

# FACTUAL ERRORS

You would think that after major publishers, a state textbook committee, and an \$80,000 Texas Tech review team had "carefully checked" four high school U.S. History books submitted for Texas approval, they would have found most of their factual errors ... but you would be wrong.

After Texas' Education Commissioner issued his Report on Correction of Factual Errors, we sent the Texas Education Agency a list of 249 remaining mistakes in those four books, for correction in the final Texas editions. Among the overlooked blunders were:

**"1848** The Mexican War ends; U.S. gains Texas, New Mexico, and California."

— *America: Pathways to the Present — Modern American History* (Prentice, 2003), p. 105, time line

### wrong result

The U.S. did not gain Texas as result of the Mexican War. Texas was annexed in 1845, before that War began. The text itself admits this on p. 136, par. 2, lines 3-6; and on p. 149, map.

"Relations worsened [in 1945, as the Cold War began] after Stalin learned that the United States had kept its development of the atomic bomb secret."

— *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (McDougal, 2003), p. 603, par. 2, lines 16-20

**"Fifteenth Amendment** Constitutional amendment ... that guaranteed voting rights to all citizens"

— *America: Pathways to the Present — Modern American History* (Prentice, 2003), p. 980, col. 1

### wrong provision

The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment did not guarantee suffrage to all citizens. It omitted women, making the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment necessary.

### wrong narrative

U.S. development of the atomic bomb was no secret to Stalin. The *Venona* cables show he knew of it by 1941, and that Soviet spies kept close watch on it thereafter.

"The Fourteenth Amendment ... extended the right to vote to all 21-year-old males, including former slaves."

— *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (McDougal, 2003), p. 724, lower right, "1868 THE FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT," par. 2

### wrong amendment

The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment, not the 14<sup>th</sup>, gave black males the right to vote. (The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment gave states a choice: either let black males vote, or lose congressional representation proportionately.)

**"1492** Columbus first reaches North America."

— *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (McDougal, 2003), p. 3, time line

### wrong itinerary

Columbus never reached North America. He explored Caribbean islands and the northern coast of South America. The text itself admits this on p. 17, map.

"... [U.S. Secretary of State] Seward sent 50,000 American troops ... to Mexico to force the French to withdraw their troops from the country."

— *America: Pathways to the Present — Modern American History* (Prentice, 2003), p. 219, "Focus on WORLD EVENTS," lines 19-23

### wrong place

Seward did not send U.S. troops to Mexico. He sent them to the U.S. Rio Grande border with Mexico. The text itself admits this on p. 354, par. 2, lines 2-4.

"[William H.] Seward had some trouble persuading the House of Representatives to approve the [Alaska Purchase] treaty."

— *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (McDougal, 2003), p. 344, par. 2, lines 3-4

### "1754 Politics

American colonists adopt the Albany Plan of Union."

— *American Nation in the Modern Era* (Holt, 2003), p. 3, time line

### wrong event

The Albany Congress proposed the Albany Plan of Union, but no colony ever ratified it, so it was never adopted.

"After a brief battle [near New Orleans], the British surrendered."

— *The American Republic Since 1877* (Glencoe, 2003), p. 167, col. 1, par. 1, line 11

### wrong outcome

The British did not surrender after the Battle of New Orleans. They withdrew.

### wrong body

The Senate, not the House, approves treaties.

"... English fireships outmaneuvered the Spanish fleet, setting some of their galleons on fire."

— *The American Republic Since 1877* (Glencoe, 2003), p. 44, "Picturing History," lines 3-4

### wrong narrative

English fireships did not set on fire any ships of the Spanish Armada. They did force the Spanish to break their tight formation, making individual ships more attackable.

"James Monroe was the last president to have fought in the Revolutionary War."

— *American Nation in the Modern Era (Holt, 2003), p. 80, "PRESIDENTIAL Lives – James Monroe," par. 1, lines 1-2*

### wrong president

Andrew Jackson, not James Monroe, was the last president to have fought in the American Revolution.

"The Northwest Ordinance provided that the territory be divided into areas of 36 square miles."

— *The American Republic Since 1877 (Glencoe, 2003), p. 104, "Geography Skills," no. 1*

### wrong ordinance

The Land Ordinance of 1785, not the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, divided the Old Northwest into 36-square mile townships. The text itself admits this on p. 104, col. 2, par. 1, lines 1-2.

"The Tenure of Office Act ... took away the President's constitutional powers as commander in chief of the armed forces."

— *America: Pathways to the Present – Modern American History (Prentice, 2003), p. 209, lines 1-4*

Map of the South in 1862-63 showing Birmingham, Alabama

— *American Nation in the Modern Era (Holt, 2003), p. 111*

### wrong decade

Birmingham did not exist in 1862-63. It was founded in 1871.

"Voting rights established by the Articles of Confederation were similarly restricted."

— *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (McDougal, 2003), p. 104, par. 1, lines 4-5*

### wrong description

The Articles of Confederation said nothing about voting rights. Each state wrote its own suffrage law.

"The following year [1818], the two countries agreed to extend the northern border of the United States westward along 49° N latitude from the Great Lakes to the Rocky Mountains."

— *America: Pathways to the Present – Modern American History (Prentice, 2003), p. 121, par. 4, lines 4-6*

### wrong law

The Command of the Army Act, not the Tenure of Office Act, deprived Andrew Johnson of his powers as commander in chief.

"After the [Revolutionary] war, the nation faced serious financial problems. Congress desperately needed cash to pay its war debts. ...

"Congress responded by printing paper money. The financial consequences proved disastrous. These bills of credit, called Continentals, were not backed by gold or silver. Thus, merchants and lenders refused to accept them at face value."

— *American Nation in the Modern Era (Holt, 2003), p. 30, par. 2-3*

### wrong chronology

The Second Continental Congress printed paper money during the Revolutionary War, not after it. By 1781 (before the war ended) its Continental bills were already trash. Shays' Rebellion (1786-87) protested deflation, not inflation.

### wrong lake

This Convention of 1818 set the U.S.-Canadian border from Lake of the Woods to the Rockies, not from Lake Superior to the Rockies. The 1842 Webster-Ashburton Treaty established the boundary between Lake Superior and Lake of the Woods.

"Before the [Civil] war, greenbacks were redeemable for either gold or silver coins."

— *American Nation in the Modern Era (Holt, 2003), p. 262, par. 3, line 1*

### wrong chronology

There were no greenbacks before the Civil War. They originated in the 1862 Legal Tender Act, during the Civil War.

"The **Judiciary Act of 1789** provided for a Supreme Court ...."

"**Judiciary Act of 1789** a law that established ... the Supreme Court ...."

— *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (McDougal, 2003), p. 74, par. 5, lines 2-3; and p. R59, col. 2*

"Economic troubles during the 1930s contributed to the rise of dictatorships in Germany, Italy, and Japan."

— *American Nation in the Modern Era (Holt, 2003), p. 558, bottom, "Build on What You Know," lines 1-2*

### wrong chronology

Economic troubles in the 1930s had nothing to do with the rise of Mussolini, who came to power in Italy in 1922.

### wrong provision

The 1789 Judiciary Act did not "provide for" or "establish" the Supreme Court. Article 3, Section 1 of the Constitution did that. The text itself admits this on p. 93, top right margin, "More About ... Federal Courts," lines 1-2. The Act did set the number of associate Supreme Court justices at 5.

"In 1688 the English Parliament removed King James II from the throne."

— *The American Republic Since 1877 (Glencoe, 2003), p. 740, col. 2, par. 1, lines 1-2*

### wrong narrative

Parliament did not remove James II. It declared the throne vacant, after James abdicated by fleeing the country.

"In 1940 the Japanese army occupied all of French Indochina, the Philippines, Malaya, and Indonesia."

— *American Nation in the Modern Era (Holt, 2003), p. 707, par. 2, lines 3-4*

### wrong chronology

The Japanese did not occupy any of the Philippines, Malaya, or Indonesia in 1940. They did not invade the Philippines and Malaya until December 1941, and Indonesia not until January 1942. The text itself indicates (p. 522, map) that Japan did not control the Philippines or Malaya on December 7, 1941.

"Early in Grant's second term, a scandal emerged involving the Credit Mobilier Company."

— *America: Pathways to the Present – Modern American History (Prentice, 2003), p. 216, par. 3, lines 1-2*

### wrong chronology

The Credit Mobilier scandal emerged late in Grant's first term, not early in his second. The text itself admits this on p. 291, par. 7, lines 3-4. The New York press broke the story on September 4, 1872. The House censured Oakes Ames and James Brooks on February 27, 1873. Grant's second term began on March 4, 1873.