevation, both Lake Michigan and Lake Huron are the same, and are connected by the Strait of Mackinac, a sizable water body in its own right. The naming question is: Should the two lakes be named as one lake based on scientific evidence, or continue to be referred to as two lakes based on historical and political preference? While this question is not widely debated, it was brought to my attention during a course for high school geography teachers in Michigan. One of the participants raised the questions and researched the

evidence, concluding that there was evidence to suggest the originally names were based on lack of sufficient information about the shared characteristics of the water bodies.

Case 1

Four or Five Great Lakes: Are Two the Same Lake?

Lake Superior is widely accepted as the largest freshwater lake on Earth. It has an area of 31,820 square miles. However, there have been discussions that the record holding size of Lake Superior is the result of a naming inaccuracy that occurred when Lake Huron and Lake Michigan were named separately. Lake Michigan-Huron should have been considered one lake with two arms interconnected and their waters at the same elevation. The water surface of the combined lake is 45,410 square miles. The two lobes of the continental glacier that formed the great lakes basin actually formed just one rather than two based on scientific evidence. The explorers in colonial times recognized the great size of the lakes and thought they must indeed be separate.

What is the scientific evidence? The Huron and Michigan surface waters are at the same elevation above sea level. The Mackinac Strait connecting the waters is at the same elevation. The Strait is not a river and the water may flow either way through the channel depending on wind direction. It is a large passage, ranging from 3.5 to 5 miles wide. It is a narrowing, not a separation of the individually named lakes.

Because the Strait represents a large connecting channel, the water on each end of the Strait can equalize rapidly whenever a water level imbalance occurs. Long term water levels show that Lakes Michigan and Huron have identical water level regimes and mean long-term characteristics. Hydrologically, they are one lake. They do have drainage basins that are widely separated except in the vicinity of the Strait. Rivers arise in the Michigan Peninsulas, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Ontario and flow into the Lake Michigan-Huron basin. The rivers are of varying length, have different flow regimes, and have varying effects on different regions of the basin.

The scientific basis for naming may be apparent, but historical names are not easily changed. The separate names for the lake are a part of history and are also legally institutionalized since Lake Michigan is treated as American and Lake Huron is bisected by the international boundary between the United States and Canada. (Infoplease, 2007).

The criteria for analyzing the conditions for a renaming – or hyphenated naming - of Lakes Michigan and Huron are:

1. Historical: both geological and cultural
2. Geopolitical: the current international boundary; regional treaties and international agreements
3. Practical: name usage
4. Scientific: Hydrologically it is one water body.

Is the evidence adequate to justify a hyphenated name, such as Lake Michigan-Huron? Or, is the evidence adequate to justify continuation of the two separate lakes designation? While the questions are interesting and provide the basis for informed debate, the renaming issue does not reflect the depth of geopolitical considerations that accompany many international naming disputes. However, it does present a case study with adequate evidence to engage students in examining the importance, both culturally and scientifically of geographical naming.

The Importance of Naming for Geographic Education

Places, both on land and water, enjoy the practical achievement of being recognized by a fixed and usable name (Stewart, 1945). First, the name has importance to both the place and to the people, both present and past, who were associated with the place. The validity, stability, and memorable aspects of a place are deeply entrenched in its name. Naming provides a means to connect historical geography, geopolitics, and contemporary geographical factors in addressing questions of significance to peoples and nations.

Damascus (City of Jasmin) is claimed to be the oldest continually occupied place name for a city, dated to 10,000 to 8,000 BCE. Damascus is an example of a name that has recognition,

and is fixed and usable. There are many others among the millions of place names on Earth that fit these initial criteria.

Secondly, records of place names from historical and modern maps, gazetteers, and the narratives of verifiable and authenticated accounts reflect the importance for assigning an agreed upon name, or names, to a maritime or land based place. There is not always agreement regarding the names assigned to places, and some are highly contested. Perhaps the most contested of geographical names are those where a country's name is also applied to an international water body. Controversy may occur when waters X with the same name as country X lap upon the shores of country Y. Views of such naming issues are underlain by other issues, such as national heritage, cultural traditions, and any perceived threats to sovereignty, territorial waters, power relationships, and navigational rights. The Gulf of Mexico, which washes the shores of Mexico, the U.S. and Cuba, is an example of a geopolitically stable maritime name. The gulf's name has not been of concern to the U.S. or Cuba, despite its identity with Mexico. It has recognition, is fixed and used without alternative names for several centuries, There is no open dispute over the maritime name, although on early maps it was sometimes referred to as Golfo de Nueva España. However, New Spain officially became Mexico and the maritime name was aligned to Gulf of Mexico.

The situation with the East Sea/Sea of Japan is quite different and a major naming contention between the two Koreas and Japan that it be called the East Sea (South Korea's position) or the East Sea of Korea (North Korea's position) and Japan's insistence that the international preferred name is Sea of Japan. This controversy over the geographical name has been waged since the 1990s. It is perhaps the most documented maritime naming disagreement

to date, which provides students in geographical education with archival maps and documents to critically consider the contested names and the positions of each country regarding the naming issue. The East Sea/Sea of Japan represents a contemporary geopolitical issue, whereas the Lake Michigan-Huron proposal carries far less geopolitical baggage.

International Water Bodies and Naming in Geographical Education

Maritime naming is a topic that fits well into world regional, political, and cultural courses in the geography education curriculum. There are several high interest naming contestations that Alexander Murphy, a political geographer, has categorized based on the level of controversy. Most emanate from issues surrounding the naming of a maritime feature bordering on a specific country (nation) when the maritime name also extends to adjacent international borders, exclusive economic zones, and territorial waters of other countries. Murphy used general categories to judge the level of national and international concern over the naming.

1. High Degree of Contention over the use of a particular name
 - a. Persian Gulf
 - b. East Sea/Sea of Japan
 - c. South China Sea
2. Moderate Degree of Contention
 - a. Bay of Biscay
 - b. Gulf of Thailand
 - c. English Channel
3. Low Degree of Contention (19 instances of maritime bodies using adjacent country names); including Bay of Benin, Denmark Strait, Gulf of Finland, Gulf of Honduras, Gulf of Oman, Irish Sea, Korea Strait, Norwegian Sea, Singapore Strait, Timor Sea, Bight of Biafra, East China Sea, Gulf of Guinea, Gulf of Mexico, Gulf of Panama, Korea Bay, Mozambique Channel, Philippine Sea, and Taiwan Strait
4. Insufficient Evidence (where evidence was insufficient or inconclusive)
 - a. Arabian Sea
 - b. Gulf of Venezuela (Murphy, 2010, pp. 53-54).

While Murphy (2010) explains that there is subjectivity in the categorizing and grouping of maritime naming issues, they do represent naming controversies that will be engaging for students studying geography. While such groupings represent a beginning point, there are current events and geopolitical issues that may present other examples and principles transferrable to categories of geographical naming. Murphy's groupings are based on criteria that guided the categorization of maritime naming into different levels of contention, which presents students in geographic education with examples based on the expert's rationale for the categories.

Geographic Learning

In geography the establishment of criteria for spatial analysis is a critical element of learning. Spatial analysis is the process by which the interrelationships between and among places, or the characteristics observed at places, are examined and explained. Those interrelationships may focus on Internet connectivity and information flow, or in the trade of products, or the funding for international assistance programs. Maritime naming also invites categories that students can use in the spatial analysis of names, including origin, derivation, changes, and evidenced based usage relative to the geopolitical context. The criteria that may be designed by students could include naming changes or controversies based on natural resources, shipping lanes, economic zones, regional power, and military dominance. The access to information and its spatial patterns are essential components for investigating contested naming of places.

Students in the first decade of the 21st century often demonstrate their first choice of authoritative information is through access to electronic data and geotechnology for the content they are studying. The Internet and search engines are the initial choice for research on most

topics, and geographical naming is no exception. More so, electronic atlases and geographic information sources are quite often accepted as definitive, just as print materials were definitive for earlier generations of students at school levels and in tertiary education.

An approach in geographic education regarding maritime place names may begin with Murphy's high degree of contention in maritime names list (Murphy, 2010). There are a substantial number of entries on web pages, blogs, and chat rooms that address academic, conventional wisdom and common knowledge and lack of knowledge about these issues. Some of the websites include scientific, geographic, and historical information that students may use in the investigation of maritime naming. The teacher's role in geographical education is to provide the opportunity for students' critical analysis of the evidence, building an informed position based on the evidence, and supporting the position with thoughtful and supportive knowledge that has been newly formulated or constructed by the student regarding the naming controversy. Prior knowledge is important, and in the U.S. it is unlikely that large numbers of students will have had specific historical or cultural experience regarding geographical naming as identified by Murphy (2010). The students will not have a nationally derived level of interest, or nationalistic values associated with a name or symbol, such as the flag. Geographic naming is not a regularly encountered topic of debate either inside or outside of school. The role for the teacher is to provide an intellectual and academic basis in the absence, most generally, of the emotive or nationalistic basis for naming that accompanies issues such as the East Sea/Sea of Japan by the Korean people and their cultural identity.

One way to approach the geographical naming topics in the U.S. is through content aligned with national standards and the criteria they suggest for studying the topic. American

teachers and students are guided by the National Content Standards for Geography (Geography Education Standards Project, 1994). The Standards present five geographic skills that students should become proficient at addressing regardless of the topic and context, and the content examples from geographic naming are aligned very well with the skill standards. They are:

1. Asking Geographic Questions
2. Acquiring Geographic Information
3. Organizing Geographic Information
4. Analyzing Geographic Information
5. Answering Geographic Questions

The geographic skills will enable students inquiring about maritime naming issues to focus on the contention that results from the naming or use of particular names from different historical, cultural, and national perspectives. For example, when students observe East Sea/Sea of Japan as a dual name on maps showing the water body to the east of the Korean Peninsula they should ask the question: Why does this water body have two names? If students have observed either East Sea or Sea of Japan on other maps, they may ask the question regarding the use of different names on different maps, and may have observed Romanized names from Korean and Japanese languages. Asking the geographical question opens the discussion about geographical naming as compared to place names, and the processes that accompany naming. The controversy over the use of East Sea/Sea of Japan provides the students the opportunity to examine foreign policy, historical events, cultural traditions, archival evidence, contemporary name designation and usage, and international standards for maritime names. The scientific and evidentiary aspects of geographical naming may be continued to the critical thinking level as the remaining skills and related questions are addressed.

Acquiring geographic information is the second skill recommended by the standards. The search for information will usually take students to their information source of choice, the World Wide Web. The search engines they select will lead them to many thousands of websites, with Google alone listing 972,000 results for the East Sea/Sea of Japan name and naming dispute. Evaluating and sorting through that quantity of information will be time consuming and impractical. The immediate response of many students is to accept the top two or three search results as authentic, since they may be the websites selected most often and that dominate the top of the list of responses to the search topic. The validity of a website may not be related to the order it appears on the search engine. A validity check and use of criteria for verification of the websites must be completed. An important step in critical analysis is the checking of the initial sources of information, cross-checking with other sources that do not rely on the initial source, evaluating the data and how it is interpreted, and following leads to additional citation information that are available. Cross referencing is essential to verify that the information is from a stable, reliable website.

While not a widely accepted source of information in academic research, Wikipedia is often the initial search objective and source for students. The East Sea naming controversy is presented by two web sites: 1) the “Sea of Japan dispute” at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sea_of_Japan_naming_dispute; and 2) the more generic website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographical_renaming. Both address the general issue of renaming geographical features with specific reference to the East Sea/Sea of Japan. A benefit of both of the websites is their inclusion of references to the controversy and their potential for encouraging students to look further into the literature for pertinent information and the search for evidence to justify a position relative to the geographical question.

In addition to websites there are many hundreds of print materials that reflect on maritime naming issues and scientific conferences that critically discuss and analyze naming issues (<http://geo.khu.ac.kr/seanames/seminar.asp>). The East Sea/Sea of Japan naming controversy has been documented widely in print, both in scholarly publications and in the news media, which encourages library research by electronic and traditional means. Maps, charts, and personal accounts of the East Sea/Sea of Japan are widely available in original and reproductions of documents.

The documentary evidence in archival and published formats represents one aspect of the skill of gathering objective information. The other and often more difficult sources of information come from the emotive cultural, historical, and spatial associations that accompany a name. Geographic names are deeply engrained in societies and carry significant meaning and associations relative to place. Teasing out those cultural and emotional connections and critically analyzing them within the naming context or issue requires the incorporation of the humanities and the sciences. Poetry, music and literature need to be considered along with scientific surveys of ocean currents, distances, and subsequent mapping. While one group may consider a geographical name to be just a name, another group may view the name to have great emotional significance in their past and current societal recognition as a people and a country. While scientific information is important, the role of the humanities nearly always has an important role in the skill of gathering information.

Organizing geographic information regarding maritime naming must be completed systematically, including the scientific and humanistic components. Once the main categories of information are identified, the individual references and data may be placed in broad categories.

In some instances there are clear positions on a naming controversy that can be categorized as proponents and opponents to a particular name or the display of names on maps and in narratives. There will sometimes be third party standards or criteria that may be applied. An example is the manual for geographical naming established by the United Nations (United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, 2006). Positions taken and arguments presented in naming issues can be evaluated using the standards of widely recognized international organizations.

The fourth skill in the process of investigating a geographic naming question deals with analyzing the information. In geography there are arrays of analytical procedures that may be applied, but the most prominent is spatial analysis. Spatial analysis involves seeking explanations through patterns, relationships, and connections, many which may be demonstrated on maps (Holt-Jensen, 2010). Spatial analysis will accommodate historical information by placing temporal data into a spatial framework which is necessary when examining centuries old, long standing questions about geographical naming. The scrutiny of archival information from maps and narratives, the use of past and current surveys of expert knowledge and opinion, and the past and current foreign relations positions of governments relative to geographical naming and name changing may be spatially represented and analyzed. Spatial analysis may result in geographic models for alternatives, justifications of positions based on visual evidence, and synthesizing of information in order for recommendations to be extended in rendering decisions. Recommended solutions to naming controversies may be based on territorial and spatial relationships, such as naming adjacent water bodies to their geographical mid-point with the preferred names for the adjoining countries.

Arriving at the fifth question is to render the decision, or to answer the geographic question that initiated the research. In some cases the answer will be direct and non-controversial if the evidence is largely supportive. However, in geographical naming controversies this is seldom the case. Three elements of finding a solution or explanation (Harvey, 1969) will confound a strictly positivist resolution in which the answer to the question is incontrovertible. In most cases the following three points will influence resolving a geographical naming issue.

1. Past and current international power relationships between and among the countries involved;
2. National identity of a country or nationalism; and
3. Traditions of colonial or hegemonic traditions (Murphy, 2010).

Answering the geographic question may not provide a clearly evident solution. Often the initial question represents a complex series of geopolitical and territorial conditions and events that are not easily resolved by the respective agencies and commission of governmental and nongovernmental organizations. However, addressing complex geographical naming issues does present students with four important aspects of leaning for students.

1. The experience in applying a range of geographic information to a naming issue;
2. The necessity to examine an issue from the viewpoint of at least two countries, both claiming that a particular geographic name is correct;
3. Weighing evidence in an impartial manner to reach an answer to the initial question; and
4. Searching for evidence in support of a naming issue that includes emotive and scientific positions, and both are an authentic element in geographical naming.

Again, it is not expected that students will solve geographical naming and renaming controversies that the world's leading international agencies and leading political leaders find either difficult or impossible to solve. However, students will benefit from the opportunity to

develop an academically reasoned position on the issue, weight the importance of all aspects of the controversy, and arrive at recommendations that are consistent with international standards and policies.

Applying Naming Standards in a Geodigital Age

The world's most widely used providers of maps have made a major transition from print and library based sheet maps and atlases during the final decade of the 20th and the first decade of the 21st centuries to geodigital data bases and libraries of electronic maps. Those electronic maps may serve as the contexts for maritime naming disputes beginning with Murphy's categories (2010). Three sets of standards may serve as the introduction to resolving maritime naming issues. They are: 1) International Hydrographic Organization; 2) the United Nations; and 3) Google. The standards permit students to apply critical analysis in examining the historical and cultural considerations that accompany maritime naming disputes.

Standards Exhibit 1

Criteria for Maritime Naming: International Hydrographic Organization Technical

Resolution

It is recommended that where two or more countries share a given geographical feature (such as a bay, a strait, channel or archipelago) under different names, they should endeavor to reach agreement on a single name for the feature concerned. If they have different official languages and cannot agree on a common name form, it is recommended that the name forms of each of the languages in question should be accepted for charts and publications unless technical reasons prevent this practice on small scale charts (International Hydrographic Organization, 1974).

Standards Exhibit 2

Criteria for Maritime Naming: United Nations Resolution on the Standardization of Geographical Names

The United Nations considered the need for international standardization of geographical names for features that are under the sovereignty of more than one country or are divided among two or more countries. As a result, the United Nations:

- a. Recommends that countries sharing a given geographical feature under different names should endeavor, as far as possible, to reach agreement on fixing a single name for the feature concerned.
- b. Further recommends that when countries sharing a given geographical feature do not succeed in agreeing on a common name, it should be a general rule of international cartography that the name used by each of the countries concerned will be accepted. A policy of accepting only one or some of such names while excluding the rest would be inconsistent in principle as well as inexpedient in practice. Only technical reasons may sometimes make it necessary, especially in the case of small-scale maps, to dispense of certain names belonging to one language or another (United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, 1977).

Standards Exhibit 3

Criteria for Maritime Name Usage: Google

Google has chosen to implement a uniform policy of *Primary Local Usage*. Google is engaged in applying standards in the geodigital presentation of maps that are accessed by many millions of users. Following is a short section of the Blog page on Google by Andrew McLaughlin, Director of Global Public Policy in 2008 regarding the display of the names for maritime bodies.

Under this policy, the English Google Earth client displays the primary, common, local name(s) given to a body of water by the sovereign nations that border it. If all bordering countries agree on the name, then the common single name is displayed. But if different countries dispute the proper name for a body of water, our policy is to display *both* names, with each label placed closer to the country or countries that use it.

"Primary" includes names of dominant use, rather than having to add every conceivable local nickname or variation. "Common" means names which are in widespread daily use, rather than giving immediate recognition to any arbitrary re-naming. "Local" reflects the primary and common names used by countries that actually border the body of water, as they are the countries recognized under international law as having a special sovereign stake in it.

In Google's view, the *Primary Local Usage* rule generates the optimal combination of neutrality, objectivity, and legitimacy. Google also hopes that it meets the expectations of the vast majority of our users and demonstrates the proper sensitivity to these important geopolitical disputes (McLaughlin, 2008).

Conclusions

While geography as a discipline and geographic education in particular have been accused of being too place name oriented in the past, the role and practice of geographical naming has been underrepresented. The review of school level and tertiary textbooks in geography suggested that little attention is devoted to the importance of naming, the derivations for names, and their representations of national traditions and cultures. When naming does get attention, it is nearly always with reference to land rather than maritime naming controversies. Maritime naming should be addressed along with land based naming.

Students studying geography should also experience taking positions regarding naming issues and critically consider the more complex implications of both land and maritime naming deliberations. Perspective taking in order to contemplate the position of each country in the controversy adds a dimension to the issue that crosses to the humanities and cultural traditions of a people. It is important to consider the emotive, cultural and place attachments as well as the scientific attributes of naming.

As a result of being introduced to and actively investigating maritime naming issues the students will become alert to naming as a geographical, practical, and continuing endeavor.

Naming also introduces the scholarly and geopolitical considerations that define the relationships between and among countries. The critical analysis of naming issues, such as the East Sea/Sea of Japan in the 21st century will demonstrate the role that naming continues to have on global geopolitics and foreign policies globally.

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