

McDougal Littell

Formal Response to Texas Public Policy Foundation Report *World History: Patterns of Interaction*

McDougal Littell appreciates the opportunity to respond to the comments raised by the Texas Public Policy Foundation regarding *World History: Patterns of Interaction*. After reviewing the list of comments, we have determined that a number are matters of interpretation; or, in some cases, the comments raise questions about the amount or depth of coverage we have provided regarding specific topics. We believe we have provided full and sufficient coverage of historical information as required by the TEKS, and that our content covers the historical topics, time lines, and themes appropriate to a high school world history text. In those cases in which the TPPF has called our attention to a verified factual error, we appreciate their careful review and will revise our text to reflect their recommendations. Comments specific to each point raised by the TPPF follow.

1. Page 486: Though we do not agree that the text implies that European diseases were intentionally brought to the Americas, we propose to make the following clarification:

“ . . . Measles, mumps, smallpox, and typhus were just some of the diseases Europeans **inadvertently** brought with them to the Americas. Native Americans had never been exposed to these diseases, so had developed no natural immunity to them. As a result, they died by the hundreds of thousands. . . . In time, European disease would devastate the natives of central Mexico.”

1. Page 486: This is a matter of interpretation. The text does not suggest that Europeans deliberately used disease to attack native populations. Most students would recognize that diseases were inadvertently carried to the Americas. The text is accurate as is.

2. Page 489: Ms. Harjo is referred to as Native American because such terminology is common and accepted both for textbook use and in the vernacular.

Regarding the use of “so-called” in the introduction to Ms. Harjo’s quotation, it was intended to make clear that the “benefits” of Columbus’s voyages were defined by other historians, not the publisher. Two other passages on the page are, in fact, in praise of Columbus’s accomplishments. The feature is balanced between two representative viewpoints. The text is accurate as is.

3. Page 489: Again, this Different Perspectives feature presents two passages in support of Columbus's achievements and two that take the opposite viewpoint. In terms of number of lines afforded to each position, more space is given to the pro-Columbus position than to the opposing position. Ms. Harjo's quotation, while perhaps strongly stated, is quite brief, and represents her viewpoint, not a viewpoint of the publisher. Students are encouraged in the questions to explore the differing viewpoints presented. The feature exposes students to widely differing viewpoints, which are matters of interpretation, not factual error. The text is accurate as is.

4. Page 495: The issue of the near-universality of slavery is addressed in the opening line of this feature: "The enslavement of human beings by others is believed to be as old as civilization itself." The text goes on to say that "People were enslaved in civilizations from Egypt to China to India, as well as among Indians in America, and in Greece and Rome." Both sentences make it very clear that slavery was widespread and long-standing.

The sentence "Race was not always a factor in slavery" is accurate. The text goes on to give examples where it was not a factor. D'Souza's contention is much debated and beyond the scope of a high school textbook. The text is accurate as is.

5. Page 501: The head "Global Impact: Food Exchange" will be shortened to "Global Impact" in acknowledgment that diseases are included in addition to food. The graphic is factually correct, even though it does not show specific diseases traveling back to Europe. The reviewer's suggestion to add syphilis (a sexually-transmitted disease) and yaws (a disease very few people have ever heard of) is not appropriate for the available space in the graphic and the age level of the students. The text, with the title change, is accurate as is.

6. Page 647: To make sure students recognize that Malthus's predictions weren't accurate, we propose to make the following changes to the text that begins, "The Ideas of Malthus and Ricardo" (new copy is bracketed):

"The Ideas of Malthus and Ricardo Economists Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo supported Smith's basic ideas. They too believed that natural laws governed economic life. Their ideas were the foundation of laissez-faire capitalism. **Capitalism** is an economic system in which money is invested in business ventures with the goal of making a profit. These ideas helped bring about the Industrial Revolution.

In *An Essay on the Principle of Population*, written in 1798, Malthus argued that population tended to increase more rapidly than the food supply. Without

wars and epidemics to kill off the extra people, most were destined to be poor and miserable. Malthus's predictions seemed to be coming true in the 1840s, [but have not proven to be accurate over time.]”

7. Page 648: For the last sentence on the page, we plan to delete the words “an optimistic view of human nature,” so that the sentence would read: “Socialism grew out of a belief in progress and a concern for social justice.”

Page 647: For the last sentence in the third paragraph, we propose the following change in wording (new copy bracketed):

“These philosophers believed that if the government allowed free trade – the flow of commerce in the world market without government regulation – the economy [and the people] would prosper.”

8. Page 636: While the perspective provided by the reviewer on Vanderbilt is interesting, it does not negate the validity of focusing on Robert Fulton as someone who brought about improvements in water transportation. The text is accurate as is.

9. Pages 638–640: The text's coverage of the Industrial Revolution is not factually inaccurate. It's difficult to identify which 13 paragraphs the reviewer felt were negative and which four were positive, because much of the content of these paragraphs is structured to describe, first, a change caused by the Industrial Revolution, and then the positive and negative effects of it.

The first sentence in the section says, “The Industrial Revolution eventually led to a better quality of life for most people.” The text goes on to document the increased ability to heat homes, the availability of better clothing, and the improved diet afforded by technological changes. Several paragraphs describe the growth of a middle class and the improved standard of living that accompanied it.

At no point does the text state or imply that society would have been “better off farming.” The text is accurate as is.

10. Page 642: We stand behind the information provided in the Connect to Today box. First, the information is factually accurate. Much evidence exists to support the contentions that “children work long hours under wretched conditions” and that they “are not protected by child labor laws.”

To engage in a discussion of how child labor varies from country to country, whether corporations have undertaken to improve working conditions, or the

effect of unions on U.S. wages is beyond the scope of this text. Adding such material would give more weight to treatment of this topic than is appropriate at this grade level. In addition, the text does not imply that child laborers are worse off in factories than they would have been in fields or that they would be in school if they were not in factories. The text is accurate as is.

11. Page 645: We propose the following text change to ensure balanced coverage of big business. The second paragraph on the page will read:

“Big business – the giants that controlled entire industries – also made big profits by cutting the cost of producing goods. However, though workers earned small wages for long hours, entrepreneurs such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller sometimes rewarded top workers with bonuses or generous vacations.”

In order to fit this additional copy, one line has been cut from the second to last paragraph on the page. The sentence, “Spain’s Catalonia processed more cotton than Belgium” has been deleted.

12. Page 658: This Interact with History page attempts to get students thinking about the kinds of changes that occurred during the 19th century – from both sides. The three questions in the Examining the Issues box basically ask students to think about the pros and cons of life before the technological changes of the mid-to-late 1800s. They are asked to identify the costs and the benefits of various inventions. It’s doubtful that students will infer that technological change is mostly negative, and it’s extremely unlikely that a 14-year-old will emerge from this activity convinced that “free market progress is questionable, but government progress is guaranteed.”

We do plan to remove the quotation marks around “progress” in the second question. Other than that, the text is accurate as is.