

McDougal Littell

Formal Response to Oral Testimony July 17, 2002

McDougal Littell appreciates the opportunity to respond to the comments made specific to our textbooks in oral testimony at the July 17, 2002, meeting of the State Board of Education. The responses that follow include a capsule summary of the comments made and McDougal Littell's response.

1. Testimony of Eleanor Hutcheson, affiliated with Daughters of the American Revolution:

Transcript page 107: Ms. Hutcheson offered her concern that McDougal Littell did not cover the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo thoroughly, noting that our texts do not mention the "additional 3.5 million paid to settle claims."

Response: Ms. Hutcheson did not identify which McDougal Littell product she was referring to. We assume she was referring to either *Creating America: Beginnings to Reconstruction*, the Grade 8 U.S. history text submitted to Texas, or to *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21st Century*, the Grade 11 U.S. history text.

In *Creating America*, the Treaty appears as a highlighted vocabulary term on page 394. The text lists the terms of the Treaty as 1) Mexican recognition that Texas was part of the United States, 2) recognition of the Rio Grande as the border between Mexico and the United States, 3) the Mexican Cession and the territory it included, 4) the U.S. agreement to pay Mexico \$15 million, 5) the U.S. agreement to pay the \$3.25 million of claims U.S. citizens had against Mexico, and 6) the U.S. promise to protect the Mexicans living in Texas and the Mexican Cession. In addition, the text includes a statement about how Mexicans living in the United States reacted to the Treaty. This coverage is both age-appropriate and thorough, given the space constraints of a Grade 8 textbook.

In *The Americans*, neither the basis for the United States' claim nor the basis for the Mexican claim is given. Nothing is said or implied about the validity of either claim. The text is accurate as is.

Transcript page 108: Ms. Hutcheson's comments are vague because she did not point to specific pages in the texts, but seem to suggest that McDougal Littell's coverage of African-American voting rights is inaccurate. Again, since she did not identify the book she was referring to, we have examined both the Grade 8

and Grade 11 U.S. history books in view of her comments, and the response follows.

Response: Though Ms. Hutcheson did not identify which McDougal Littell product she was referring to, our response is the same for both *Creating America: Beginnings to Reconstruction* and *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21st Century*.

Ms. Hutcheson refers to the book *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln*, by Nancy Weiss. She quotes Weiss as saying that most African Americans who were able to vote in 1932 voted for Republicans. However, Weiss is only referring to the African Americans who could vote. Only a small percentage of African Americans in the South in the years between Reconstruction and passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were allowed to vote. The text is accurate as is.

Transcript page 109: Ms. Hutcheson questioned the accuracy of a caption under a photograph of child laborers on page 409 of *Celebrating Texas*.

Response: Ms. Hutcheson is correct. The photo is not of Texas children. They are actually Pennsylvania children. Although the photo does not identify the children as being from Texas, we can see how one might assume that they are. As such, we will change the caption to read as follows (the text in italics is being added to the existing caption, which is shown in regular type):

“In the late 1800s, many children across the United States worked in industry and mining. These children from Pennsylvania mined coal. In 1870, Texas industries employed twice as many children as women. • Why do you think children were employed by Texas industries?”

The existing version of the caption is factually accurate, but the revised version will ensure that there are no misunderstandings. Note that the 1870 U.S. Census stated that 320 children under the age of 16 were employed in manufacturing in Texas (compared to 157 women over the age of 16).

2. Testimony of Thomas Gomez

Transcript pages 136–138: Mr. Gomez offered comments on *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21st Century*. In general, he found the text lacking of coverage of Latin American influences in Texas, California, Arizona, and the West. Specifics include concern that Spanish *encomiendas* and Hispanic civil rights leaders are “barely mentioned,” coverage of Cuban immigration and Central

American immigration in the 1980s is weak, and more is needed on Texas leaders.

Response: The Proclamation calls for U.S. History 1877-present; 16th- and 17th-century influences are beyond the scope of the TEKS. Encomiendas are explained on pp. 16–17, but these were a European imposition. *The Americans* addresses the influence of indigenous Native Americans, Spanish colonists, and enslaved persons brought from the Caribbean. It addresses the influence of Mexico and Mexican-Americans on pages 133–137, 208, 246, 662, and 768–771.

The Americans discusses Latin and Hispanic leaders on pages 225 (Gregorio Cortez), 504 (Pedro González), 573 (Company E, 141st Regiment, 36th Division), 662 (Ignacio Lopez), 770 (César Chávez, Dolores Huerta), 882 (Antonia Hernandez), 844 (Antonia Coello, Daniel Villanueva, Toney Anaya, Robert Martinez, Lauro Cavazos), 875 (Sandra Cisneros), 879 (Ellen Ochoa).

3. Testimony of Lupita Ramirez, college student, University of Texas-Brownsville

Transcript pages 138–141: Ms. Ramirez’s comments are directed at *Celebrating Texas*. Her concern focuses in general on the extent of coverage of Latin American history in the text. Specifically, she identified what she perceives as an inaccurate portrayal of early European contact with Mesoamerica and inadequate representation of the violent conflict between Anglos and Mexicans in the early years following statehood.

Response: Throughout the chapters on European exploration of Texas and the Americas, the text stresses that the explorers were motivated in large part by a quest for riches. The short section on Cortés and the Aztecs ends with the following paragraph:

“The gold and silver Cortés brought back from Mexico made Spanish leaders even more eager to explore New Spain. If they could lay claim to these lands and the riches they held, Spain could become the leader of Europe and the world.”

The section on Cortés and the Aztecs of Mesoamerica is quite short, provided only as a foundation upon which to build the discussion of European exploration of Texas. A detailed look at Cortés’s war with the Aztecs is inappropriate in a seventh grade Texas history textbook, since it took place entirely within present-day Mexico, not in what is now Texas. As such, no change is needed.

Regarding Ms. Ramirez's comment about the portrayal of early European contact with Mesoamerica and description of the conflict between Anglos and Mexicans following statehood, Chapter 12 discusses Texas's admission into the Union, the war with Mexico, and the creation of the state's present-day boundaries. There is little discussion of civil rights issues in this chapter, with the exception of the question of whether Texas would be admitted as a slave state or a free state. As such, a discussion of Hispanic civil rights would be out of place here.

However, Mexican Americans' struggles for civil rights are discussed at length throughout the text. For instance, on page 450, the section titled "Hispanic Texans" discusses discrimination against Hispanics in the 19th and early 20th centuries. On page 459, there is a discussion of racist activities directed against Hispanic Texans. The section on the Ku Klux Klan on page 469 discusses the Klan's discrimination against Hispanic Texans.

The text describes the efforts of many Hispanic Texans to fight discrimination. On page 480, a biography of Félix Tijerina discusses the founding of the Latin American Club of Harris County, formed to fight injustices against Mexican Americans. Also on page 480, there is a discussion of the founding of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), which worked to overcome both segregation and discrimination. On pages 511–512, we look at Dr. Héctor P. Garcia's leadership in the fight for Hispanic equal rights. Dr. Garcia is also one of the "Lone Star Legends" pictured on the book's cover. On page 533, a full-page biography of Henry B. González discusses the state senator's efforts to bring equal rights to all, including his bill to abolish the poll tax. State Representative Irma Rangel's biography on page 648 looks at her "Ten Percent Plan," designed to increase the number of minority students admitted to Texas colleges and universities. Page 544 looks at the challenges of bringing basic city services to Texas *colonias*, while page 545 examines the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund's efforts to get equal school funding to poorer districts.

Ms. Ramirez's final comment about *Celebrating Texas* requires no response, but is included because it illustrates an important point:

"Chapter 22, covering World War I in the 1920's, the arts, literature, culture, politics, technology, war, business and education are all presented in such diversity that it makes the chapter visually augmented and culturally fascinating; such as the picture of Poncho Villa and the Mexican refugees on Page 457. And on Page 458, the 450 female nurses that enlisted to serve in the armed forces were recognized."

This is the portrait of Texas history that we show: one of cultural diversity, of people from a wide variety of ethnic heritages coming together as Texans to help shape this great state, and we thank Ms. Ramirez for recognizing that.

4. Testimony of Dr. Jose Angel Guterrez, University of Texas-Arlington

Transcript pages 182–186: Dr. Guterrez voiced several concerns about *World Cultures and Geography*, summarized here:

- a. Weight of the text, which he claims is close to 10 pounds;
- b. The organization of the book by cultural region rather than by continents, and the resulting inclusion of Mexico with Latin America rather than with the United States and Canada;
- c. lack of coverage of Spain and its influence;
- d. spelling error on page 22 (confusion of “capital” and “capitol”)
- e. treatment of Puerto Rico as a dependency of the United States and the lack of explanation of what a dependency is (text page 206);
- f. inclusion of “The War on Terrorism,” the 16-page section at the back of the book covering the World Trade Center attack, which he sees as an “infomercial” for USA Today

Responses:

- a. While McDougal Littell shares Dr. Guterrez’s concerns about the weight of textbooks, this book does not weigh 10 pounds. (It actually weighs less than five pounds.) Indeed, it is no heavier than other middle school textbooks submitted by the host of publishers for this Proclamation.
- b. Like several of its competitors, McDougal Littell made a conscious decision to organize *World Cultures and Geography* by cultural region rather than by continent, a pedagogical position set forth and supported by academic research for the past several years. Teaching of basic concepts such as the continents is generally considered part of an upper elementary curriculum. Consequently, for sixth grade students, the teaching of geography is as strongly focused on cultural geography as on physical geography. This offers an enhanced opportunity to encourage an understanding of the unique characteristics of the world’s cultures and to foster tolerance for people of all cultures.

This is not a sudden or shocking development, nor is it the “abandonment” of teaching continents. *World Cultures and Geography* reinforces the concept of continents in several ways. The Atlas in the front of the textbook includes

large physical maps of the seven continents, and the map on page 35 to which Dr. Guterrez refers labels the seven continents that together formed Pangaea. A graph on page 49 shows estimated world populations in 2000 by continent. The locator maps shown on each chapter opener show the world's continents and highlight the region covered in the chapter.

Having said that, we will make the term *continent* a highlighted key term on page 35 by adding the following copy to the caption in "Dateline": "**continent** is a landmass above water on earth." The term will be included in the section assessment on page 40 and in the chapter assessment on page 50. In addition, we will add the term and its definition to the glossary on page R4 and revise the index entry on page R34 accordingly. (Note that this will result in changes to the Teacher's Edition on the same pages.)

A decision was made to create a unique unit on Latin America in order to group together the regions of the world that most reflected Spanish heritage and elements of Spanish culture, including language. Far from being an attempt to segregate Hispanic history from coverage of what Dr. Guterrez calls the "white countries" (United States and Canada), we felt giving Latin America its own unit gave students an opportunity to trace the development and spread of Spanish culture throughout the region and to develop a sense of the contributions of people of Hispanic heritage across time and space.

- c. Rather than focusing on a string of countries and their characteristics, this textbook emphasizes the influences of one country or region on another. This means, then, that there is no country-by-country encyclopedic listing of imports, exports, chief crops, and so forth, for any country, including Spain. However, Spain does appear in the Data File on page 268 and is represented on the maps in the Unit Atlas.

On the other hand, the book does present in some detail the impact of the Spanish arrival in the Americas (pages 173-176). The text describes the arrival of Cortés in 1519, his interaction with Montezuma and the Aztecs, the founding of New Spain, and the changes brought about in daily life because of the Spanish influence. This is an appropriate level of detail for sixth grade students.

- d. We apologize for the incorrect spelling of "capitol" on page 22 and will correct the text to say, "State Capitol Building."
- e. The U.S. Department of State lists Puerto Rico under its "Dependencies and Areas of Special Sovereignty." We will edit the text on page 206 to read:

“Puerto Rico became a U.S. dependency, a territory under the control of another nation.”

- f. “The War on Terrorism” fills 16 pages at the back of the book, not the 50 pages that Dr. Guiterrez attributes to it. We are actually quite proud of our treatment of the tragic events of September 11, believing that it reflects a thorough yet sensitive presentation of facts and interpretations that were available at the time of publication. The material is not “lifted” from USA Today, but is in fact composed of our own written text accompanied by three brief first-hand reporters’ accounts. In addition, we were able to include several informative graphics from USA Today that will help students understand what happened that day, and why.

Though, indeed, the USA Today logo appears on several pages of this material, it hardly seems like the “infomercial” Dr. Guiterrez suggests it is. First of all, it is located at the back of the book and is easily skippable by teachers if they so desire. In addition, we deliberately chose not to show the logo on the cover of the textbook, unlike our competitors who advertise partnerships like National Geographic on their covers and throughout their books. In fact, the logo appears in “The War on Terrorism” only at the beginning of the section and on pages where material from USA Today (such as graphics) was used.

For what it’s worth, teachers in focus groups in Texas invariably chose McDougal Littell’s treatment of these events over those of our competitors.

5. Testimony of Jeffrey Bahlmann

Transcript pages 236–238: Mr. Bahlmann, speaking about *World Cultures and Geography*, raised the issue as to whether the United States is a democracy or a republic. He believes it is a republic.

Response: To clarify this issue in the text, we plan to make the following changes:

Page 87: We will add the word “republic” under Terms & Names, after “patriotism.”

Page 91: We will revise the passage now entitled “Democracy and the Political Process” so that the United States is identified as a republic. The text will read:

“The Political Process in a Democracy and a Republic In a democracy, government receives its power from the people. **Democracy** is a Greek word that

means “rule of the people.” In a **republic**, the people also hold power, but they rule through elected representatives. The United States is a republic. The citizens of a democracy or a republic have the responsibility to take part in the political process. The political process refers to those legal activities through which citizens can change government policy. By becoming involved, citizens demonstrate their patriotism, or love for their country.”

Page 95: We will change the first sentence under “Limited and Unlimited Government” to begin, “ The constitutional republic of the United States . . .”

6. Testimony of John Roland of The Constitution Foundation

Transcript pages 258–261: Mr. Roland addressed the question of whether the Constitution is a “living document” and objected to the term “informal amendment.”

Response: We have examined our AP American Government book (Wilson’s *American Government*, 8th Edition) in light of Mr. Roland’s comments. We cannot find any of the references he mentions, specifically to “informal amendments.” We believe he misspoke when he said “**McDougal’s** American Government,” and meant instead to say “**Magruder’s** American Government.” (For example, he refers to the Prentice Hall web site as supporting the printed text.) He also says the text of the Constitution in the appendix of the book he is referring to has lines struck out “which seem to indicate” passages that were later amended. This is not true of McDougal Littell’s book, which uses italics and footnotes to indicate these changes.