

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: F.

Date: September 22, 2011

Topic: Final Review of History and Social Science Textbooks Published by Five Ponds Press

Presenter: Dr. Linda Wallinger, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Telephone Number: (804) 225-2034

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Origin:

Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

Board review required by

State or federal law or regulation

Board of Education regulation

Other:

Action requested at this meeting Action requested at future meeting: _____

Previous Review/Action:

No previous board review/action

Previous review/action

date July 28, 2011

action Accepted for First Review the History and Social Science Textbooks Published by Five Ponds Press

Background Information:

On March 24, 2011, the Virginia Board of Education took action to remove two textbooks published by Five Ponds Press, Inc., *Our Virginia: Past and Present* (1st edition) and *Our America to 1865* (1st edition), from its approved textbook list. The Board also directed that if Five Ponds Press submitted for review the second edition of the same textbooks, the Department of Education was to conduct an expedited review “in accordance with the terms of the Board’s newly-adopted textbook review process” and bring to the Board a recommendation regarding approval of the replacement editions.

Summary of Major Elements

Five Ponds Press formally submitted new editions of its textbooks for Virginia Studies and United States History to 1865, *Our Virginia: Past and Present* and *Our America to 1865*, respectively on June 24, 2011, and the Department of Education began the process to review these textbooks as prescribed in the revised textbook process approved on March 24, 2011. Five Ponds Press completed Publisher’s Certification and Agreement forms required as part of the revised process for each textbook. Attachment A contains the Publisher’s Certification and Agreement forms. Department of Education staff members reviewed both textbook certifications and agreements to ensure they were completed correctly, sufficient information was provided, and they were signed by an appropriate representative of the publishing company.

In accord with the textbook approval process, the Department convened a review committee comprised of a teacher, a division-level content specialist, and a subject-matter expert. Members of the review committee conducted individual analyses of the textbook printouts prior to meeting with the full committee. On July 8, 2011, the members of the committee convened to reach consensus on their reviews of the textbooks. The consensus evaluations were shared with the publisher, and the publisher was given an opportunity to respond to the committee's review and recommendations.

On July 28, 2011, the Board of Education accepted for first review the 2011 editions of the two Five Ponds Press books, *Our Virginia: Past and Present* and *Our America to 1865*, for consideration. A 30-day public comment period began on July 29, 2011, and ended on August 31, 2011. One letter was received that questioned the author's lack of credentials as a historian. Seven comments were received in the public comment mailbox. Of those, several comments noted minor technical errors in punctuation. Several comments questioned the accuracy of facts, but most comments encouraged various interpretations of events or additional information to explain events. One comment addressed general textbook selection in Virginia for multiple grades. Attachment B contains copies of the comments that were submitted. Attachment C includes information about the 2011 editions of the two Five Ponds Press books, *Our Virginia: Past and Present* and *Our America to 1865*.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education approve the 2011 editions of two Five Ponds Press history and social science textbooks, *Our Virginia: Past and Present* and *Our America to 1865*.

Impact on Resources:

This responsibility can be absorbed by the agency's existing resources at this time. If the agency is required to absorb additional responsibilities related to this process, other services will be impacted.

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

Upon approval, the Department of Education will publish the list of approved textbooks on its Web site in accordance with Section 22.1-238 of the *Code of Virginia*.

Textbook Publisher's Certification

June 16, 2011

(Date)

Five Ponds Press

(Publishing Company)

Name of Primary Contact: Laura Buckius
 Phone Number, including area code: 877-833-0603, ext.103
 E-mail Address: laura@fivepondspress.com

The publishing company indicated above submits the following primary materials to the Virginia Department of Education for consideration in Virginia's textbook approval process.

Title	ISBN	Copyright	Grade Level or Course	Is this primary material submitted as digital, print, or combination?*
<i>Our Virginia Past and Present</i> 2 nd Edition	978-1-935813-12-5	2011	Virginia Studies	print
<i>Our America to 1865</i> 2 nd Edition	978-1-935813-13-2	2011	United States History to 1865	print

*Only one version of the primary material will be reviewed by VDOE committees. If the primary material is available in more than one format, provide an explanation of how they differ or are comparable.

The publisher certifies the following:

1. Each textbook has been thoroughly examined and reviewed by at least three qualified content experts for factual accuracy in the subject matter and the textbooks are free from any factual or editing errors. The credentials of the author(s) and/or editor(s) and content review experts are provided on the attached forms.
2. Each textbook has been thoroughly examined and reviewed by qualified editors to identify any typographical errors.
3. Any duplicate version (i.e., print or digital) of the primary material that is available to Virginia school divisions contains at least the same content included in the primary material selected by the publisher for review. Any additional content, above that contained in the primary material reviewed is accurate and free of errors. If the content of the print and digital versions of the same primary material varies, those variations are outlined in an attachment to the certification.
4. The Quality Assurance and Editing Process described below was followed for all primary materials submitted by the publisher for review.

Quality Assurance and Editing Process: Please describe, *in three pages or less*, the internal process used to ensure accuracy and lack of bias including:

- the quality assurance and workflow steps used to ensure accuracy of content;
- the quality assurance and workflow steps used to eliminate editing and typographical errors, including errors in grammar, written expression, spelling, formatting, and other substantive elements that may affect student learning;
- the fact-back-up guidelines (i.e., what is an acceptable source for a fact and what is not) used by the authors, editors, and outside content experts;
- the review by outside content experts, other than the authors, to verify accuracy and ensure freedom from bias; and
- the process used to reach consensus on information with divergent interpretations.

Five Ponds Press is a custom publisher specializing in creating social studies textbooks for Virginia schools. Our process for developing books includes presenting, expanding upon, and illustrating the Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework.

We substantially follow the Quality Assurance Process for Instructional Materials suggested by the Association of American Publishers. Listed below are the workflow steps for the process including steps to ensure accuracy of content, steps to eliminate editing and typographical errors, and the review process by outside content experts.

Step 1 –Determine Content

- Reference the state curriculum and consult with authors and independent experts/reviewers.
- Study established research base and new research findings.
- Establish plan for customized correlations to state standards.
- Develop preliminary plan for content.

Step 2 –Research and Planning

- Identify author (Joy Masoff) and content experts.

To ensure the accuracy of content presented by Ms. Masoff, we worked with Dr. Don Zeigler, Professor of Geography at Old Dominion University; Dr. Melissa Matusevich, former Social Studies Supervisor for Montgomery County Schools and former Associate Professor of Education at East Carolina University; and Karenne Wood, Director of the Virginia Indian Heritage Program. Dr. Zeigler supervised the geography content development with an emphasis on location accuracy of the maps and descriptive accuracy of the text. Dr. Matusevich was responsible for quality assurance of the instructional aspects of the student text. She verified that the strongest instructional strategies and practices were incorporated into the titles and that the language used was thorough, clear, and age appropriate. Ms. Wood led the development of all parts of the books related to American Indians. She ensured the accuracy and lack of bias in all related images and text.

- Survey educators (current and former public school teachers around Virginia).
- Develop preliminary plan for chapter organization and design.
- Build out plan for customized correlations to state standards.
- Develop and produce prototype pages.
- Review prototype pages with author and educators.
- Revise content development plan to reflect input from author and educators.

Step 3 –Early Development

- Form editorial team, including authors, content experts and other specialists

The editorial team included Lisa Arnold, M.Ed. and Ed.S.; Bree Linton, M.Ed.; Lara Samuels, M.L.S.; Nancy Vest; Alex Smith, AP American history teacher; Deanna Beacham, Virginia Council on Indians; and Upper Mattaponi Chief Kenneth Adams. Ms. Arnold, Ms. Linton, Ms. Samuels, and Ms. Vest ensured the information from the Curriculum Framework was interpreted in an objective, balanced, developmentally and age appropriate manner for the grade levels. They also developed the instructional aspects of the student text and ancillary materials. Mr. Smith presented an objective interpretation of the primary source documents presented in the reference section of the books. Ms. Beacham and Chief Adams ensured the impartial presentation of images, facts and text for all content related to American Indians.

- Begin development of customized correlations to state standards.
- Develop detailed outlines and make writing assignments.
- Establish project schedule.
- Authors and content area experts write and evaluate first draft of manuscript.
- Design plan for special features and assign writer teams.
- Create page and cover design for textbook and all ancillary materials.
- Plan teacher editions and ancillary materials.

Step 4 –Editing and Review

- Update as necessary customized correlations to state standards.
- Edit student and teacher texts as well as ancillary materials.
- Review for accuracy by academic reviewers (Dr. Peter Wallenstein and Dr. Kevin Hardwick) and current teacher of the content (Raymi Catron and Donna Smith).

Dr. Wallenstein and Dr. Hardwick verified the accuracy of each fact, historical date, and

statement in the entire book using their professional expertise and the timely, unbiased, authoritative and accurate primary and secondary source materials listed in the section below. In addition they reviewed the text to ensure the material was presented in an unbiased and impartial manner. Ms. Catron and Ms. Smith also reviewed the books to ensure freedom from bias. In addition, as current teachers of the content, they reviewed the books for clarity, age appropriateness, and presentation.

- Copy edit.

Our team of copy editors combed the books to eliminate typographical errors, including errors in grammar, punctuation, written expression, spelling, formatting and other substantive elements that may affect student learning. The team is composed of two veteran, accomplished consulting copy editors, Anna Wainwright and Karen Brooks; Jason Mahlke, an AP English teacher; and Anita Parker a language arts classroom teacher.

- Incorporate changes from authors, editors and reviewers.
- Create pages, develop art, prepare charts and graphs, choose photographs.
- Check revised pages, perform cold read.
- Repeat page checks until all pages are correct.
- Check proofs.
- Produce first version (intended for use only as marketing samples).
- Distribute first printing.

Step 5 –Quality Reviews of First Version/Printing

- Send student editions to independent reviewers for complete content read. (Dr. Peter Wallenstein and Dr. Kevin Hardwick)
- Solicit comments from teachers.
- Research and verify accuracy of error reports through authors and independent content authorities.
- Correct errors and create proof of corrected pages.
- Proofread corrections.
- Repeat process until all corrected pages are accurate.
- Check proofs of final pages.
- Print second printing (which will be sold for classroom use).

Step 6 –Continuing Quality Reviews

- Receive and review comments from students, teachers, academic and textbook review committees.
- Correct text, photographs, charts and graphs, and art for any identified errors or necessary clarifications.
- Prepare and distribute errata if errors are found.

Step 7 –Subsequent Editions

- Research clarifications, including public comments.
- Hold discussions among authors and editors.
- Complete entire preparation process—productions, documentation, verification, editing.
- Reprint.

All facts we use in the textbooks that relate specifically to the Virginia standards were taken from the approved document, the *2008 History and Social Science Standards of Learning Curriculum Framework*. For content beyond the Framework, we rely on primary sources and secondary sources. The secondary sources we use are highly reviewed, up-to-date, unbiased, verifiable, authoritative, and accurate. Specifically for these two books, we used the sources listed below.

- Reference encyclopedias and dictionaries including
 - *Oxford Reference Online: Premium Collection*
 - *Blackwell Reference Online*
- Specialized syntheses and textbooks including
 - Michael Kammen, ***Colonial New York: A History***
 - Warren Billings, John Selby, and Thad Tate, ***Colonial Virginia: A History***
 - Thomas Benjamin, ***The Atlantic World: Europeans, Africans, Indians and Their Shared History, 1400-1900***
 - D.W. Meinig, ***The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History, Vol. 1: Atlantic America, 1492-1800***
 - Douglas Egerton, Alison Games, Jane Landers, and Kris Lane, ***The Atlantic World***
 - John Elliott, ***Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492-1830***
 - Stephen Hornsby, ***British Atlantic, American Frontier: Spaces of Power in Early Modern British America***
 - Eric Foner, ***Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877***
 - Peter Wallenstein, ***Cradle of America: Four Centuries of Virginia History***
- Numerous articles from various scholarly journals accessed via the JSTOR article repository
- Range of secondary scholarly monographic works
- Primary sources including
 - James Madison, *Notes of Debates: In the Federal Convention of 1787*
 - *Papers of James Madison*
 - *Thomas Jefferson Papers*
 - *Papers of George Washington*
 - *Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*
 - Jack P. Greene, ed., ***Colonies to Nation, 1763-1789: A Documentary History of the American Revolution***

When we encounter information with divergent interpretations, we consult with our history experts, review reputable sources, and then consult with our educator experts to compose the text in a manner that is accurate and age appropriate for our student readers.

Textbook Publisher's Agreement

The PUBLISHER agrees to the following:

1. After submission of a textbook to the Department of Education for consideration in the textbook approval process, the PUBLISHER will promptly inform the Department in writing of any changes made in the textbook prior to its approval by the Board of Education.
2. If any factual or editing errors are identified in a PUBLISHER's textbook following its approval by the Board of Education, the PUBLISHER will submit a corrective action plan to the Department of Education within 30 days of being notified by the Department of the errors. All corrective action plans must be approved by the Board of Education, but the Board hereby delegates the approval of corrective action plans not involving significant errors to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Each corrective action plan must be tailored to the materiality of the errors identified and must be implemented in the manner most conducive to and least disruptive of student learning. Corrective action plans may include, but are not limited to: a) corrections upon reprinting of the textbook; b) corrective edits to an online textbook; c) electronic errata sheets posted on the PUBLISHER's and the Department of Education's Web sites; d) print errata sheets provided to schools for insertion into textbooks; e) replacement books; and f) return of the textbook and refund of any payment made for the textbook. Upon approval of the corrective action plan, the PUBLISHER will implement the plan at the PUBLISHER's expense.
3. If, upon being notified by the Department of factual or editing errors in an approved textbook, the PUBLISHER disputes that the textbook contains such errors, the PUBLISHER must submit a written explanation of its position to the Department within 30 days of receiving notice from the Department of the error. Upon request, the PUBLISHER may meet with the Department. The Board of Education reserves to itself the right to make a final determination of whether the textbook contains a factual or editing error. If the Board determines that the textbook contains such an error, the PUBLISHER will submit a corrective action plan to the Department within 15 days after receiving notice of the Board's determination.
4. If numerous and/or significant errors are identified in a textbook on the Board of Education's approved list, the Board of Education may, in its sole discretion, withdraw the textbook from the approved list. The Board of Education must notify the PUBLISHER in writing before it removes its textbook from the approved list. The PUBLISHER will have 30 days to respond in writing and the right to meet with the Department of Education before removal. A "significant error" is a factual or editing error that the Board of Education or Department of Education determines within the context of the intended use of the textbook will substantially interfere with student learning. A change in knowledge that occurs subsequent to publication shall not constitute a significant error.
5. If the PUBLISHER makes updates/revisions to textbooks after they have been approved by the Board of Education, the PUBLISHER will ensure that the updated/revised material has been vetted through the same quality assurance process for accuracy and editing outlined in the signed certification. The PUBLISHER will notify the Department and any school division that has purchased this material of the updates/revisions that have been made.

Please check here if this submission includes an attachment that outlines if and how duplicate versions (print or digital) of primary materials vary. (Item #3 in the certification)

Lon Scott

(Signature of President of the Company or Designee)

6-29-11

(Date)

Lon Scott, Publisher

(Name and Title of Person Signing)

Author(s)/Editor(s) and Content Review Expert Information

This attachment must be completed for each primary material submitted for review. Please insert additional copies for each primary material.

Primary Material (printed book or digital submission)

Please list name and edition of the textbook, or series submitted as a primary material.

Publisher: Five Ponds Press
Product Name: Our Virginia Past and Present
Author(s): Joy Masoff
Edition: 2nd ISBN: 978-1-935813-12-5

Author/Editor Information

Please complete the table below. Include each author and/or editor associated with the development of the primary material. Please insert copies of the table for additional authors/editors.

Author/Editor: Joy Masoff	Role of the author/editor in writing the textbook (include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Fine Arts, Pratt Institute • Art Director and writer for Reader’s Digest book and video division • Children’s Non-Fiction Author 	Ms. Masoff wrote the entire book.
Related published works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authored over 50 Video Companion Guides for Reader’s Digest on history and geography topics to accompany several series including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Walter Cronkite Remembers the 20th Century</i>: A 10-volume set that covered 70 years of American history (in conjunction with Walter Cronkite and Chip Cronkite) ○ <i>Ancient Mysteries</i>: A multi-volume series created in conjunction with A&E that explored the history behind The Pyramids, Machu Picchu, Chaco Canyon, and many more ○ <i>Our National Parks</i>: An in-depth closer explorations of America's national treasures ○ <i>World War II</i> • <i>Chronicle of America: Colonial Times-</i> Published by Scholastic 2002 National 	

<p>Council for Social Studies Notable Social Studies Trade Book for Young People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chronicle of America: American Revolution</i> Published by Scholastic <p>(Both <i>Chronicle</i> books were adopted as resource material for use in the New York City Public School system in 2009.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mali: Land of Gold & Glory</i> nominated for Africa Access' Children's Africana Book Award • <i>We Are All Americans: Understanding Diversity</i>--reviewed by <i>School Library Journal</i> "Gloriously supported by photographs, diagrams, and maps, this five-chapter overview offers information about America's immigrants." • <i>African American Story</i>—nominated for the Virginia Library Association Jefferson Cup Award and reviewed by American Library Association <i>Booklist</i> "A solid choice for browsing, research, and class discussions." 	
<p>Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2002 National Council for the Social Studies Guest Speaker on bringing the excitement of life in Colonial Times to the classroom 	
<p>Did the author/editor review the final copy of his/her work before publication?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <u>yes</u></p>	

Content Review Expert Information

Please include each content review expert associated with the quality assurance process for accuracy and editing for the primary material listed. At least three content review experts must be included with at least 1) two experts with a graduate degree in the content area being reviewed; and 2) at least one teacher with recent experience teaching the content in the appropriate grade level or course. Please insert copies of the table for additional content review experts.

Reviewer: Dr. Peter Wallenstein	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in U.S. History from Johns Hopkins University • Bachelor of Arts from Columbia University • Professor of History at Sarah Lawrence College, University of Toronto, University of Maryland at military base locations in Japan, Korea, and Guam • Professor of History at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University since 1983 	Dr. Wallenstein reviewed the entire book.
Related published works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cradle of America: Four Centuries of Virginia History</i> • <i>Higher Education and the Civil Rights Movement: White Supremacy, Black Southerners, and College Campuses</i> • <i>Virginia's Civil War</i> • <i>Blue Laws and Black Codes: Conflict, Courts, and Change in Twentieth-Century Virginia</i> • <i>From Slave South to New South: Public Policy in Nineteenth-Century Georgia</i> 	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 years teaching history at the college level • Specialization in U.S. South, Virginia, Civil War era, and civil rights 	

Reviewer: Dr. Kevin Hardwick	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts from Swarthmore College • Master’s Degree and Ph.D. in History from University of Maryland at College Park • Associate Professor of History at James Madison University 	Dr. Kevin Hardwick reviewed the entire book.
Related published works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Classics of American Political and Constitutional Thought, Vols. I and II (co-author)</i> • <i>Virginia Reconsidered: New Histories of the Old Dominion (co-author)</i> • <i>Patrick Henry: Economic, Domestic and Political Life in Eighteenth-Century Virginia</i> 	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 years teaching Virginia history at the college level • Specialization in Colonial British America, Virginia, the Constitution, and U.S. History 	

Reviewer: Raymi Catron	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Science from Virginia Commonwealth University • 23 years of classroom teaching 	Raymi Catron reviewed the entire book.
Related published works: n/a	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Virginia history teacher • 16 years of teaching Virginia history to fourth graders in Hanover County Public Schools 	

Author(s)/Editor(s) and Content Review Expert Information

This attachment must be completed for each primary material submitted for review. Please insert additional copies for each primary material.

Primary Material (printed book or digital submission)

Please list name and edition of the textbook, or series submitted as a primary material.

Publisher: Five Ponds Press
Product Name: Our America to 1865
Author(s): Joy Masoff
Edition: 2nd ISBN: 978-1-935813-13-2

Author/Editor Information

Please complete the table below. Include each author and/or editor associated with the development of the primary material. Please insert copies of the table for additional authors/editors.

Author/Editor: Joy Masoff	Role of the author/editor in writing the textbook (include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Fine Arts, Pratt Institute • Art Director and writer for Reader’s Digest book and video division • Children’s Non-Fiction Author 	Ms. Masoff wrote the entire book.
Related published works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authored over 50 Video Companion Guides for Reader’s Digest on history and geography topics to accompany several series including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Walter Cronkite Remembers the 20th Century</i>: A 10-volume set that covered 70 years of American history (in conjunction with Walter Cronkite and Chip Cronkite) ○ <i>Ancient Mysteries</i>: A multi-volume series created in conjunction with A&E that explored the history behind The Pyramids, Machu Picchu, Chaco Canyon, and many more ○ <i>Our National Parks</i>: An in-depth closer explorations of America's national treasures ○ <i>World War II</i> • <i>Chronicle of America: Colonial Times-</i> Published by Scholastic 2002 National 	

<p>Council for Social Studies Notable Social Studies Trade Book for Young People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chronicle of America: American Revolution</i> Published by Scholastic <p>(Both <i>Chronicle</i> books were adopted as resource material for use in the New York City Public School system in 2009.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mali: Land of Gold & Glory</i> nominated for Africa Access' Children's Africana Book Award • <i>We Are All Americans: Understanding Diversity</i>--reviewed by <i>School Library Journal</i> "Gloriously supported by photographs, diagrams, and maps, this five-chapter overview offers information about America's immigrants." • <i>African American Story</i>- nominated for the Virginia Library Association Jefferson Cup Award and reviewed by American Library Association <i>Booklist</i> "A solid choice for browsing, research, and class discussions." 	
<p>Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2002 National Council for the Social Studies Guest Speaker on bringing the excitement of life in Colonial Times to the classroom 	
<p>Did the author/editor review the final copy of his/her work before publication?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <u>yes</u></p>	

Content Review Expert Information

Please include each content review expert associated with the quality assurance process for accuracy and editing for the primary material listed. At least three content review experts must be included with at least 1) two experts with a graduate degree in the content area being reviewed; and 2) at least one teacher with recent experience teaching the content in the appropriate grade level or course. Please insert copies of the table for additional content review experts.

Reviewer: Dr. Peter Wallenstein	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in U.S. History from Johns Hopkins University • Bachelor of Arts from Columbia University • Professor of History at Sarah Lawrence College, University of Toronto, University of Maryland at military base locations in Japan, Korea, and Guam • Professor of History at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University since 1983 	Dr. Wallenstein reviewed the entire book.
Related published works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cradle of America: Four Centuries of Virginia History</i> • <i>Higher Education and the Civil Rights Movement: White Supremacy, Black Southerners, and College Campuses</i> • <i>Virginia's Civil War</i> • <i>Blue Laws and Black Codes: Conflict, Courts, and Change in Twentieth-Century Virginia</i> • <i>From Slave South to New South: Public Policy in Nineteenth-Century Georgia</i> 	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 41 years teaching history at the college level • Specialization in U.S. South, Virginia, Civil War era, and civil rights 	

Reviewer: Dr. Kevin Hardwick	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts from Swarthmore College • Master’s Degree and Ph.D. in History from University of Maryland at College Park • Associate Professor of History at James Madison University 	Dr. Kevin Hardwick reviewed the entire book.
Related published works: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Classics of American Political and Constitutional Thought, Vols. I and II (co-author)</i> • <i>Virginia Reconsidered: New Histories of the Old Dominion (co-author)</i> • <i>Patrick Henry: Economic, Domestic and Political Life in Eighteenth-Century Virginia</i> 	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 years teaching Virginia history at the college level • Specialization in Colonial British America, Virginia, the Constitution, and U.S. History 	

Reviewer: Donna Smith	Role the reviewer had in the review process (entire book or include references to specific sections, chapters, pages, etc.)
Education and professional background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Youngstown State University • Masters of Early Childhood Education from Kent state University • 10 years of teaching middle school history 	Donna Smith reviewed the entire book.
Related published works: n/a	
Professional qualifications and specific areas of expertise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current teacher of United States History to 1865 • 16 years teaching experience • 8 years of teaching United States History to 1865 (formerly to 1877) to students in Hanover County Public Schools 	

**Public Comments on 2011 Editions of Textbooks by Five Ponds Press
Our Virginia: Past and Present and *Our America to 1865*
September 22, 2011**

Theobald Mary Miley [mmtheobald@comcast.net]
Thursday, August 04, 2011 11:28 AM
Thurston, Beverly (DOE)
Five Ponds comments

Hello Beverly.

I tried six times to send this email to the address in the newspaper, vaustextbooks@doe.virginia.gov, and the message always came back undeliverable. So I figured I'd try you.

I am the historian who reviewed the Five Ponds fifth grade book OUR AMERICA TO 1865 last year. I submitted a thorough report at the time. So I was interested to see whether the corrections had been made.

I examined the revised version at J. Sargeant Reynolds campus on August 2. A complete read of the entire book would take several days, and I did not do that, but I did check every one of the pages where I had found problems. I was pleased to find that almost all had been corrected.

The ones that had not been corrected are as follows:

Page 58. Originally claimed that Queen Elizabeth sent three ships to found Jamestown in 1607. Queen Elizabeth died in 1603. The passage was corrected to say that King James sent men and ships. He was king then, but as we all know, the settlement was founded by a private joint-stock company named the Virginia Company, so King James did not send any men or ships. If the authors think such concepts are too much for 5th graders, they might say something like "Three ships from England came to Virginia," or something to that extent.

Page 48: Grammar issue: "Each country believed that their culture was superior" should read "Each country believed that its culture was superior."

Page 82. Map issue: The map still shows Fort Necessity in the wrong state. At least they spelled it right this time. The original book had it in Ohio. This one has it in West Virginia. It's in Pennsylvania.

I hope you can get the publishers to fix these issues.

Mary Miley Theobald

Freelance Writer & Editor

5 Countryside Court
Richmond, VA 23229
(804) 288-2770

From: Maureen Marroni [mmarroni1@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, August 06, 2011 11:31 AM
To: DOE - VAUS Textbooks
Subject: Comments on revised textbooks
Attachments: Response to revised textbook.doc

Thank you for the notice “INACCURATE VA. TEXTBOOKS REVISED, ON DISPLAY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT” in the 8/2/11 edition of the Virginian Pilot.

After going over the draft of Our Virginia Past and Present at ODU I wanted to point out the following misleading comments, which could simply be omitted without harm to the text. Let me tell you that my point of view was on behalf of the 5th grade and 4th grade students I have worked with as counselor for the last 20 years in Norfolk.

On page 111 “No one knew that those fluffy white tufts would help push us toward a terrible war”, may sound like an innocent comment by the author, but it leaves a reader with a feeling of frivolity in contrast to such a terrible human conflict. Why not just omit this comment and leave what is factual speak for itself?

Page 111 “Others found small ways to fight back and hold on to their dignity”, in the state of being treated like a non-human and being burdened and deprived of adult choices, the word “small” just doesn’t give credit to the efforts made by enslaved humans to resist and in some way hold on to self-esteem. How about the word devious, or inconspicuous, or hidden ways to fight back?

Page 112 “Life was grim for many slaves”, another understatement. How about the words tragic, hopeless and depressing? Perhaps the author read Uncle Tom’s Cabin and is trying to make the situation of slavery not seem so horrible.

Page 113 “To stem the tide, many Virginia slave owners called for a federal Fugitive Slave Act 1850” Tell what it said! Children, both white and black need to know that the government at that time legislated that Negro Americans were not humans and were property and therefore had to be returned to their owners. These deeds of our past are the reason we still have lingering unconscious racism today. To help rid our minds of these false attitudes, we have to tell the truth about what the planters as well as the politicians were saying about Africans. Once we realize how these seeds have been sown in our attitudes over the years, motivated by economic gain and misguided science, we will have the clear vision to see what is true and what we have done.

Page 113 “More than any other person, she (Harriet Tubman) symbolized the Underground Railroad and Southern slaves’ desperate wish for freedom”, some how “symbolized” just doesn’t give the students a message of how she braved swamps, weather, insects, illness and fear to help hide and release captives. How about “lived out”?

Page 114 When telling about Dred Scott, let the students know that the reason he was sent back to his owner was because he was considered property and not a man.

Page 123 When discussing at the end of paragraph three the African men’s participation in the war, it would lead the reader to believe that they were treated equally, but the pay was less for African’s than for white solders. Shouldn’t this be included?

Page 130 The Black Codes are named, but not explained. Why not let the students know? Wikipedia gives this short detail. “The Black Codes granted African Americans certain rights, such as legalized marriage, ownership of property, and limited access to the courts. But the Black Codes denied them the rights to testify against whites, to serve on juries or in state militias, or to vote, and express legal concern publicly. And, in response to planters’ demands that the freed people be required to work on the plantations, the Black Codes declared that those who failed to sign yearly labor contracts could be arrested and hired out to white land owners. Some states limited the occupations open to African Americans and barred them from acquiring land and others provided that judges could assign African American children to work for their former owners without the consent of their parents. ^[5]These are detailed elements of the black codes of [Mississippi](#) and [South Carolina](#).^[6]”

Page 131 In left column in brown coloring, tell how after Sherman ordered that coastal land be divided up into 40 acre lots and given to freedmen to farm it was shortly after taken away and the families were put off the land and it was sold to former white planters.

In the picture at the bottom of the page, of a mother and children on a farm, in the red rectangle it says, “At last! A home of their own”. Why not omit this, since the land was shortly taken away?

Page 132 “White people could not go to public places with black friends.” This statement is true, but misleading given the tempo of the time. It is written as if the law was restricting white people’s rights and not African American rights. Omitting it would not hurt the text and I believe, help it’s credibility.

Page 133 Would it be too inflammatory to use the words “white supremacy” in paragraph 2 about the Racial Integrity Act? By using the word, the students would learn the origin of that concept and better be able to choose to go with it or against it in their own life dealings today.

Page 134 “As sad memories of the Civil War began to fade” should be omitted. White folks may be glad to forget the Civil War and get on with progress, but African American families are still to this day struggling with the after shocks of having been forcibly brought to this country, enslaved, segregated and still treated (unconsciously if it be) like 2nd class citizens.

Page 149 “This time permanently” is a hope of the author, but it is stated to the students as a reality and we know better. The phrase can be found at the bottom in the left column.

Again, I thank you for your attention and the opportunity to point out to you some misleading phrases and omissions that I see as important in delivering a truthful history to our students, both black and white.

Sincerely,

Maureen N. Marroni, BA in education, MA in religious education, MS in counseling

Retired after 20years as counselor in downtown Norfolk, Jacox Elementary School

Presently working with racism/white privilege module with group discussions and volunteering with Empower Hampton Roads, St. Paul’s Quadrant taskforce.



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
HOUSE OF DELEGATES
RICHMOND

KENNETH COOPER ALEXANDER
7246 GRANBY STREET
NORFOLK, VIRGINIA 23505
EIGHTY-NINTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:
PRIVILEGES AND ELECTIONS
EDUCATION
COMMERCE AND LABOR
RULES

August 10, 2011

Dr. Patricia I. Wright, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Virginia Department of Education
Post Office Box 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Dr. Beverly Thurston, Office of Standards
Virginia Department of Education
Post Office Box 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218

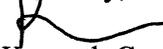
Dear Dr. Wright and Dr. Thurston:

I write regarding the first review of history and social science textbooks published by Five Ponds Press. As you know, last year a panel of historians appointed by the Department of Education found very significant errors in "Our Virginia: Past and Present" and "Our America to 1865" both of which were published by Five Ponds Press. One of these textbooks included the false assertion that thousands of African Americans soldiers fought for the South during the Civil War. With our history in Virginia, it is unfortunate that this myth would be perpetuated in our public schools. It is critically important that young people learn history and this history needs to be accurate.

It was of great concern that the textbook's author, Joy Masoff, is not a trained historian and told the media that she substantiated her assertions about African Americans confederate soldiers primarily by doing an Internet search, which led her to the work of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. I was very pleased that the new Virginia textbook review process requires publishers to list credentials such as educational and professional qualifications in areas of expertise. The Virginia Department of Education has required that at least two reviewers for textbooks have a graduate degree in the content area they review. It seems to me even more important that the author of a textbook being used in Virginia also have a graduate degree in the content area about which they are writing. I am very concerned to learn that the author of both "Our Virginia: Past and Present" and "Our America to 1865", Joy Masoff, only has a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and does not have the credentials required of the reviewers of textbooks. It would be my view that the author of these history textbooks should have at least a graduate degree in history. This is particularly a concern because the same author wrote the inaccurate textbooks.

It would be my strong recommendation that these textbooks not be approved.

Sincerely,


Kenneth Cooper Alexander
Member, House of Delegates



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Patricia I. Wright, Ed D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
P.O. BOX 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

Office: (804) 225-2023
Fax: (804) 371-2099

August 19, 2011

The Honorable Kenneth Cooper Alexander
Member, Virginia House of Delegates
7246 Granby Street
Norfolk, Virginia 23505

Dear Delegate Alexander:

Thank you for your comments regarding two history and social science textbooks published by Five Ponds Press, *Our Virginia: Past and Present* and *Our America to 1865*. On July 28, 2011, the Board of Education accepted the second edition of these two textbooks for first review, and opened a public comment period prior to final approval of the textbooks for inclusion on the Board's list of approved textbooks. You noted that there have been concerns about these textbooks, and recommended that the Board of Education withhold approval.

In fact, on March 24, 2011, the Board of Education removed the first edition of these two textbooks from its list of approved textbooks. At the same meeting, it approved a revised textbook review and approval process. The new process places primary responsibility on publishers to ensure the accuracy of their textbooks. Publishers must certify that textbooks submitted for approval have been thoroughly examined and reviewed by qualified content experts for factual accuracy and must list all authors/editors and their credentials. Publishers must list the professional credentials for at least three content review experts who have thoroughly examined each textbook for content accuracy. Also, the publisher must certify that each textbook has been thoroughly examined and reviewed by qualified editors for typographical errors and errors in grammar, written expression, spelling, formatting, and other substantive elements that may affect student learning. The publishers must also sign an agreement that if factual or editing errors are identified in a publisher's textbook, the publisher must submit a corrective action plan to the Department of Education for review and approval by the Board of Education. All corrective action plans must be approved by the Board of Education, or the Board may delegate the approval of action plans to the superintendent of public instruction. Publishers must execute corrective action plans at their own expense.

When the first editions of *Our Virginia: Past and Present* and *Our America to 1865* were removed from the approved list, Virginia school divisions that were using these two textbooks were at a disadvantage because the textbooks contained errors and they were no longer approved by the Board. Five Ponds Press indicated a willingness to provide free corrected replacement textbooks to school divisions that had purchased the first edition. Thus, the Board of Education directed that, in the event that Five Ponds Press sought an expedited review of the second edition of the two textbooks, the superintendent of public

The Honorable Kenneth Cooper Alexander
August 19, 2011
Page Two

instruction was to a) receive and review the request from Five Ponds Press in accordance with the terms of the Board's newly-adopted textbook review process, and b) bring to the Board a recommendation regarding the approval of the replacement edition.

On June 24, 2011, Five Ponds Press formally submitted for review a new second edition of its textbooks, *Our Virginia: Past and Present* and *Our America to 1865*. The Department of Education began the process to review these textbooks as prescribed in the revised textbook process approved on March 24, 2011. The process requires that at least three content review experts review a textbook submitted for review, with at least two experts with a graduate degree in the content area being reviewed, and at least one teacher with recent experience teaching the content in the appropriate grade level or course.

The publisher's documentation for the new textbooks indicates that the second edition of the textbooks was reviewed by individuals with the proper credentials. The forms submitted by the publisher are available online at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/meetings/2011/07_jul/agenda_items/item_1.pdf. They indicate that while the author, Joy Masoff, does not have a degree in history, the books have been reviewed by two content experts: Peter Wallenstein, who holds a Ph.D. in U.S. History from Johns Hopkins University; and Kevin Hardwick, who holds a Master's Degree and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Maryland at College Park; and a classroom teacher, Raymi Catron.

Upon receipt of the second edition textbooks, the Department of Education convened a committee to review them. In accord with the Board of Education's revised review process, the review committee consisted of a teacher, a division-level content specialist, and a subject-matter expert. The committee members' review, along with the certification provided by the publisher, provided evidence that the content of the textbooks was aligned with Virginia's Standards of Learning and that errors in the previous edition of the textbooks had been addressed.

The public comment period for the second edition of *Our Virginia: Past and Present* and *Our America to 1865* continues through August 31, 2011. At that time, Department of Education staff will review the comments and make a further recommendation regarding approval to the Board of Education.

The Department will include your letter among the public comments it received. If you have questions about the process used to review the two textbooks, please contact Dr. Beverly Thurston, history and social science coordinator, at (804) 225-2893 or Beverly.Thurston@doe.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,



Patricia I. Wright, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

PIW/LMW

C: Dr. Beverly Thurston
Dr. Linda Wallinger

From: Zachary Schrag [zschrag@gmu.edu]
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2011 10:47 AM
To: DOE - VAUS Textbooks
Subject: Comments on Our Virginia: Past and Present and Our America to 1865

Dear Dr. Thurston,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft of the 2011 editions of Our Virginia: Past and Present and Our America to 1865 by Five Ponds Press.

I would like to draw your attention to the following errata.

Sincerely,

Zachary M. Schrag
Associate Professor | Department of History and Art History | George Mason
University zschrag@gmu.edu | zacharyschrag.com | 703 594 1844

Messages sent to and from this address may be subject to disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

Errata in Five Ponds Press drafts texts, 2011

OUR AMERICA TO 1865.

29. Epigraph: "Honor the sacred. Honor the Earth, our Mother. Honor the Elders. Honor all with whom we share the Earth:- Four-leggeds, two-leggeds, winged ones, Swimmers, crawlers, plant and rock people. Walk in balance and beauty. -Native American Elder" Who is this elder? When was this said? The text should avoid quotations of unknown provenance.

32. "Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, ... We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children --An American Indian Proverb" Another doubtful attribution. In any case, its lack of specificity undercuts the claim on the same page that "America's first people were and still are very diverse groups."

49. Map of Europe in 15th century shows 21st century borders. It should be replaced with a map of Europe in a particular year. The "early exploration routes" arrow is confusing, since it ignores northern routes, mentioned on p. 51

55. Seems to imply that French and English settlers brought diseases but that Spanish settlers did not. (The next page makes clear that the Spanish brought disease as well.)

55, 68. Implies that Europeans learned to use fish as fertilizer from Indians. This is doubtful; see Lynn Ceci, "Squanto and the Pilgrims." Society 27, no. 4

(May 1990): 40-44.

58. John Cabot sailed in ships, not boats.

66. Map of 17th century English colonies shows 19th century boundaries. (No border between Virginia and West Virginia)

68. Map has "New Netherlands" for "New Netherland"

71. "New Netherlands" for "New Netherland"

72. Map of early southern colonies shows 21st century borders

82. 18c map with 21c borders.

82. Hats were made from beaver fur, not beaver skin

95. Franklin is misquoted. Correct quotation: "They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety." [Benjamin Franklin, William Temple Franklin, William Duane, Memoirs of Benjamin Franklin, Volume 1, 127]

95. Jefferson quotation is spurious.

<http://www.monticello.org/site/jefferson/when-governments-fear-people-there-libertyquotation>

102. Painting shows Washington kneeling in prayer at Valley Forge. Edward G. Lengel, George Washington: America's Founder, in Myth and Memory, 83-89, shows that there is no credible evidence for this event.

103. Britian for Britain

108. Abrupt shift to first person: "We were still trying to shake ourselves free from a powerful king." Who are we?

118. War of 1812: "Americans fought bravely—from the Great Lakes to New Orleans—struggling against the more powerful British forces." I'm not sure of the basis of this claim; Americans often fled battle even when they outnumbered the British. See Alan Taylor, The Civil War of 1812.

121. Question 4. "How did all the states participate in the writing of the Constitution?" Rhode Island did not participate.

121. Question 8. Asks about "two Virginia documents" that influenced the Bill of Rights. I'm not sure of the reference here. Does the book consider the Declaration of Independence a "Virginia document"? Or is this a reference to the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, not mentioned in the text?

126. Picture is captioned "The Port of New Orleans in 1803," but it is clearly

from mid-19th century.

127. Language distinguishes between "Indians" and "Americans." Does the text wish to suggest that the Indians were not Americans?

130. What Indian nations are supposed to be represented in this picture?

130. Map shows "Canada" 1819-1848. "British North America" is a better term; until 1867 "Canada" referred mainly to today's Ontario and Quebec

132. Irish immigration began well before the famine.

133. I'm not sure why the "beautiful and charming female" of Gast's painting is identified as "Destiny." Given the title of "American Progress," most scholars have identified her as America or Progress.

134. Presents a heroic account of Whitney's cotton gin, discredited by Angela Lakwete, *Inventing the Cotton Gin: Machine and Myth in Antebellum America* (2003)

138. Antebellum suffrage movement is illustrated with 1912 photograph.

144. I don't understand the picking-at-scab metaphor. What is the wound? What is the scab? Is the text suggesting that slavery was a wound that would have healed had it been left alone?

144. Doubtful contrast between New York City and southern plantations. Pennsylvania and Virginia weren't that different. See Edward L. Ayers, Anne S. Rubin, *The Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War*.

140, 146. Maps of slavery show West Virginia and Virginia as separate states.

161. Placing "Goddard Space Center" (headquartered in Maryland) in Virginia is a bit confusing. "Wallops Flight Facility" would be better.

162. "All photos and illustrations listed below are copyrighted by the respective providers." This is clearly false; e.g., the list includes 19th century works held by the Library of Congress.

162. "United States Navel Academy"

R9. President must be a natural born citizen, not "born in the U.S." The Naturalization Act of 1790 established that ""The children of citizens of the United States that may be born beyond sea, or outside the limits of the United States, shall be considered as natural-born citizens of the United States."
<http://rs6.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=001/llsl001.db&recNum=227>

R27. Map lacks South Sudan

OUR VIRGINIA

95. Says "everyone" would count in apportionment, except slaves. Indians not taxed didn't count at all.

98. "The summer of 1787 was very hot." Not really. See David O. Stewart, *The Summer of 1787: The Men Who Invented the Constitution*, 82.

99. Says of War of 1812, "in the end, America was victorious once more." The Treaty of Ghent did not achieve American war aims, so calling America "victorious" may be misleading.

105. Depicts Virginia/West Virginia border for antebellum period.

123. Depicts a 20th-century Medal of Honor for a Civil War recipient.

142. Claims Richmond was the first US city with electric streetcars. Daft's system in Baltimore preceded it. See Robert C. Post, *Urban Mass Transit: The Life Story of a Technology* (Johns Hopkins University Press), 39-41.

161. Placing "Goddard Space Center" (headquartered in Maryland) in Virginia is a bit confusing. "Wallops Flight Facility" would be better.

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<http://rs6.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llsl&fileName=001/llsl001.db&recNum=227>

R27. Map lacks South Sudan

From: Sheriff, Carol [cxsher@wm.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, August 17, 2011 10:24 AM
To: DOE - VAUS Textbooks
Cc: Thurston, Beverly (DOE)
Subject: Comments on *Our Virginia: Past and Present*
Attachments: Comments on Our Virginia--Carol Sheriff--August 17, 2011.pdf

Dear Dr. Thurston,

Please find attached my comments on the Civil War chapter of *Our Virginia: Past and Present* (second edition). Thank you for offering this opportunity for public review and comment.

Sincerely,

Carol Sheriff

--

Carol Sheriff
Class of 2013 Professor of History
Lyon G. Tyler Department of History
The College of William and Mary
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Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795

The College Of

WILLIAM & MARY

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August 16, 2011

Dr. Beverly Thurston
Coordinator for Textbook Adoption
Office of Standards, Curriculum, and Instruction
Virginia Department of Education
P. O. Box 2120
Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

Dear Dr. Thurston:

I am writing in response to the Department of Education's call for public comments on the revised version of *Our Virginia: Past and Present*. As an historian specializing in the Civil War Era at the College of William and Mary, I have limited my review to Chapter Seven, "The Civil War Era: One Nation or Two?"

Overall, I am pleased to see that this revised edition addresses many of the problems with the book's first edition. The author seems to have responded diligently to the expert reviews, and as a result, the book contains many fewer inaccuracies and distortions than in the first version. It seems as if the Board of Education's policy of requiring certification from three expert reviewers is in fact improving the quality of our children's textbooks.

That said, the revised version of the Civil War chapter still contains some problems that were in the first edition while it also introduces some new ones. Some of the new problems seem to result from the author's attempt to remedy omissions identified by experts; in those instances, she has added information without adequate historical explanation or conceptual clarity. These problems are unfortunate in that they will continue to impede our children's understanding of such a crucial event in our state's and nation's history.

Before outlining my specific criticisms, I would like to raise another, related issue: Nowhere have I seen any mention that experts have reviewed the supplementary material that Five Ponds is distributing along with the textbook. On January 11, 2011, I sent an email to you and Dr. Allan expressing my concern that there were significant problems with those materials. (I had outlined several problems with the Civil War material in a memo that I sent to the DOE, via an email attachment to Charles Pyle, on November 1, 2010.) These problems include: multiple-choice questions that include more than one correct answer; a Venn diagram that leaves inadequate opportunities for recognizing commonalities between the North and South; questions whose topics are inadequately covered in the text to allow for an informed response; and what I consider a very problematic essay question: "Do you think Nat Turner was a brave civil rights leader or a crazed killer?" I sincerely hope that before allowing Five Ponds to distribute its "Reproducibles and Assessments" for *Our Virginia: Past and Present*, the DOE will have it vetted by experts.

As for the second edition of the main textbook itself, I will list my concerns in the order that they appear. Quotations in italics are from the textbook; un-italicized quotations represent my suggested wording changes.

p. 110: "*Black Northerners began working for abolition throughout the nation and spoke out with great passion for equality between both blacks and whites.*" I think the author may mean: "...for equal rights for blacks and whites."

p. 110: The author fails to mention that many people in New England and the Mid-Atlantic states were also antislavery. Probably more of them were antislavery than abolitionist in outlook, a crucial point that gets overlooked.

p. 110 and passim: I think that this book needs to make clearer (and earlier) the point that people remained legally enslaved in the Union (including in its capital) during the war. (There is only a passing reference to four slave states remaining in the Union; it appears on p. 115.)

p. 111: "*Planters did everything they could politically to make sure that their power and fortunes were protected.*" Will fourth graders understand what the author has in mind with this sentence, which receives no explanation?

p. 112, the box on Nat Turner. The author is correct to point out that Nat Turner's revolt revealed the ways in which white Virginians were divided over the future of slavery. But it is not clear how this information (or the information about the revolt itself) will help students to answer review question #2 on p. 127; that question asks students to explain how Nat Turner helped to lead to Virginia's secession. The information that students are given may help them to understand why West Virginia seceded from Virginia, but I do not see how it helps them to understand Virginia's secession from the Union.

p. 113 "*To stem the tide [of runaway slaves], many Virginia slave owners called for a federal Fugitive Slave Act in 1850. Some began to argue against states' rights after several Northern states passed Personal Liberty Laws to stop white Southerners' efforts to find and return runaways to their former owners.*" I have a few concerns here:

--It would be helpful to inform students that the Fugitive Slave Act did in fact become law.

--The book never explains what personal liberty laws were, which is a crucial oversight if it is going to mention the laws at all. (I'm not sure that it's necessary to do so in a fourth-grade book, especially in light of the fact that the author does not make clear why they were significant, per my next point.)

--While it is true that reactions to the Fugitive Slave Act help to illustrate that Northerners sometimes favored states' rights and that Southerners sometimes favored federalism,

Chartered 1693

it is hard to imagine what a fourth grader is to make of the simple assertion that some Virginia slave owners "began to argue against states' rights." Without further explanation, this statement risks very much confusing a child. (It suggests, among other things, that Virginia slave owners henceforth argued against states' rights, which is false. What it shows instead is their flexibility in choosing arguments to defend slavery.) The author could perhaps add a sentence that clarifies the

Chartered 1693

significance of this point: Concerns about the perpetuation of slavery, not simply states' rights as an abstract principle, drove secession.

p. 114: It is arguably nearly impossible, if not impossible, to understand the Civil War's onset without a consideration of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and its aftermath, but here the problem may lie with the SOL curriculum itself and/or a review process that seemingly emphasizes adherence to that curriculum above all else. Still, the book does contain other points not directly related to Virginia's history, so perhaps there's room for a brief mention of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and Bleeding Kansas.

p. 114: "*Angered by the Dred Scott decision, a brand-new political party promised that its candidates would not try to abolish slavery. They also vowed to stop slavery from expanding into any new western territories.*" I think it would be much clearer (and accurate) to reverse these two points and to say something like: "Angered by the Dred Scott decision, a brand-new political party vowed to stop slavery from expanding into any new western territories even as it promised that its candidates would not try to abolish slavery." In other words, the party's anger at Dred Scott led it to vow to stop slavery's western expansion; that same anger had little, if anything, to do with the party's position that it would not end slavery where it already existed. (A small technical point: The party was no longer brand-new by the time it reacted to Dred Scott. It had already run candidates in two national elections. The party arose in the aftermath of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and Bleeding Kansas, not Dred Scott, as the book implies. Without dealing with details, the problem could be rectified by saying "a recently formed political party" instead of a "brand-new political party.")

p. 115, "Virginia Breaks Apart" I think the book needs to indicate which of the two regions felt which way about the divisive issues of voting rights and taxes, if it's going to raise these issues at all. I wonder, too, if children will have any notion of what was involved in "voting rights" in this instance.

p. 116—minor wording issue—"*Americans from all over came to fight in Virginia....*" I think it would be clearer if the author said specifically that not all of the people listed were fighting on the same side. I think a child could get the impression that all of those people were fighting on the Confederacy's side, especially because the subsequent point about soldiers' allegiances is under a separate subheading.

p. 116—another wording issue (I think)—"*Northerners wondered if the United States could survive, while most white Southerners hoped it would not.*" I do not know if this statement is historically true as written, but I also don't think it's what the author meant to say. The sentence implies that most white Southerners wanted the Union to cease to exist as a nation; what the

author may mean instead is that they no longer wanted to be part of that nation. Those are two very different points.

p. 116 and passim: It might be worth stating outright somewhere that there were white Virginians who remained loyal to the Union throughout the conflict. The term “Unionist” might be worth introducing.

p. 117: “Three Major Virginia Battle Sites”: Is there any way to discuss these three battles in chronological order while still indicating their geographical locations? The war’s chronology is at least as significant as its geography, and this visual aid—as currently set up—suggests that the Battle of Fredericksburg preceded the Battle of Hampton Roads. If nothing else, the three battles could be numbered, and Fredericksburg’s box could be off the right, so a child would see in the left column Bull Run and Hampton Roads, and then in the right column the third battle, Fredericksburg.

p. 118: Referring to the war by two different names in back-to-back sentences may confuse children, especially b/c the book’s discussion of the war’s different names does not appear until several pages later. Perhaps a little box inset—along the lines of the informative one about why some battles have different names—would help clarify things.

p.121—caption re women and children coming along to the front. I would specify that these were officers’ wives and children. It would be giving children the wrong impression to suggest that enlisted men brought their wives and children. (If it ever happened, it was extremely rare.) Because this picture and its caption risk misleading children, it might be better simply to omit them. Maybe the publisher could substitute a photo of women working in a Confederate hospital.

p. 123: Box on Emancipation Proclamation. Perhaps explain the meaning of this phrase: slavery was “*abolished in any area still in rebellion against the United States.*” The author is correct (and has improved upon the incorrect statement in the first edition), but my fourth-grade daughter referred to this passage as “legal language” whose practical meaning was obscure to her. Perhaps something like “any parts of the Confederacy that had not yet come back under the control of Union armies.” I also think it would be worth noting explicitly that the Emancipation Proclamation did not apply to slaves living within the Union itself.

p. 123: In reference to black soldiers: “*They all quickly earned a much-deserved reputation for bravery and valor.*” This point overlooks the very important facts that 1) black soldiers were often denied the opportunity to fight in battle and 2) many white Northerners detested the idea of blacks fighting in the army to the point where some of them deserted or turned against the war effort entirely. I would omit this sentence, both for these reasons and because it is a gross generalization that falls into a heroes-and-villains approach to history that belies the much more complex nature of the past.

p. 125—“*The awful war with its many names....*” I’d include “Civil War” among the names listed.

p. 127, question #1: Several of those items—e.g., large warehouses, taverns, clothing stores, farms, furniture shops, slave labor—belong in *both* “Life in the North” and “Life in the South.” If the

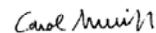
author fails to give children the opportunity to recognize that the delineations between the two regions were not so clear-cut, she is going to fundamentally mislead them about the nature of antebellum society and the war's causes. It is particularly troubling that this question will lead children to think that slave labor did not exist in the Union, when it remained legal in four of the Union's states and in the nation's capital.

p. 127, question #3: I think it is very difficult for a fourth grader, especially based on the information provided to him or her in this book, to understand how Nat Turner contributed to secession. The link to Harriet Tubman is also not entirely clear, especially—but not only—because to my knowledge Tubman had no link to Virginia prior to the Virginia's decision to secede. It is much clearer what role John Brown and Abraham Lincoln played, though I do find it curious that not one white Virginian—not one person who could actually vote for secession—is included in the list.

Passim: There are a few small grammatical and punctuation issues throughout, but I assume a copy editor will vet for those sorts of issues— e.g., “they” to refer to a singular subject (e.g., the “Union” or a “party”), commas where they do not belong, commas missing where they do belong, etc.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to comment and for the Department of Education's commitment to putting accurate course material into our teachers' and students' hands.

Sincerely,



Carol Sheriff
Class of 2013 Professor of History

From: Inmnhughes@comcast.net
Sent: Thursday, August 18, 2011 12:35 PM
To: Thurston, Beverly (DOE)
Subject: Public input to textbook selection needed

Dr. Beverly M. Thurston:

Subject: Virginia's textbook selection process

Aug 1, 2011

This article contains my public comments concerning textbook selection in Virginia. When the public is invited to review textbooks, we need to be given enough time to review the textbooks. Is there time flexibility for the public to review the textbooks? May the public check out a textbook to take home and review?

Shouldn't members of the public be notified of the flexibility allowed in reviewing the textbooks? I looked for the textbooks on amazon.com because I didn't have enough time to review twenty to thirty textbooks in a week's time during school hours – I couldn't locate the textbooks online to purchase them.

Some of my critiques concerning lies in the textbooks follow. Patrick Henry didn't say famous quote. A Caucasian lawyer (actor) dresses up as Henry. This actor pompously utters a monologue written by William Wirt and St. George Tucker. Reference Raphael, Ray, *Founding Myths*, pages 145 – 156.

Virginia textbooks and in school, library books mention Betsy Ross. Virginia's "Standards of Learning" mention Betsy Ross. Betsy Ross didn't do anything. She played 'no role whatsoever in the creation of any actual first flag.' Reference: Loewen, James W., *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, pages 31-32.

In year 2007, I perused a United States', history book used in a middle school. Presently, I am ashamed because of the United States' history book used for sixth graders in Hopewell, Virginia at Carter G. Woodson Middle School. The book plays up the accomplishments of white presidents without mentioning that they were slave owners. The text doesn't say that slave labor made George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and others rich. The text says Henry Clay owned slaves. Why are other slave owners not mentioned?

Other slave owners were "...Madison, Monroe, Jackson, Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, Tyler, Polk, Buchanan, and Andrew Johnson...; Grant had one slave ...and his wife four." Reference: *Negro President* (Jefferson and the Slave Power) by Garry Wills, page 236.

Most history books still suppress the injustices of white history. This same suppressed history, I had in the fourth grade sixty-three years ago.

Sincerely,

Leonard Hughes

From: Anne Evans [Anne.Evans@ccs.k12.va.us]
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2011 10:49 PM
To: DOE - VAUS Textbooks
Cc: Thurston, Beverly (DOE); Laura@fivepondspress.com;
Lou@fivepondspress.com
Subject: Five Ponds Press

To whom it may concern:

I reviewed both Five Ponds Press books on August 25th at JMU. I still found a few errors which were not corrected from the earlier version. I would expect these to be taken care of prior to our division receiving the replacement textbooks we are due.

Thank you, Annie Evans

5 Ponds Press textbook review ----Questions and corrections still not made in 2nd edition

by Annie Evans, Charlottesville City Schools Coordinator of Social Studies

Our Virginia

p 138

Why did they delete “Pres. Grant elected” from timeline ? Seems odd to just leave it out....

Our America

p. 34

Caption on bottom left corner of green box still incorrect – should read “Waterproof pullovers like the one to the right, ...

p. 73

Still need to correct “well-to-do”Says “well- to-to!!”

Anne M. Evans (Annie)
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Anne.Evans@ccs.k12.va.us

From: Steve Corneliussen [Corneliussen@Verizon.net]
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2011 9:39 PM
To: DOE - VAUS Textbooks
Cc: Robert F Engs; rfengs@wm.edu; eayers@richmond.edu; llee@vahistorical.org; Cwidell@fmauthority.com; Daryl Lease; Kate.Wiltrout@pilotonline.com; MGooding@wvec.com; Kilpatrick, Kathleen (DHR); Dennis R Lee; KCalos@timesdispatch.com; Cathy Lewis; MWard@hampton.gov; Suit, Terrie (GOV); David Macaulay; Charles (Webb) Stanton; council@hampton.gov; Donald.Luzzatto@pilotonline.com; agoodheart2@washcoll.edu; ekostelny@preservationvirginia.org; wrawls@moc.org; DSquires@dailypress.com; Roger Chesley; jfredericks@dailypress.com; bb9s@virginia.edu; tony@wnis.com; dude@virginia.edu; Barbara Lee; Amy Broad; jvquarstein@aol.com; lmalon@apva.org; Denis.Finley@pilotonline.com; merickson@dailypress.com; Thurston, Beverly (DOE); corneliussen@jlab.org
Subject: Va. text revision: America's "greatest moment"

Response to the Virginia Department of Education’s call for comments

(http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2011/206-11.shtml)

Thanks for soliciting comments about those elementary school history texts that famously contained errors about black participation on the Confederate side in the Civil War. In my view, schoolkids need to appreciate the 1861 Fort Monroe Freedom Story. Here's my comment about that:

- - - -

A June profile

(<http://chronicle.com/article/U-of-Richmond-Chief-Stirs/127879/>) in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* quoted the view of the Civil War historian Edward L. Ayers, president of the University of Richmond, that the 1861 Freedom Story at Fort Monroe, Virginia -- often called the “contraband” story, though that phrase objectifies humans -- was “the greatest moment in American history.” Yet I’m told by two elementary school teachers who inspected the texts on public display that the books fail to mention those events -- events that contributed mightily to the crumbling of slavery, and therefore to the meaning of the Civil War, and therefore to the completion of America’s founding as a nation that would actually try to live up to its original Declaration.

I hope in particular that you’ll consult Professor Robert F. Engs about this. He’s formerly of Penn, but now at William and Mary with the Lemon Project, an effort to improve understanding of the slavery era.

And I hope you’ll take into account something that President Ayers said last year at WashingtonPost.com (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp->

dyn/content/discussion/2010/10/29/DI2010102904641.html): “We will need to broaden our understanding of the [Civil War] to include the determination of black people to become free from the first moments of the conflict.”

In my view, that’s important because so many people -- even historians who should know better -- still believe that the main hero of the Fort Monroe Freedom Story is the white general rather than the three men who actually challenged him, and therefore America, finally to begin at least trying to live up to our founding ideals.

Last spring at Fort Monroe a celebration was held, mistakenly, on May 24, the date of the general’s constructive, clever, but ultimately *reactive* decision to use the filthy laws of slavery -- all he had to work with -- as pretext for affirming the sanctuary request of the self-emancipators Sheppard Mallory, Frank Baker and James Townsend.

If President Ayers is right about our national need for constructive, healthy revisionism, then those are three names that should be known to future schoolchildren. On May 23, 1861, with no politician whispering “emancipation” in their ears, those Americans stood up, took a big risk and, in effect, challenged America to become America. They made the original, *active* decision in this story. That’s why May 23 is the date that history books should mark.

Virginia’s political leaders are now planning, grimly, to mar the site of those 1861 events with what a Richmond *Times-Dispatch* editorial called “swanky condos.”

But that bad judgment can’t stop Virginia’s educational leaders from improving our kids’ texts by mentioning the moment when America finally began to decide at least to try to become America.

Thanks very much.

Steven T. Corneliussen
Poquoson, Virginia
Cell 757 813-6739

Virginia Board of Education
Proposed History and Social Science Textbooks Recommended for Approval
 September 22, 2011

Course	Publisher	Title	Copyright	Satisfactory Completion of Publisher's Certifications and Agreements	
				Yes	No
Virginia Studies					
	Five Ponds Press	Our Virginia Past and Present 2 nd Edition	2011	✓	
United States History to 1865					
	Five Ponds Press	Our America to 1865 2 nd Edition	2011	✓	