

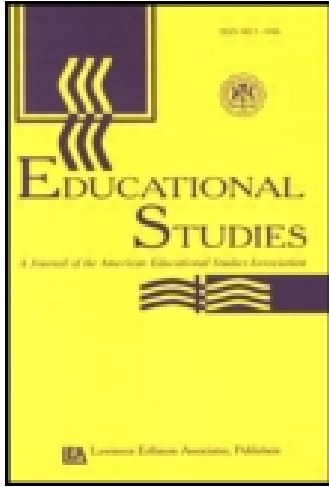
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ARTICLES

Uncovering Settler Grammars in Curriculum

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In this article, I focus on making settler colonialism explicit in education. I turn to social studies curriculum as a clear example of how settler colonialism is deeply embedded in educational knowledge production in the United States that is rooted in a dialectic of Indigenous presence and absence. I argue that the United States, and the evolution of its schooling system in particular, are drenched in settler colonial identities. Thus, to begin to decolonize we must first learn to account for settler colonialism. To do so necessitates that we grapple with the dialectic of Indigenous presence and absence that is central to settler colonialism in the United States and its social studies curriculum.

RESEARCHING US SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM: SETTING THE CONTEXT

Decolonization is a process that both engages dominant Western knowledge and institutions and critiques the manner in which these enable the ongoing and endemic subjugation of Indigenous peoples in the United States (Brayboy 2006; Sleeter 2010). Regarding curriculum, Sleeter (2010) argues that school curricula support colonization; so, to “decolonize curriculum” (194), we must “critically examine that knowledge [traditional school curricula] and its relationship to power, re-centering knowledge ‘in the intellectual histories of indigenous peoples’ (Grande 2004, 172)” (194). Here, I answer Sleeter’s call to decolonize curriculum by

uncovering how “traditional school curricula teach the values, beliefs, and knowledge systems that support colonization” (194).

To do this, I turn to US social studies curriculum an exemplar of colonization, or coloniality in education in relation to Indigenous peoples. Coloniality refers to the manner in which modern systems of colonialism operate epistemically, economically, ontologically, politically, and spatially (Grosfuguel 2007; Lugones 2008, 2010; Maldonado Torres 2007; Mignolo 2000; Quijano 2000). Coloniality offers us a way to think about the particular context we are responding to, in this case curriculum developed in the US. To decolonize, we need to first provide a context for the particular colonial project(s) we are responding to. In the United States, we need to attend to settler colonialism, a type of colonialism shaped by the fact that European colonizers came to stay (Coloma 2013; Wolfe 2006). Although settler colonialism has been described as a triad relationship between settler/Indigenous/slave (Arvin, Tuck, and Morril 2013; Tuck and Yang 2014; Vizenor 1998; Wolfe 2013; Wynters 1995), here I focus on Indianness as foundational to understanding settler colonialism in the United States (Bang et al. 2014; Byrd 2011; Champagne 2007; Grande 2004; Tuck and Yang 2012, 2014; Vizenor 1994, 2008). Byrd (2011) identifies Indians, for example, as the ghost-like apparitions “implied and felt” (xx) that are the “casualties of national progress” (xx), yet remain silent figurative aspects of American empire. According to Byrd, when “the remediation of the colonization of American Indians is framed through discourses of racialization” (xxiii) and integration of the nation-state this affirms and maintains the ideologies and structures of settler colonialism. Indianness, thus, is a foundational dialectic to understanding settler colonialism in the United States: The heart of settler colonialism has to do with legitimating settler territorial acquisitions through physical and ideological dispossession of Indigenous inhabitants and cooptation of nativeness by settlers (Coloma 2013; Wolfe 2006). Without understanding how this dialectical presence and absence of Indianness works, decolonizing work with material effects that centers settler colonialism cannot take place. For this reason, I argue that how the specter of Indianness manifests itself in social studies curriculum needs to be interrogated and ultimately rejected.

Herein, I examine the centrality of settler colonial narratives, or grammars, in social studies curriculum in the United States. The idea of the United States as a settler nation is little explored in educational research (Coloma, Means, and Kim 2009) with notable exceptions (see Calderon 2008, 2014; A. Smith 2010; Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández 2013; Tuck and Yang 2012, 2014). I maintain that this work is key to cultivating holistic (Cajete 1994; Pewewardy 2002) educational ideas and practices that can speak to the complex needs of Indigenous peoples and make space for decolonizing approaches in education that take earnestly the occupation of Indigenous territories (Champagne 2005a, 2005b). I see social studies curriculum as a foundational tool to settler colonial schooling and its ongoing legacy in US curriculum. US social studies represents a type of

palimpsest—a document in which previous writings are erased and written over yet old knowledge bleeds through (Johannessen 2012). The grammars of settler colonialism—discursive logics that maintain settler colonial ideologies (Bonilla Silva 2012; Wolfe 2006) and identities that are dependent on Indianness—bleed through social studies curriculum if one is willing to look. In turn, social studies curriculum offers concrete evidence of how settler colonialism shapes the types of learning students engage by inculcating in students an empire-type of imagined community (Anderson 2006; Coloma 2013), that according to Kanu (2003), “has been mediated by the nation-state which, faced with the impossibility of incorporating its ‘surplus’ . . . into the symbolic realm of national identity” (70). Specifically, I turn to US social studies textbooks widely adopted at the secondary level (see the appendix) because they are a central delivery mechanism of normative historical narratives that promote a particular type of American national identity (Apple 1992, 1993; Berger 2007; Byrnes 2004; Ross 1996), inexorably linked to settler colonialism.

The manner in which national identity is constructed in textbooks reifies the notion that national identity and modern state formation is not ideological; rather it is a natural and inevitable outgrowth of human progress as conceived in the Western tradition (Anderson 2006; Byrnes 2004; Daza 2013; Gibbons 2002, 2003; Hoxie 2008; Rhee 2013; Subreenduth 2013). Thus, social studies curriculum, and particularly US history, offers a useful insight into the origins, construction, and maintenance of settler colonialism because one of its main goals for developing discourses and practices of nationality is to teach an almost predestined sense of citizenship and democratic participation, at least for some populations (Martinez 1998; Sleeter 2002, 2004). Unfortunately, critical discourses (e.g., critical race theory, queer theory, etc.) based in Western epistemologies fail to decolonize settler colonial ideologies and practices by centering modern nation-state such as racial remedies (Calderon 2014; Morgensen 2011).

My unearthing of settler colonial identity construction is built upon previous research (Calderon 2008) in which I critically examine social studies curriculum representation/misrepresentation of American Indians, including US history and government textbooks (see the appendix) widely adopted at the secondary level and the corresponding state standards of two US states that heavily influence the content of textbooks nationally (see also Altbach et al. 1991; Apple and Christian-Smith 1991; Bianchini and Kelly 2003; Ross 1996). My research affirms previous work (Costo and Henry 1970; Garcia 1978, 1980; O’Neill 1984, 1987; Vogel 1968, 1974), finding Indigenous peoples are constructed in textbooks as relics of the past while providing little to no perspectives from Indigenous peoples themselves (see also Journell 2009). Moreover, this research confirms that US social studies curriculum emphasize a particular type of nationalism that constructs the United States as a White immigrant nation, centering White experiences and ways of being and knowing (Cornbleth and Waugh 1993; Martinez 1998; Ross 1996;

Sleeter 2002; Sleeter and Grant 1991; Sleeter and Stillman 2005). In contrast, my research also shows how narratives focusing on American Indians in textbooks (such as precontact, westward expansion, and civil rights) maintain settler colonialism.

However, labeling US social studies as forms of settler education is not enough. We must peel back another layer to reveal why these narratives are commonplace and commonsensical, making them difficult to challenge. Indeed, as Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) argue, “Curriculum and its history in the US has invested in settler colonialism, and the permanence of the settler-colonial nation state” (73). Thus, in this article, my purpose is to expose and describe the grammars that perpetuate this investment, protecting the permanence of the settler state in education, or what Tuck and Yang (2012) refer to as settler futurity.

I use the concept of settler grammars to describe this organizing system of thought and institutional practices. The organizing concept of grammar speaks to the way that settler colonialism is reproduced through narratives, or discourses, in this case curriculum. However, to engage education audiences, concepts of settler grammars and settler colonialism must be augmented theoretically and methodologically because mainstream, and even many critical epistemologies of education, are built upon edifices and lenses that may obscure or distort settler ontology (Calderon 2008, 2011, 2014; Du Bois 1903; Mills 2007; Tuck and Yang 2014; Tuana 2004, 2006).

This chapter analyzes US social studies curriculum as a settler palimpsest. It highlights how social studies curriculum delivers official curriculum (Apple 2000, 2012) as settler grammars. The chapter is organized as follows. First, I briefly contextualize US settler colonialism. Next, I offer a framework for understanding key settler grammars (i.e., ideologies) by examining the ways these mechanisms organize themselves around dominant discourses of Indigenous absence/presence. I also provide representative examples from social studies texts. Finally, I point to particular Indigenous created curriculums that disrupt the settler colonial processes embedded within dominant curriculum.

CONTEXTUALIZING THE SETTLER-STATE

Sociologist Ronald Weitzer’s (1990) definition of settler societies provides an excellent starting point for understanding how settler grammars are generated, particularly in relation to Indianness. Specifically, I use his definition not as a definitive framework of settler colonialism, rather as an outline for understanding the grammars of settler colonialism. One of the outlining features of settler grammar according to Weitzer revolves around the idea that “settler societies are founded by migrant groups who assume a superordinate position vis-à-vis native inhabitants and build self-sustaining states that are de jure or de facto independent

from the mother country and organized around the settlers' political domination over the indigenous population" (25). Differently stated, settler societies claim to be founded by migrant groups based, in part, on claims of superiority over the Indigenous peoples they displace. Moreover, settler societies, as opposed to colonial societies, build new societies independent of their countries of origin and institute political institutions that maintain settler rule over the Indigenous peoples they displace. From this we can see that Indianness is central to the conceptualization of settler societies. Weitzer (1990) argues, though, that the US is not a settler state, maintaining that societies that displaced, eliminated or assimilated Indigenous peoples are not settler states.

Different from Weitzer, I argue that this ideological division between Indigenous peoples and settlers continues to shape the sociopolitical order within the United States in multiple ways. In asserting that the United States is no longer a settler state, Weitzer (1990) falls prey to a core principle of settler colonialism: ideological erasure or replacement (Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández 2013) of Indigenous populations. Indeed, his narrative represents the success of the United States in promoting ideological erasure of Indigenous peoples, which elides the ways that settler colonialism is an ongoing project and not one that ended with the creation of reservations and American Indian boarding schools. Instead, the original division between settlers and Indigenous peoples in the United States continues to shape the sociopolitical order as evidenced in national discourses concerning American identity (Ahluwalia 2001; Calderon 2008), the legal frameworks of territorial law in the United States, and the continued vitality of over 560 federally recognized tribes and the ever-present movement of Indigenous peoples into and out of the territorial borders of the US (Gallegos, Villenas, and Brayboy 2003).

Therefore, Weitzer's analytic description of settler societies is actually useful in understanding the United States as a settler-state, particularly in examining the ongoing project of settler colonialism as it relates to the project of education in the United States. Weitzer's description of settler societies and, indeed, settler colonialism can be understood as an ongoing relationship between the settler and Indigenous and more specifically the dialectic of Indigenous presence and absence (Bang et al. 2014): Indigenous presence in early writings, Vizenor (1998) illuminates, was connected to territory, though they were "removed as a vindication of the environment" (12); thus the absence of Indigenous peoples "in the history of the nation is an aesthetic victimry" (12). Although much research has studied the manner in which the United States colonial imagination insists on erasing Indigenous peoples (A. Smith 2005) to soothe settler anxieties in the face of Indigenous presence (Shohat and Stam 1994; Tuck and Yang 2012), US social studies curriculum also explicitly includes Indigenous presence. Thus I examine the main points of Weitzer's description of settlerism in two parts: Indigenous absence and Indigenous presence (Table 1).

TABLE 1
Settler Grammars

Weitzer Framework

Part 1

Indigenous absence

- (a) Settler societies are/claim to be founded by *migrant groups* that
- (b) Build *new societies* independent of their countries of origin

Part 2

Indigenous presence

- (a) Settlers rely on claims of *superiority* over the Indigenous peoples they displace and
- (b) Settler societies institute political institutions that maintain *settler rule* over the Indigenous peoples intended to displace

As stated, the ongoing dialectic of absence and presence (Bang et al. 2014) is foundational to the construction of social studies curriculum in settler nation-states. Although an interconnected dialectic, I first explain absence. Settler societies depend on the absence—or what Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) have called name replacement—of Indigenous peoples to legitimate settler claims to territory and establish a settler as native identity. To achieve the settler as native shift, social studies curricula depend on two common grammars: the United States as immigrant nation/migrant group and the United States as a new society. Vizenor’s (1994) concept of manifest manners is helpful to understand how the settler grammars of US curricula see American Indians as peoples who only exist in the past and as precursors of the new society of the United States, “the romantic absence of natives” (Vizenor 1998, 14). Vizenor developed manifest manners to explain his analysis of dominant racist and inaccurate representations and tropes of Indian cultures in novels and specifically to describe how such tropes frame popular ideas about American Indians. Not only do I use his understanding of manifest manners to understand the archives and lexicons of settlers, the notion of manifest manners also explains how settlers actively construct Indigenous absence, or what Vizenor (1998) refers to as the Indian as simulation that gives way to settlers. My understanding of Indigenous absence is also informed by Mills’s (2007) idea that the oppressed have a better and more accurate idea of the oppressor and consequently more accurate insights into the lexicon of settler grammars.

Settlers also have to account for Indigenous presence to validate settler identity and legitimate settler claims to territory. Thus, the grammars of settler superiority and settler rule frame how settlers make sense of Indigenous presence in order to protect the settler as native or settler futurity (Tuck and Yang 2012). In US social studies textbooks, this is accomplished in the common grammar of westward expansion, which is linked to a particular type of settler land ethic founded on the notion of empty lands (Calderon 2014). To deal with Indigenous presence, settlers invent, construct, and rely on ideologies and legal mechanisms to work out this

contradiction and construct an imagined community amenable to settler nations. This results in a particular type of territoriality (Calderon 2014, forthcoming; Wolf 2006). Here I draw from Delaney (1998) who characterizes territoriality as a fundamental mechanism through which, “space and power are expressed” (6). Territoriality in a settler colonial context is most simply characterized as settlers’ access to territory and the resulting elimination and removal of Indigenous peoples enabled by both legal and ideological mechanisms of removal (Wolfe 2006). The dialectical relationship between absence and presence is clear, because to maintain settler nationalism, discourses must both account and discount Indigenous existence, the spectral image of Indianness (Byrd 2011).

Vizenor’s (1998, 2008) idea of Native survivance is particularly helpful for further elaborating the presence/absence dialectic undergirding settler constructions of the nation. Vizenor (2008) notes, for example, that survivance is “an active sense of presence over absence, over deracination, and oblivion. It is about the continuance of stories, not a mere reaction. . . . Survivance stories are renunciations of dominance” (1). These stories of survivance resist erasure (Byrd 2011; Vizenor 1998, 2008); thus I use survivance to speak back to the manner in which settlers concomitantly use native absence/presence to justify their superiority and domination over Indigenous peoples. Native survivance allows me to locate the grammars of settlerism that rely on epistemologies of ignorance to protect settler futurity. Indigenous absence and presence are not mutually exclusive (Vizenor 1998). Settler colonialism is caught up in the dialectic of absence/presence that involves a dynamic relationship between the two concepts and their articulation.

SETTLER GRAMMARS IN SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM

In laying the groundwork for understanding how social studies textbooks participate in a settler colonial education project, the first grammars I turn to depend on Indigenous absence in their articulation. In particular, I take up the idea that settler states are immigrant nations and that settlers create a new society, or the new native, as key components of settler nationalism. Textbooks are artifacts of Western knowledge production and its attendant institutional manifestations (Apple and Christian-Smith 1991); thus through a settler-colonial theoretical lens, social studies textbooks offer us a way to uncover how “traditional school curricula teach the values, beliefs, and knowledge systems that support colonization” (Sleeter 2010, 194).

Constructing Indigenous Absence in Textbooks and Standards

Settler societies claim to be founded by migrant groups (immigrant nation) that build new societies independent of their countries of origin (the new society/native;

Weitzer 1990). This first component of settler grammar of the United States as an immigrant nation is chiefly represented as an ideological grammar in social studies curriculum, informed by particular types of myths regarding the founding of settler states. The central myth embodied in the immigrant nation construct is built on the invention that immigrants founded the United States (Behdad 2005; Martinez 1998; Symcox 2002). Critical examinations of social studies curriculum identify the propensity of standards and texts to promote a nation of immigrants narrative of national origins (Calderon 2008; Foster 1999; Gordon 2007; Martinez 1998; Sleeter and Grant 1991). However, most of the existing research does not identify the actual origin of this myth. To perform decolonizing work related to curriculum, educators need to understand how settler colonialism gives rise to, and maintains, such a myth through processes that maintain Indigenous absence.

An important corollary to the creation of absence through settler grammars is the concern with constructing and maintaining an origin story of the United States that preserves settler futurity (Tuck and Yang 2012). Settler futurity, as another key feature to settler grammars in textbooks, is an ideological worldview that helps construct a particular type of national identity, one that is framed as an organic outgrowth of the immigrant nation. For example, an important ideological component of the movements for independence in the United States was the perpetuation of the myth that settlers in the United States were creating a new society, free of the problems and traditions that burdened Europe (Moran 2002). Philip Deloria's (1998) *Playing Indian*, describes how early American colonists simultaneously killed the Indian while becoming the Indian, relying on the very myths and ideologies of Indians to dispossess tribes and to distinguish and free themselves from the European yoke. As Tuck and Yang (2012) argues, "Settler nativism is about imagining an Indian past and a settler future" (13).

These stories are, in fact, mythologies constructed around national identity and national origins (Razack 2002), which inform a peculiar settler nationalism that relies on Indigenous absence. In turn, settler nationalism informs the legal as well as a symbolic parameters of citizenship in a settler state, enabling members of the national community to define citizenship (Razack 2002). In settler nations, narratives of immigration are central to constructions of citizenship because "colonization is directly constitutive of such states, and subsequent mass settlement secured majority presences as they literally swamped the indigenous populations they dispossessed [citation omitted]" (Pearson 2010, 993). This process directly shapes the construction of social, economic, and political relations in the location settled (Razack 2002; Weitzer 1990; Wolfe 2006). Furthermore, this settling requires the elimination of Indigenous peoples, as well as the construction of a new identity to set settlers apart from their countries of origin (Wolfe 2006). As settler societies evolve, they structure belonging or citizenship, notably through racial hierarchies that promote the myth that Europeans were the first settlers that

developed and made the new territories productive (Razack 2002). Under this mythos, Indigenous peoples are believed to have perished, allowing White settlers to “become the original inhabitants and the group most entitled to the fruits of citizenship” (Razack 2002, 1–2): the new native.

Yet settler states are not immigrant nations. Tuck and Yang (2012) clarify this distinction: “Settlers are not immigrants. Immigrants are beholden to the Indigenous laws and epistemologies of the lands they migrate to. Settlers become the law, supplanting Indigenous laws and epistemologies” (6–7). Settler states, instead, are about conquest (Mamdani 1998; Wolfe 2006) and occupation (Belich 1996; Tuck and Yang 2012) and as Veracini (2010) points out, settlers “carry their sovereignty with them” (3). Settler grammars are thus silent to occupation, instead promoting narratives of immigration that embrace White origins, yet reject non-Whites as those who are inassimilable and undesirable (Anderson 2006; Behdad 2005; Pearson 2010; Razack 2002). The benefits of citizenship in a settler state are differentially constructed via immigration laws and dominant racialized narratives of who belongs and who does not (Pearson 2010). Now I turn to social studies textbooks to show how education transmits settler grammars that protect settler futurity and thus perpetuates the absence mythology. In the following, I show examples of how textbooks, relying on the absence/presence dialectical grammars, create new immigrant societies and new natives as key components of settler nationalism, as well as rely on grammars of empty lands and settler superiority to support settler expansion.

The Immigrant Nation. Citing (Western) “scientific” evidence, the *American Odyssey: The United States in the 20th Century* (Nash, 1997) textbook offers a typical example of a settler narrative of Indigenous immigration: “Archaeological evidence indicates that across the wide, grassy land bridge that once connected Asia and North America trekked the first people to settle in North America. . . . The first settlers stalked big game such as mammoths and bison. . . . Scientists disagree on when people first came to the Americas and on how many waves of settlement they rode” (22). Another widely adopted text, *The American Vision* (Appleby et al., 2005) more directly affirms this view of Indigenous peoples as migrants: “No one can say for certain when the first people arrived in America. . . . Presently, scientific speculation points to a period between 15,000 and 30,000 years ago. . . . How long ago the first Americans appeared remains a hotly debated question. . . . From DNA and other evidence, researchers have concluded that the earliest Americans probably came from Asia” (13).

As the examples from these textbooks illustrate, Indigenous peoples are merged into narratives of immigration and settler nationalism, thereby erasing a central tenet of Indigeneity—that Indigenous peoples originate from particular places in North America. Also because Indigenous peoples are constructed as relics of

the past in US social studies curriculum, settler nationalism does not need to account for the actual presence of Indigenous peoples today. This epistemological ignorance (Calderon 2011; Margonis 2007; Mills 2007; Tuana 2004, 2006) regarding Indigenous peoples is actually a product of how gaps in knowledge are actively produced to protect settler futurity. Yet this narrative is not a representation of reality. If true, then it would follow that settlers came to these lands and were integrated into Indigenous nations (see Belich 1996; Tuck and Yang 2012; Veracini 2010). In fact, the opposite is true. European settlers came and attempted to remove and eradicate Indigenous nations.

The grammars of immigrant nation and the cooptation of Indianness, or the new native/society, reproduced in schooling, inform a particular type of settler nationalism. For instance, US history curriculum tends to frame Indigenous peoples as immigrants to destabilize their claims to land, ultimately erasing the core of Indigenous claims to land as an extension of settler nationalism. In US history textbooks, settler nationalism characterized by immigrant nation narratives has to account for the fact that “settlers are not immigrants” (Tuck and Yang 2012, 6). Certainly, settler occupation requires a long-standing commitment to physically and symbolically supplant Indigenous communities (Razack 2002; Tuck and Yang 2012; Wolfe 2006). As stated, US history textbooks largely begin with explicit narratives describing how Indigenous peoples arrived to what is today the United States over the Beringia land bridge. This narrative of a land bridge, overwhelmingly found in all the textbooks I examined, perpetuates the nation of immigrants narrative, framing Indigenous peoples as the first immigrants (Martinez, 1998), which later waves of European settlers simply replaced.

Next, I examine the leaps these texts make to promote this myth. The texts rely on Western science to legitimize their views of Indigenous immigration. This grammar, based on scientific truths, is found universally in the instructional texts analyzed in this research. Besides, there is no mention or qualification in any texts, that Indigenous creation stories relate completely different accounts about origins and contain their own scientific thought (Cajete 2000; Harding and Figueroa 2003; Maffie 2003). V. Deloria (1997) explains that, “American Indians, as a general rule, have aggressively opposed the Bering Strait migration doctrine because it does not reflect any of the memories or traditions passed down by the ancestors over many generations” (81). V. Deloria (1997) elaborates that “some tribes speak of transoceanic migrations . . . and others speak of the experience of creation;” others “even talk about migrations from other planets” (81). Thus, US history textbooks promote a position that is at odds with Indigenous knowledge and accounts of creation and origins. This land bridge narrative is presented as largely fact, accomplished by including Western scientific sources to provide the necessary authority to cement this view.

Ironically, US history textbooks promote narratives that are highly contested even within western science circles. After all, science is consistently changing according to changing methodologies and findings (Harding 2008; Klein

and Schiffner 2003; National Academy of Sciences 1993). The Encyclopedia Smithsonian (Fitzhugh et al. 2007) entry on Paleoamerican Origins articulates such perspectives on the ancient movement of peoples:

Recent discoveries in New World archaeology along with new scientific methods for analyzing data have led to new ideas regarding the origin of the first peoples of the Americas and their time of arrival. The traditional theory held that the first Americans crossed the land bridge from Siberia to Alaska around 11,500 years ago . . . to reach unglaciated lands to the south. These first inhabitants, whose archaeological sites are scattered across North and South America, were called the Clovis people, named after the town in New Mexico where their fluted spear points used for hunting mammoth were first found in 1932. There is now convincing evidence of human habitation sites that date earlier than the Clovis culture including sites located in South America. . . . Emerging evidence suggests that people with boats moved along the Pacific coast into Alaska and northwestern Canada and eventually south to Peru and Chile by 12,500 years ago—and perhaps much earlier. (Fitzhugh et al., 2007)

Thus, the land-bridge theory, while not dismissed, is giving way to other theories. As stated, other theories support or examine the idea of transoceanic migrations to the Americas in general (Montenegro et al. 2006; Storey et al. 2007) and even more recent findings in Brazil place peoples in the Americas as early as 22,000 years ago (Lahaye et al. 2013).

The land-bridge narrative is a manifestation of how settler grammars, in this case immigration or migrations, construct Indigenous peoples as predecessors of today's US citizens. However, these narratives also maintain the related, yet incongruent, ways settler grammars have to continue to discount Indigenous existence. Moran (2002) explains that because of settler expansion and dislocation of Indigenous peoples, "the discourses of settler nationalism must continue to engage with histories of indigenous dispossession in order to explain the nature and quality of their national existence" (1016). It is not surprising that textbooks rely on outdated, and at times challenged, ideas to promote a particular notion of Indigenous peoples as early immigrants, peoples who only exist in the past. This myth, in turn, is used in textbooks to construct a particular type of national identity. The Common Core, for example, will only extend this legacy with its notion of citizenship as it does not truly alter current social studies frameworks/content, focusing more on emphasizing literacy (reading, assessment, etc.) in social studies.

The New Native. Similarly, the California History-Social Science Framework (CHSSF 2005) imagines an Indian past to construct a settler future that perpetuates Indigenous absence. It is here I turn to the related grammar of the new native, or new society that is tied to narratives of settler nationalism. Specifically, regarding nationalism, the CHSSF states: "To understand this nation's identity,

students must: Recognize that American society is and always has been pluralistic and multicultural, a single nation composed of individuals whose heritages encompass many different national and cultural backgrounds” (20). Here the notion of a “pluralistic and a multicultural, single nation” is important to highlight because it points to the fact that there is a singular American identity that encompasses diversity. This identity, in the framework, is predicated upon nationalism that emerged out of the movement for independence in the United States, a major discursive frame pointing to the creation of a new native identity. For instance the grade-five course, *United States History and Geography: Making a New Nation* (CHSSF 2005),

presents the story of the development of the nation, with emphasis on the period up to 1850. This course focuses on one of the most remarkable stories in history: the creation of a new nation, peopled by immigrants from all parts of the globe and governed by institutions founded on the Judeo-Christian heritage, the ideals of the Enlightenment, and English traditions of self-government. This experiment was inspired by the innovative dream of building a new society, a new order for the ages, in which the promises of the Declaration of Independence would be realized. (64)

This new society betters the old society it left behind, affirming Weitzer’s characteristic of a settler state. It is also important to note that curriculum is sequential; thus, looking at different grades provides more context as to how the grammar of *new native* shapes settler nationalism. For example, the CAHSSF, from the grade-eight course *US History and Geography, Growth and Conflict*: “The West should be studied for its deep influence on the politics, economy, mores, and culture of the nation. It opened domestic markets for seaboard merchants; it offered new frontiers for immigrants and discontented Easterners; and it provided a folklore of individualism and rugged frontier life that has become a significant aspect of our national self-image” (102). It is in this space between accounting for what happened to Indigenous peoples and the actual movement of settlers that I turn to a related settler grammar embedded in land relations to help explain this contradiction.

Empty Lands. The grammars of a new society or new native of settler nationalism are also directly tied to the expansion of settlers across North America. The history of the 18th and 19th centuries in the United States is fundamentally and irrevocably shaped by the simultaneous expansion of settlers across the United States and the figurative and physical reterritorialization of Indigenous peoples. Indeed, one of the most formative and constitutive aspects of settler expansion is the idea that the lands settlers came to were empty lands—a grammar central in colonizing nations takeover of other people’s territories—free for settlers to build

their new societies, which is foundational to the dominant settler land ethic of today (see Snelgrove, 2014, on settler stewardship). Furthermore, this grammar of empty space was central in promoting legal justifications invented in the legal theater of settler colonial expansion (William 1990) that granted settler states independence from their host colonies (Moran 2002). Thus settler expansion was enabled by the practice that empty lands were prime locations for new societies to take root and develop (Moran, 2002). Also, this new society was morally obligated to settle and develop these lands based on their status as civilized peoples (Moran 2002; Tuck and Yang 2012). Although Indigenous peoples were present, their supposed status as uncivilized and childlike so-called savages meant that settlers were free to construct their new identity upon a clean slate (Moran 2002). The textbook *The American Odyssey* offers an example of how this grammar is typically constructed in textbooks I examined: “For European colonists and their descendants, North America’s pure drinking water, healthful climate, and spacious territory made life both longer and healthier” (Nash 1997, 49). To be able to consider the grammar of empty lands, we need to examine a formative aspect of this settler grammar outlined in Weitzer’s (1990) definition of settler societies: the belief that settlers are superior to Indigenous peoples.

Settler Superiority. In the United States, White supremacy as it relates to Indigenous communities, was in large part accomplished through the application of European legal doctrine (I further explore this aspect of settler grammar in the next section). Together, the grammars of empty space and land acquisition enabled by settler laws are evident in narratives of settler expansion that figure prominently in narratives of settler nationalism as well. Thus, one can see how these structural and ideological grammars of the settler state serve many interrelated purposes. Certainly the type of settler expansionism prominent in settler colonialism promotes a particular type of nationalism (Moran 2002; Wolfe 1999) that excludes non-Whites (Leonardo 2007; Perez-Huber et al. 2008) because it relies on the powerful organizing myth of European immigrant origins. It is understandable then why US history textbooks commonly treat Indigenous peoples as relics of the past, which allows for the related expansion of white settlers as inevitable (Calderon 2008; Cornelius 1999; Martinez 1998; Vogel 1968). These grammars are constructed to promote a nationalism that enables and normalizes Indigenous absence and dispossession as natural to American progress, and promotes a fictive settler nationalism that transforms itself into the new native (Huhndorf 2001; Leonardo 2007; Perez-Huber et al. 2008).

Constructing Indigenous Presence in Textbooks and Standards

Although settler nationalism and expansion rely on the removal of Indigenous peoples, it also has to account for it (Moran 2002; Olund 2002; Wolfe 1999).

Regarding Indigenous presence, settlers must rely on claims of superiority over the Indigenous peoples they displace (settler supremacy) and institute political institutions that maintain settler rule over Indigenous peoples and their lands (territoriality; Weitzer 1990). Settler societies thus account for the presence of Indigenous peoples, revealing intense settler anxieties revealed in the face of Indigenous presence (Shohat and Stam 1994; Tuck and Yang 2012). Specifically, my concern is with how settler societies employ the grammars of settler superiority and territoriality to both soothe this anxiety (Shohat and Stam 1994) and gain and maintain territory, creating a particular type of ahistorical land ethic. Settler nationalism does this, in part, by promoting the narrative that settler societies are superior to the old societies they left behind in Europe as well as the ones they are supplanting (Moran 2002; Wolfe 1999). This important aspect of settler supremacy manifests itself in a series of ideologies that promote the notion that settler expansion is inevitable and indeed necessary (Moran 2002). The sense of inevitability embedded in the rise of settler states is concretely expressed in settler structures. Thus, it is important to understand that at the heart of settler colonialism is territorialization—of both bodies and land (Wolfe, 2006). As Razack (2002) explains, “The national mythologies of White settler societies are deeply spacialized stories. Although the spacial story that is told varies from one time to another, at each stage the story installs Europeans as entitled to the land, a claim that is codified in law” (3). This spacial story is told in social studies curriculum through narratives of westward expansion.

Settler Superiority. Establishing themselves as superior to Indians, settlers ideologically and structurally enabled an entitlement to look after tribes (establishment of guardian ward relationship in trust doctrine). Ultimately, because of the constructed inferiority of Indigenous peoples, their supposed childlike nature and their inability to use land to its full potential, Whites are entitled through law and moral superiority (manifest destiny) to take these lands and make them fruitful, productive (Miller 2008, 2012; Roberts 2007; Williams 1990). In textbooks *Manifest Destiny*, the 19th century idea that European immigrants were destined to lands in the United States, is discussed at length. Although many of the US history textbooks I examine treat settler expansion into the western territories of the United States as a dark time in the history of the United States, they nevertheless promote narratives that present this clash between settlers and tribes, and the displacement of tribes by settlers as inevitable to give way to the superior western civilization of settlers (Miller 2008, 2012; Roberts 2007). Moreover, these narratives disconnect the continued impact of settler expansion on Indigenous peoples today, a key part of the dominant settler land ethic.

For example, the text *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21st Century* (Danzer et al., 2006), beginning with early 19th-century settler expansion into the west describes:

In the 1840s, expansion fever gripped the country. Many Americans began to believe that their movement westward was predestined by God. The phrase ‘manifest destiny’ expressed the belief that the United States was ordained to expand to the Pacific Ocean and into Mexican and Native American territory. Many Americans also believed that this destiny was manifest, or obvious and inevitable. (130–131)

Another textbook, *America: Pathways to the Present* (Cayton et al., 2002), describes how beliefs of settler superiority enabled removal of Indigenous peoples:

For generations, many Americans viewed the West as a wild, empty expanse, freely available to those brave enough to tame it. But the West was not empty. Others had been living there for centuries. . . . The Plains soon swarmed with settlers, many of whom felt justified in taking Native American lands. Settlers believed they had a greater right to the land because they improved it by producing more food and wealth than did the Native Americans. (180)

Textbooks use this historical period to dramatize the cultural differences between settlers and tribes, with special emphasis paid to land use and the underlying concept of empty lands.

Similarly, *The Americans* (Danzer et al., 2006) textbook distinguishes Indigenous land usage from that of White settlers, explaining that White settlers were, instead, driven by economic incentives and land use ethic that employed the notion of empty lands regardless of Indigenous presence:

The culture of the White settlers differed in many ways from that of the Native Americans on the plains. Unlike Native Americans, who believed that land could not be owned, the settlers believed that owning land, making a mining claim, or starting a business would give them a stake in the country. They argued that Native Americans had forfeited their rights to the land because they hadn’t settled down to ‘improve’ it. Concluding that the plains were ‘unsettled,’ migrants streamed westward along railroad and wagon trails to claim the land. (203)

Although these textbooks do not make a value judgment concerning these cultural differences, they do not need to. The predominant ethics related to land use in classrooms will make the judgment for them: that Indians had to be displaced to make room for the more efficient, more appropriate use of land. This improvement of land use on the part of settlers signals the inevitability of settler expansion. Although the US history textbooks vary in detail regarding the impacts of westward expansion they do, for the most part, articulate the reality that Indigenous peoples were displaced, many times violently, as a function of this process. This displacement was encouraged by ideologies and policies that facilitated expansionism, particularly the notion of empty land.

The textbooks point out that settlers and Indians had differing views regarding land, but they fail to explore the reasons for these differing cultural attitudes and they fail to critically engage how settler attitudes shaped policies that were, and continue to be, detrimental for Indigenous peoples. This perspective focuses on the experience of settlers which function to legitimize the conquest and occupation of Indigenous lands, minimizing past acts that are key in forging a cohesive national identity that obfuscates the genocide, removal, and taking of Indigenous peoples and lands that to this day continue to reward settler society (Calderon 2008; A. Smith 2005; Tuck and Yang 2012). The related settler grammar that promotes this is territoriality, settlers' access to Indigenous territories (Wolfe 2006). This grammar is undergirded by the concept of empty lands developed in western law, which we see reflected in textbooks previously mentioned.

Territoriality. The idea of *terra nullius*, or empty lands, was developed in part to enable the expansion of groups of people into other territories. *Terra nullius* allowed for the planting of settlers in colonies through the principle adopted from Roman law of *res nullius* (empty thing, belonging to no one), “that if something is ‘empty’ it is unowned and so open to claims of ownership, [which] goes back to ancient times” (Pateman 2007, 36). In North America and Australia, the legitimacy of these settler states rests on assertions that they were established on empty lands or lands not exploited to their full extent (Pateman 2007). The settler contract is based on a complex engagement with social contract theory between settlers and colonial metropolises (Pateman 2007). Although a contract implies an agreement between two parties, the contract in these cases were not agreed upon between settlers and Indigenous tribes (Pateman 2007); rather, settlers agreed amongst themselves and their respective colonial governments on a settler contract based on the idea of *terra nullius*, because it provided a clean slate for settlers to build a new identity, setting them apart from the mother country(ies).

In Australia, for instance, Indigenous peoples there were given no rights to their territories (Wolfe 2006) under explicit application of *terra nullius*; in North America (Canada and the United States) treaty-making between tribes and European powers provided for tribal self-governance and limited territorial rights, in part due to the long-standing military power of tribes in that context (Wolfe 2006). Yet even in the North American context, the rights granted to tribes were done so under the auspices of the European power, mainly expressed in terms of use. For Wolfe (2006) this distinction “between dominion and occupancy illuminates the settler-colonial project’s reliance on the elimination of native societies” (390–391); yet it also details how Indigenous presence is dealt with.

The more modern and narrow translation of *terra nullius* in the United States—that the European conquerors had title to the lands (of what is now the United States) by virtue of discovery by a civilized European power—was widely

invoked by the US government. Although its application was not one of outright claiming lands as legally vacant, the authority to legally consider land ownership was outside the purview of Indigenous nations, and resided with the civilized occupier (d'Errico 2000). One needs only to look to the doctrine of discovery to locate the rationale that illustrates how settling on these US soils was not solely based on the notion of empty lands. It is also built on the belief of the inferiority of Indigenous peoples, a carryover of the principle of the Law of Nations (Miller 2012; Newcomb 2008; Williams 1990). For instance, in the United States the legal doctrine of discovery is wielded by courts to justify the taking of Indian lands based on arguments asserting the superiority of Whites and their laws over Indians (Newcomb 2008). Chief Justice John Marshall wrote in the majority opinion in *Johnson v. M'Intosh* (1823), the argument that would cement the doctrine of discovery in US Indian law:

On the discovery of this immense continent, the great nations of Europe were eager to appropriate to themselves so much of it as could respectively acquire . . . and the character and religion of its inhabitants afforded an apology for considering them as a people over whom the superior genius of Europe might claim an ascendancy. . . . But, as they were all [Europeans] in pursuit of nearly the same object, it was necessary . . . to establish a principle which all [Europeans] should acknowledge as the law by which the right of acquisition, which they all asserted, should be regulated as between themselves. This principle was that discovery gave title to the government by whose subjects, or by whose authority, it was made, against all other European governments. (572–573)

Marshall's opinion concretely expresses the belief in the superiority of Europe and, therefore, the ascendancy of White settlers over Indians. As a result of the incorporation of White supremacy in the settler legal system, White settlers acquired new territories (Newcomb 2008; Williams 1986, 1990). The outcome of this structural function positions settler laws as the only mechanisms available to define the legal relationship between Indians and settlers.

Turning to social studies curriculum allows us to examine how the settler grammar of territoriality is smuggled into the everyday practice of the classroom. US history textbooks promote a particular type of inevitability of settler expansion, as well as particular utilitarian and extractive ethics with the land. The following excerpt from *The American Vision* (Appleby et al., 2005), Unit 5: The Birth of Modern America 1865–1900, Section 3 Native Americans, is a textual example of this: "In the end, Ten Bears and the other chiefs had little choice but to sign the treaty. The army's main representative at the council . . . told them bluntly that they would have to accept the deal: 'You can no more stop this than you can stop the sun or moon; you must submit and do the best you can'" (425). Although the US history textbooks vary in detail regarding the impacts of westward expansion,

they do articulate the reality that Indigenous peoples were displaced, many times violently, as a function of this settler expansion and related policies.

Another entry from the *The American Vision* (Appleby et al., 2005) describes some of these policies, such as the Dawes Allotment Act, intended to assimilate American Indians: “This act [Allotment Act] allotted to each [Indian] head of household 160 acres of reservation land for farming; single adults received 80 acres, and 40 acres were allotted for children. The land that remained after all members and received allotments would be sold to American settlers, with the proceeds going into a trust for Native Americans” (430). In essence, lands protected under treaties, retained by tribes in exchange for other land to the United States were sold off because of the prevailing deficit view that tribal cultures were keeping American Indians in poverty. Thus, to aid American Indians, the US government needed to do away with tribal customary land holding practices by individually assigning lands. What was not assigned was sold to White settlers, regardless of what treaties promised.

The textbook elaborates: “This plan [the Dawes Act] failed to achieve its goals. Some Native Americans succeeded as farmers or ranchers, but many had little training or enthusiasm for either pursuit. Like homesteaders, they often found their allotments too small to be profitable, and so they sold them” (430). Yet the textbooks I examined fail to mention that, for a period of 25 years, individual Indian allottee lands were held in trust by the federal government to allow individual Indians the opportunity to be deemed competent to own the land privately (Shoemaker 2003). The textbook continues, “Some Native American groups had grown attached to their reservations and hated to see them transformed into homesteads for settlers as well as Native Americans. . . . In the end, the assimilation policy proved a dismal failure. No legislation could provide a satisfactory solution to the Native American issue, because there was no entirely satisfactory solution to be had” (430). No solution could be had because, ultimately, Indigenous tribes demanded return of territories, and more commonly that the federal government honor treaty provisions regarding land. This was something settler governments were/are unwilling to do. More important, the textbooks all fail to point out that Allotment, or the Dawes Act, continues to detrimentally impact Indigenous peoples today (see the Cobell Indian Trust Settlement).

The textbook, *The American Vision* (Appleby et al. 2005), goes on to conclude: “The Plains Indians were doomed because they were dependent on buffalo for food, clothing, fuel, and shelter. When the herds were wiped out, Native Americans on the Plains had no way to sustain their way of life, and few were willing or able to adopt American settlers’ lifestyles in place of their traditional cultures” (430). The narrative emphasizes the inevitable disappearance of Indigenous peoples. The historical presence of American Indians is frozen in such a way that leaves contemporary Indigenous communities are left unexplored. Yet the legacy of allotment continues to compound tribal governance and the ability of individual

tribal members to benefit from their lands (Shoemaker 2003). The settler grammar of territoriality thus divorces the contemporary realities of these histories despite the presence of Indigenous peoples in textbooks, indeed society, maintaining an ahistorical (Ledesma 2007) settler land ethic.

CONCLUSION

This analysis demonstrates that to make space for decolonizing approaches in education that take earnestly the continued occupation of Indigenous territories (Champagne 2005a, 2005b) by settler societies we must account for how settler colonialism is maintained—especially through systems of schooling that have been one of the most important tools of the ongoing settler-colonial project. I conclude my analysis of social studies curriculum with a discussion of the Allotment Act because it strongly reflects the disconnect between the contemporary dilemmas faced by American Indian communities and the larger miseducation of non-Indian society regarding Indigenous issues. Allotment and fractionation, however, can also be a point of departure for actually moving toward decolonial understandings of the way textbooks/curriculum participate in a settler-colonial project. For instance, the Indian Land Tenure Foundation’s—“a community-based organization serving American Indian nations and people in the recovery and control of their rightful homelands” (Indian Land Tenure Foundation [ILTF] 2013)—curriculum centers these very issues. These standards both review American Indian traditional land values and uses while offering standards that focus on the history of American Indian land tenure and its contemporary status (ILTF 2013). Concretely, nearly two-thirds of American Indian lands in the United States were lost as a result of the Allotment Act. Today the effects of the Allotment Act are substantial through the process of land loss and fractionation (Shoemaker 2003). Although over 60 million acres of the surplus land was sold to non-Indians as a result of allotment, these lands remain within contemporary reservation boundaries, which provide unique challenges to tribal land management and governance, and self-determination generally (ILTF 2013). This represents only a portion of the contemporary challenges caused by allotment, only one such policy instituted by the federal government that continues to have lasting negative consequences in Indian Country. I insist here that this is the type of learning all students need to be exposed to. However, such strategies are cautionary approaches, at best. Offering these standards without attending to the decolonizing moves that decenter settler subjectivities ultimately allow dominant settler ideologies to remain.

Connecting such historical narratives to contemporary realities for non-Indian students is not a challenging task. What is challenging is that most mainstream educators remain ignorant of the realities of Indigenous communities, which is, I argue, an inevitable outcome of settler ideologies that work to erase and

reconstruct Indianness to maintain settler futurity. As an educator that teaches non-Indian students about the American Indian experience, common feedback I receive from students is “I did not know!” which leads most students to a reassessment on the status of American Indian peoples as sovereign nations. Though I do not challenge settler identities, it is a move in the direction toward attempting decolonizing pedagogies. As such, this work might be more appropriately contextualized as *anticolonial*, as it does not decolonize but rather moves students to question common settler colonial tropes that erase the complexity of Indianness.

Thus, the framework I sketch here is not an exhaustive overview of settler colonialism in the United States. What I offer provides a scaffold for understanding settler grammars, particularly in education. If we are truly interested in decolonizing work, we must attend to the context of coloniality that we find ourselves in—in this case, a settler colonial society. Doing the real work of decolonization requires that we first identify how settler grammars continue to be an ongoing project and importantly so in educational contexts. As my analysis of settler grammar and their ongoing work in textbooks and curriculum demonstrates, part of doing decolonial work, not as a metaphor, requires that we identify and engage the bleeding-through of ongoing settler processes. I see textbooks as one prominent example among many in US schools that are actively perpetuating settler grammars and as one practical place to engage in concrete decolonial work. Decolonizing work demands that we resurrect the thread of Indianness that is foundational to settler colonialism. Indeed, this work points to the challenge that confronting students with the reality of American Indian specificities is unsettling (Tuck and Yang 2013). Future work should look at how communities, teachers, and students can collectively confront settler grammars and begin to move away from metaphors and into concrete anti-settler practice, exemplified by the movements of tribal nations at the borders of the United States and Canada active resistance to the Keystone Pipeline and other extractive industries.

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APPENDIX

List 1: Textbooks

Author(s) and Title	Publisher
1. Appleby, Joyce, et al.: <i>The American Vision: Modern Times</i>	Glencoe/McGraw-Hill
2. Appleby, Joyce, et al.: <i>The American Republic Since 1877 (Texas Edition)</i>	Glencoe/McGraw-Hill
3. Ayers, et al.: <i>American Passages: A History of the United States, 3rd Ed.</i>	Thomson Learning/Wadsworth
4. Berkin, Carol, et al.: <i>American Voices, 1865 to the Present</i>	Scott Foresman
5. Boorstin, Kelley: <i>History of the United States</i>	Prentice Hall
6. Boyer, Stuckey: <i>American Nation: Civil War to Present</i>	Holt, Rinehart and Winston
7. Boyer, Stuckey: <i>American Nation in the 20th Century</i>	Holt, Rinehart and Winston
8. Boyer, Stuckey: <i>American Nation in the Modern Era</i>	Holt, Rinehart and Winston
9. Boyer, Stuckey, et al.: <i>The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People, 5th Ed.</i>	McDougal Littell
10. Bragdon, Henry W., et al.: <i>History of a Free Nation</i>	Glencoe/McGraw-Hill
11. Cayton, Andrew, et al.: <i>America: Pathways to the Present, Modern American History (Texas edition)</i>	Prentice Hall
12. Cayton, Andrew, et al.: <i>America: Pathways to the Present</i>	Pearson/Prentice Hall
13. Danzer, Gerald, et al.: <i>The Americans: Reconstruction Through the 21st Century (California Edition)</i>	McDougal Littell
14. Danzer, Gerald, et al.: <i>The Americans: Reconstruction Through the 21st Century (Texas Edition)</i>	McDougal Littell
15. Dibacco, Thomas V., et al.: <i>History of the United States, Vol. 2, Civil War to the Present</i>	McDougal Littell
16. Downey, Matthew T., et al.: <i>United States History: In the Course of Human Events</i>	Glencoe/McGraw-Hill
17. Hyser, Arndt: <i>Voices of the American Past: Documents in U.S. History, 3rd Ed., Volume I and Volume II [Reader]</i>	Thomson Learning/Wadsworth
18. Jordan, Winthrop D., et al.: <i>Americans, A History</i>	McDougal Littell
19. Kelman, Steven, et. al. <i>American Government</i>	
20. Kennedy, David M., et al.: <i>The American Pageant: A History of the Republic, 13th Ed.</i>	McDougal Littell
21. McClenaghan, W. A. & F. A. Magruder: <i>Magruder's American Government</i>	
22. Murrin, John M., et al.: <i>Liberty, Equality, and Power: A History of the American People, 4th Ed.</i>	Thomson Learning/Wadsworth
23. Nash, Gary B.: <i>American Odyssey: The 20th Century and Beyond</i>	Glencoe/McGraw-Hill
24. Newman, Schmalbach: <i>United States History: Preparing for the Advanced Placement Examination [Test Preparation Aid]</i>	Amsco
25. Norton, Mary Beth, et al.: <i>A People and A Nation: A History of the United States, 7th Ed.</i>	McDougal Littell
26. Schmidt, Steffen W., et. al. <i>American Government and Politics Today</i>	
27. Ritchie, Donald A.: <i>American History: The Modern Era Since 1865</i>	Glencoe/McGraw-Hill
28. Tindall, Shi: <i>America: A Narrative History, 5th Ed.</i>	W. W. Norton (Peoples Publishing)
29. Miller: <i>West's American Government</i>	