GOODMAN RESEARCH GROUP, INC.
Program Evaluation • Consultation • Market Research

Bridging World History
Formative Evaluation

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SUBMITTED TO
Oregon Public Broadcasting

July 2003

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Goodman Research Group, Inc. (GRG), of Cambridge, Massachusetts, a research firm that specializes in the evaluation of educational programs, materials, and services, was contracted by Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) to conduct formative evaluation of *Bridging World History*, a professional development series for secondary history teachers. Funded by Annenberg/CPB, *Bridging World History* (BWH) is intended to provide teachers with world history content from a global and thematic perspective through a 26-unit, two-semester course.

Each unit will contain a video, text, and web component. Videos are intended to provide an overview to engage users' interest in the unit. The text and web materials will extend the content in the videos with primary and secondary source materials, analysis activities, and interactive activities. The text will comprise complete reading materials and activities required to support a 4-credit distance-learning course.

FORMATIVE EVALUATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of GRG's formative evaluation was to obtain feedback from the target audience of this professional development series -- secondary history teachers -- that would support and guide producers as they make decisions about the series content. Formative evaluation activities were planned for two points during the production period:

I)   **Script review:** Upon completion of the 'rough draft' of the video scripts, teachers and teacher-leaders reviewed two scripts and provided feedback to inform the 'fine draft' of the scripts and subsequent production of the videos.

II) **Unit review:** In Spring 2004, participants will review the video and text materials for one unit and provide feedback that will inform the creation of the web materials and will help ensure that the three components for each unit complement one another clearly and adequately.

This report documents findings from the script review (I) completed in Summer 2003.

METHODS

To obtain data from a sample of the potential audience for the BWH series, GRG recruited 20 secondary history teachers from across the country. To recruit teachers for participation, a brief description of the research opportunity was sent via email either: (a) directly to teachers (some provided by BWH advisors) or (b) to administrative offices of schools from GRG's national database of teachers. All recipients were asked to circulate the description of the research opportunity to others.

Among those who agreed to participate, 12 were teachers and 8 were teacher leaders. Participants were considered a teacher leader if they:
- were a Content Specialist or Supervisor
- led professional development for other teachers
- had Master Teacher certification

For participation in this first part of the evaluation teachers were asked to:
- complete a **pre-survey**
- read the rough drafts of two video scripts (Unit 7: *Missionaries, Pilgrims, and Converts: Religions in Motion* and Unit 11: *Empires*) and comment directly on the script[1]
- complete a **script survey** after each script
- complete a final **post-survey**

Pre-surveys were designed to obtain the following background information from participants:
- teaching experience, including general, history, and world history
- approach to teaching history, including curricula typically used and teaching styles employed
- education, certification, training, and professional development in history and world history
- baseline knowledge of general and specific world history content

Script surveys for Religions and Empires were designed to obtain ratings of:
- elements of each script (e.g., flow of narrative, quality of evidence provided, etc.)
- the extent to which the script met some of the stated series goals
- the degree to which the information was *new* or *familiar* in terms of the particular content, its presentation, and whether and how much it overlapped with content they have taught in the classroom
- the perceived regional balance between the three case studies presented
- what they learned from the script in general and how well they understood the big concepts and integrative themes producers intended to convey through each script

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[1] Originally, participants were asked to review the script for Unit 4 as well. The script was not completed in time, however, so reviewers were asked to substitute the 3rd script review with the unit review (II) slated for Spring 2004.

Post-surveys were designed to obtain ratings, after reading both scripts, of:
- knowledge and interest in the general areas covered in the scripts (to assess any change after reading the scripts)
- whether scripts conveyed a tension or problem and whether they conveyed a sense of the impact of new research on the field
- their likelihood to participate in the BWH series, to recommend it to colleagues, and anticipated fit with state and national standards

See Appendix A for copies of each survey instrument.

In addition to the surveys, participants were encouraged to write comments directly on the script, in space provided, to indicate segments they found to be particularly: (a) *clear or confusing*, (b) *familiar or new*, (c) *interesting or needing more* to hold their attention.

RESULTS

In all, 20 secondary history teachers from across the country were recruited to participate in the script review. Completed surveys were returned by 17 participants. One teacher completed only the pre-survey and the Religions script-survey; those data are included in the findings where relevant. Two teachers did not return any surveys.

In this section we present:
- a profile of respondents, including details about participants' teaching experience and background and training in history and world history
- participants' current general knowledge about the script topics
- ratings and feedback about the *Religions in Motion* script
- ratings and feedback about the *Empires* script
- changes in participants' knowledge and interest about specific topics conveyed in the two scripts
- participants' reported likelihood to participate in the BWH series and likelihood to recommend it to colleagues when it is complete

Note: ***Evaluator recommendations based on the summary of participants' responses are offered at the end of specific sections where appropriate.***

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Evaluation participants represented 10 states including:

- California
- Florida
- Iowa
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- New Jersey
- New York
- Texas
- Wisconsin

Among the 18 participants who completed the pre-survey:
- 11 were teachers

- 7 were teacher leaders

- 8 taught 9th grade
- 13 taught 10th grade
- 8 taught 11th grade
- 8 taught 12th grade

Teaching Experience

On average, participants had been teaching 14 years and teaching history 13 years (range: 1 - 37 years).
- 16 taught at a public school
- 2 taught at a private school

Participants described their specific history-related teaching, including courses they currently teach or will teach next year, the history curricula they typically use, and their teaching style:

- Courses taught this year range from U.S. History, including U.S. Government and Holocaust studies, to World History, including AP and honors courses.

- Additional courses listed by one teacher each included:
  - AP Comparative Politics
  - Asian Civilizations
  - Economics
  - History of Europe
  - Middle East Diplomacy
  - New York History seminar
  - Philosophy
  - Pre AP Logic & Semantics
  - Western Civilization
  - World Religions

- Beyond the history courses listed above participants reported having taught geography, psychology, economics, and law in past years.

- Teachers described the topics they cover in the history courses they currently teach in terms of:
  - Time periods, movements, or revolutions including Renaissance; Ancient Civilizations; French Revolution; Industrial Revolution (n=6)
  - Thematic coverage including state systems; gender; political systems; world religions (n=6)
  - World history including pre-history to present; Scientific Revolution to present; the AP world history curriculum (n=4)
  - U.S. history including American Government; Holocaust history (n=1)

  A full list of history topics is provided in Appendix B.

- Regarding particular history curricula, most use textbooks, including Prentice Hall: *World History, Connections to Today*, and Stearns: *World Civilizations, the Global Experience*. Several use the *History Alive!* Curriculum units. Table 1 shows the number of participants who used various curriculum materials.

Table 1
History Curricula used for Teaching

	# of teachers (N=18)
Textbooks (Prentice Hall, Stearns, etc.)	16
History Alive!	6
Primary Sources	3
Variety of Resources	2
College Board AP materials/Regents Prep.	2
Fiction	2
Internet	2

* Total number exceeds N=18 because respondents described multiple curricula.

- As shown in Table 2, most teachers described an approach to teaching history that incorporates various teaching styles.

Table 2
Reported Teaching Styles

	# of teachers (N=18)
Combination of approaches	6
Student-based/interactive	4
Thematic	2
Lecture-based	2

- Only one participant described teaching world history with a "*chronological*" approach, indicating that this audience may be open to incorporating an approach that is more thematic than linear.

- Seven teachers provided their course syllabus (See Appendix F).

Participants indicated how likely they would be to incorporate a list of styles into their history teaching in the future, as well as whether or not they had previously used each.

- On a scale from 1 (*not at all likely*) to 5 (*extremely likely*), on average, most were very likely to incorporate each technique into their history teaching in the future. Most had already used all of the teaching styles listed. See Table 3.

Table 3
Experiences with and Likelihood of Incorporating Approaches to Teaching

How likely are you to: (N=18)	# who already have	Mean likelihood (Scale: 1-5)
Bring a global/thematic approach to your lessons?	17	5.00
Teach with history content that is new to you as well as to your students?	17	4.82
Bring an interdisciplinary approach to your lessons?	16	4.69
Use the web to download curriculum content?	15	4.40

- **Evaluator recommendation:** *Participants described readiness to employ a variety of approaches to teaching and slightly lower familiarity with using the Web to download curriculum content for students. These findings suggest the BWH professional development series would be a good fit and would be well received if developed and promoted as a way to build upon familiar teaching practices and introduce new content while demonstrating new dynamic and interactive styles of instruction.*

Education and Training

Participants identified, from a list provided, their specific history education and training background. As shown in Table 4, the majority had an undergraduate degree in history or a history certification. All participants reported some level of formal history training.

Table 4
History Education and Training Background

	# of respondents (N=18)
History degree: undergrad	12
History certification	10
History degree: grad	6
World History degree: undergrad	3
World History certification	3
World History degree: grad	1
No formal history training	0

* Total number exceeds N=18 because respondents indicated multiple choices.

- 7 had both an undergraduate history degree and history certification.
- 2 had both an undergraduate history degree and world history certification.

From a list of options, participants identified their personal combination of training and teaching experience around world history. Options ranged from "*Have not received training, never taught*" to "*Have received training, have taught.*"

- 17 had received training and had taught world history for an average of 8 years (range: 1-19 years) [2]
- 1 had received training and will start teaching world history next year

Professional Development

Participants indicated whether they had received or led professional development focused on history or world history.

- 14 had **received** professional development focused on history
- 17 had **received** professional development focused on world history
- 8 had **led** professional development focused on history
- 10 had **led** professional development focused on world history
- Everyone who has led professional development has also received professional development in that area

Participants had some difficulty quantifying number of hours of professional development received because some have taught for as many as 37 years and have been participating in professional development throughout that time. Responses included:
- "*Numerous, can't remember exactly*"
- "*Hundreds*" (includes a yearlong seminar in past year)
- "*Too many to count since 1978*"

Among those who provided number of hours of professional development received:
- History: Mean = 70 hours; range: 3 to 300 hours (n=11)
- World history: Mean = 64 hours; range: 3 to 175 hours (n=13)

Among those who provided the hours of professional development they have led:
- History: Average = 36; range: 1 to 150 hours (n=5)
- World history: Average = 15; range: 2 to 50 (n=6)

Table 5 presents types of professional development experiences participants have had. Most had participated in professional development intended to bring a global and interdisciplinary approach to lessons. Fewer had participated in professional development delivered through video or web-delivered materials and lessons.

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[2] At the time of the recruit, 6 teachers reported they do not teach world history. One of them did not return any data and the other five likely have taught world history in the past but reported they were not teaching it this year.

Table 5
Styles of Professional Development Received

Have you ever received professional development that:	% Yes (N=18)
Was designed to help bring a global/thematic approach to your lessons?	100%
Provided you with history content that was new to you as well as to your students?	89%
Was designed to help bring an interdisciplinary approach to your lessons?	89%
Was designed to encourage use of the Web to download curriculum content?	44%
Was delivered primarily through video materials/lessons?	35%
Was delivered primarily through web-delivered materials/lessons?	33%

- **Evaluator recommendation**: *The global, thematic approach incorporated in the BWH series may not be new to all potential users, but the delivery mechanism -- web and video along with print -- may be a new experience for secondary history teachers. This new mode of presentation should be highlighted as valuable and accessible when promoting the series and engaging users' interest.*

WORLD HISTORY BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

BWH series developers planned to produce videos based on some general assumptions about the knowledge base of their target audience. General concepts that they assumed participants would already know were not explicitly included in the videos. To gauge the accuracy of these assumptions, participants rated their current knowledge on several of these general concepts on a scale from 1 (*not at all knowledgeable*) to 5 (*extremely knowledgeable*).

▪ Table 6 shows that, on average, participants reported a great deal of knowledge about the origins of the three primary religions highlighted in the *Religions in Motion* script (Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism) and about the sacred text of Christianity. They reported less knowledge about the sacred texts of Buddhism.

Table 6
General Background Knowledge

Knowledge about…	(N=18)	Mean rating (Scale: 1-5)
The origins of Christianity		4.28
The sacred text of Christianity		4.06
The origins of Islam		4.00
The origins of Buddhism		3.72
Religions in China		3.67
The Roman Empire		3.67
Implications of agriculture*		3.67
Characteristics of early urban life*		3.50
Religions in India		3.39
The sacred text of Islam		3.33
Pre-Spanish conquest Americas		3.28
Archaeology as an historical source*		3.24
The impact of metallurgy on agricultural society*		3.00
Implications of pastoralism*		2.89
The sacred texts of Buddhism		2.67
Dating and identification techniques*		2.28

* Statements included because initially, participants were also going to read the script for Unit 4: Seasons of World History: Agriculture, Pastoralism, and Urban Life.

▪ **Evaluator recommendation:** *Participants reported knowledge of some of the assumptions made by series developers indicating that exclusion of some topics, such as the origins of various*

religions, would be acceptable for this series. Knowledge of several of the topics listed above, however, cannot be assumed to the point of exclusion from the series. Project developers should consider including in the text and web materials those topics for which participants reported less current knowledge.

SCRIPT REVIEWS

After reading each script, participants completed the corresponding written script survey. Several questions were repeated on both script surveys, tailored to the specific script content. Tables comparing ratings across the scripts are provided in Appendix C.

In the next sections, participants' feedback about Unit 7, *Missionaries, Pilgrims, and Converts: Religions in Motion*, will be followed by feedback about Unit 11, *Empires*. Post-survey questions written to gather comparative feedback between the two scripts follow.

UNIT 7: MISSIONARIES, PILGRIMS, AND CONVERTS: RELIGIONS IN MOTION

Script Elements

After reading the *Religions in Motion* video script, participants rated several stylistic elements of the script overall on a scale from 1 (*poor*) to 5 (*excellent*).

- As shown in Table 7, characteristics of the presentation of content, including the *format* used and the *flow of narrative*, were rated highest.

- Lowest ratings were assigned to the way in which the details of the information were conveyed (e.g., objective presentation, clearly stated information). Even the lowest ratings, however, were above the midpoint of the scale.

Table 7
Ratings of Script Elements

	(N=18)	**Mean Rating (Scale: 1-5)**
Format/**organization** of content		4.50
Flow of narrative		4.25
Ability to hold my **interest**		4.19
Voice in which script was written		4.13
Quality of evidence provided		4.07
Innovative coverage of information		3.88
Clarity of information		3.88
Objective/ Unbiased presentation of the information		3.81

- On a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely well*), participants reported the information in the script was conveyed in a way they could envision translated into video very well (average rating was 4 out of a possible 5).

- On the same scale, participants perceived the script lent itself to a balance of elements within a video (e.g., interviews, lectures, vignettes) moderately well (average rating was 3.7 out of a possible 5).

New or Familiar Content

Participants responded to several questions designed to gather a sense of how new or familiar to them the content was in the script. Questions targeted: (a) their own degree of knowledge of the area, (b) the extent to which the information overlapped with content they have taught in the past, and (c) whether or not they had previously seen the topic covered in that way.

- Regarding the level at which the script was written, on a scale from 1 (*far below my knowledge level*) to 5 (*far above my knowledge level*), the average rating was 2.9 out of 5.
    - 44% of participants said the script was written *at* their knowledge level
    - 28% said it was written *just above* their knowledge level
    - 22% said it was written *just below* their knowledge level
    - 6% said it was written *far below* their knowledge level

- On a scale from 1 (*no overlap in content*) to 4 (*completely overlapped*), over one third each said the information in the script had *some overlap in content* (39%) or *completely overlapped* (39%) with content they have taught in their own courses.

- On a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*), participants assigned a high rating to the extent to which the script included information that was already familiar to them. Average was 4.19 out of 5.

- 59% had seen the topic of world religions presented in that way before and 41% had not.

    - Participants who **had** seen the topic covered in a similar way were asked to describe the similarities they saw and cite the sources.
        - Several listed books and textbooks including *Millenium*, Bentley and Stearns' textbook, and *History Alive!*
        - Similarities described included the above-mentioned books' mix of generalizations with primary source information and thematic analysis.
        - The Bentley and Stearns' book was described as providing similar coverage in its focus on comparing the spread of religions and their effects.
        - Some described things they perceived as missing, including issues of language and translation, differences between religions (e.g., Buddhism was not exclusive, Christianity was exclusive), and more about the basic beliefs of the faith.

    - Participants who **had not** previously seen the topic covered in that way were asked to list what they perceived to be the primary difference.
        - Most noted that the three religions selected for this script were different from the typical religions selected for comparison (i.e., they typically see Judaism included or see basic comparisons of Eastern vs. Western religions).
        - Some also mentioned this script made different comparisons and connections than usual (e.g., the use of a religion to establish itself on another religion's holiest sites).
        - Some pointed to the focus of this script: Usually, for a discussion of world religions, the focus is first on beliefs and rituals and then on the structure. In this case focus was not on the "what"

but on the where and how; this presentation was perceived as conveying a sense of motion.

- ▪ **Evaluator recommendations:** *Participants reported strong familiarity with content and experience teaching similar content in their classrooms. Promotional and introductory information about the BWH series should communicate the idea that the series may include familiar content, but will present it in a new way intended to encourage teachers to rethink their ideas about world history and how they can present it to students.*

  In terms of points considered missing from the script, some were topics deliberately excluded by producers, based on the assumption that the audience for the series would have the necessary background knowledge. For example, discussion of the basic beliefs of each religion was intentionally excluded. While the video is intended to provide an introduction or framework, it may be helpful for developers to include a deeper level of detail in the supplemental text and web materials. In this way, users of the series can decide whether or not to refer to the details as needed.

Series Goals

Participants also rated the extent to which, overall, the script achieved some of the specific series goals such as sparking new interest and presenting new information in a way that brings world history to life as dynamic and controversial.

- ▪ On a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*), on average, participants assigned the highest rating, slightly above the scale midpoint, to the extent to which the script sparked new interest.

- ▪ Displayed in Table 8, lower average ratings were assigned to the extent to which the script conveyed the idea that new research findings change what we know, the extent to which the script conveyed a tension or controversy,[3] and the extent to which the script related historic content to contemporary life issues.

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[3] Series producers have since added an element at the end of the script specifically developed to introduce a question and provoke viewers' thought about a controversial issue.

Table 8
Extent to Which Script Met Series Goals

To what extent did the script overall… (N=18)	Mean Rating (Scale: 1-5)
Spark new interest	3.82
Include information/content that was new to you	3.00
Relate the historic content to contemporary life issues	2.59
Convey a tension or controversy	2.56
Convey the idea that new research findings change what we *know*	2.53

- **Evaluator recommendation**: *Series producers have since added an element at the end of the script specifically developed to introduce a question and provoke viewers' thoughts about a controversial issue. If presented clearly, that should address the lack of a perceived controversy or tension and should pique viewers' interests such that they seek out the text and web materials as well as additional units in the series.*

Religions in Motion: Three Case Studies

In the *Religions in Motion* script, world religions were compared through three case studies, Christianity, Buddhism, and Islam. Participants responded to several questions about (a) the balance of the coverage across the three and (b) the depth versus breadth of information presented within each:

- 6% (n=1) said the coverage was *not at all balanced.*
- 39% (n=7) said the coverage was *moderately balanced.*
- 56% (n=10) said the coverage was *well balanced.*

- The perceived imbalance (i.e., those who found it *not at all* or *moderately* balanced) was described as an absence of the sense that (1) the religious leaders interacted with one another and made *"real decisions"* and (2) Christianity was the most expansive.

- Four participants suggested ways to improve the balance of coverage. Each focused on a strongpoint of one or two of the cases and a suggestion to modify the other(s) accordingly, including:
  - The script demonstrated the appeal of Christianity to the converts -- add more about the appeal of Islam and Buddhism.
  - Buddhism was covered well, but Christianity and Islam seemed *"rushed."*
  - Buddhism and Christianity explored "*division,"* include that exploration in Islam.
  - The language used in Islam conveyed more energy and excitement than did the language for Christianity and Buddhism.

- Within each religion, participants primarily perceived either just the right balance between breadth and depth of information, or too much breadth and not enough depth.

	Buddhism	Christianity	Islam
Just right depth vs. breadth:	59%	47%	41%
Not enough depth, too much breadth:	35%	35%	53%
Not enough breadth, too much depth:	6%	18%	6%

- **Evaluator recommendation:** *Series developers intend for the video to serve as an introduction to the big themes and concepts for each unit that will be explored in more detail via the accompanying text and web materials. Based on the above ratings, it would be helpful to include a brief and clear description of this intent in the description and introduction to the series. Viewers who might perceive the coverage of information to be too broad or superficial may then appreciate that the rich details are included in the other components of the unit.*

Big Concepts and Integrative Themes

For each unit in the BWH series, the video is meant to introduce a few general concepts and themes in order to establish a framework for the more detailed exploration to be covered in the text and web components.

- On a scale from 1 (*not at all understandable*) to 5 (*completely understandable*) participants rated *the spread* of each religion highest in terms of the way the information was conveyed in the script.

- As seen in Table 9, information about *the appeal* of each religion was not made as clear to the readers.

Table 9
Understandable Big Concepts and Integrative Themes

Topic conveyed: (N=18)	**Mean Rating (Scale: 1-5)**
The spread of Christianity	4.47
The spread of Buddhism	4.47
The spread of Islam	4.29
The interrelationship between religion and cultures	4.06
Human influence on transformation of religion	3.88
The appeal of Buddhism	3.65
The appeal of Christianity	3.53
The appeal of Islam	3.53

- **Evaluator recommendation:** *The concepts listed in the above table are specified by series producers as those they intended to convey in the Religions in Motion video. The <u>appeal</u> of the religions is an area that should be developed more fully so that viewers will gain a better understanding of the appeal of these religions and will look to the other unit components for more information.*

Learned from the Script

Participants were asked to comment on the extent to which they learned something new about the topic of world religions after reading the script.

Regarding the degree to which the script enhanced or challenged their understanding of the topic:
- 44% (n=8) said the script enhanced but did not challenge their understanding
- 33% (n=6) said the script enhanced and challenged their understanding
- 11% (n=2) said the script did not enhance but did challenge their understanding
- 11% (n=2) said the script neither enhanced nor challenged their understanding

Participants were asked to describe what they learned from the script. Open-ended responses were coded and categorized as follows.
- 5 participants described learning more about the spread of religions, noting a focus on the **how** more than on the **why,** including:
  - the extent to which they spread
  - the similarities of how they spread
  - the "*agents of change*" that led to the dynamic nature of the change and the "*two dimensional"* nature such that *"world religions both affected and were affected by their surrounding societies."*

- 7 participants described the comparisons and contrasts made that were new to them including:
  - Saw new connections: pilgrimages and merchants, "*religious connections to trade, conversion, and other ch*anges," religions' connections to economics and trade, similarities and "borrowings" between Islam and Christianity, relationship between rulers of empires and the spread of religion.
  - The comparative approach, rather than treating one religion as an autonomous system, was seen as new and a better way to think about religions and ultimately to present it to students.

- 3 participants said they did not learn anything. One described an expectation to learn more about the people and their beliefs and one explained that the information was not new due to a personal "*extensive background in religious history*." The information was described as good and enjoyable, just not necessarily new to the readers.

- These ratings correspond with participants' reports (described earlier, p.11) that the content was familiar to them, they had taught similar information to their students, and they had seen similar comparative treatment of the topic of world religions. The presentation, more than the content was novel to them.

- **Evaluator Recommendation:** *The familiarity with basic content but not with the particular comparative approach presents an opportunity for producers of the BWH series to go further with their treatment of the topics. For this topic (religions in motion) information was familiar, but the focus was different than usual. Series developers can build on this opportunity to take the new focus and make new connections or link the content to controversial issues, new research findings, and new questions that have been or can be raised.*

Script to Video

Participants were reminded that the script they read was to be made into a video. They were asked to describe whether they would consider the video useful alone or would need to watch more of the videos in the series to benefit from the information.

- Most (75%) reported they would be satisfied watching just this video.
  - It was considered a good summary or overview unit that provided valuable information on its own that would be enhanced further with more about the appeal of each faith.

- 25% would not be satisfied watching only this video.
  - Some would need to watch at least some of the others in the series for context.
  - Most, however, referred to the inclusion of more depth or detail in this video for it to stand alone (e.g., more about the motivation for each religion to spread, more visuals including maps).

Script Notes

Participants were instructed to comment directly on the script as they were reading it and to note any areas they found to be (a) *clear or confusing*, (b) *new or familiar to them*, and (c) *interesting or needing more to hold their attention*. Only one participant limited comments to these three areas. Most, instead, wrote down thoughts they had about each segment. In parts of the script where reviewers saw a list of ideas to be discussed rather than the actual text, they noted some difficulty with interpretation. This coincides with their expressed desire for more specific details to be included in each script and may also reflect their lack of experience reading and interpreting video scripts.

Participants' written notes generally corresponded with specific findings that have been reported throughout this report. General comments are summarized here and the full transcript of comments is in included in Appendix E.

- Throughout the *Religions in Motion* script, participants noted places where they would like to see more visuals, more action, and less narration by the on camera host or experts.
- They enjoyed the timelines and maps, particularly when the maps showed movement.
- Participants commended writers for including a "*good hook*" in the introduction, a nice opening for Christianity and Islam, and a nice closing for Christianity.
- In some places, they noted controversial issues addressed or important links that were made. These included:
  - the idea that religions were changed by the world
  - the intermingling of secular with "sacred"
  - the dynamism and fluidity of Buddhism

- In several sections, participants suggested different wording or choices of words to use. They also suggested defining more words and phrases used throughout the script.

- Specific details to add to parts of the script included:
  - The story of birth of Siddhartha Gautama and more about his life
  - More about Asoka
  - Why the Muslim Arab armies burst from Arabia (e.g., merchants, weak surrounding empires, Bedouins)
  - More explanation of "living saints"/mystics/Sufis
  - Detail about how we count years based on the birth of Jesus
  - Explicit links between politics and religions leading to Holy Wars

- Specific corrections noted included:
  - In the introduction, the script said Islam began in 5th century CE. Nearly all participants wrote that it should say 7th century.
  - The term "Orthodoxy" should be replaced with "Christian Eastern Orthodoxy." As written, it was considered too general (e.g., it excludes the fact that one can be Orthodox Jewish).

- Some comments referred to classroom students. In some cases, it appeared as though, despite several reminders, teachers forgot or misunderstood that **they** were to be the audience for these videos. More often, however, as written, it seems that teachers were demonstrating how connected they are to what they do (i.e., teach students.). Comments, therefore, reflect the fact that when presented with new content themselves, they immediately think about how they will be able to add this not only to their knowledge base, but also to their repertoire of lessons and content they will provide to their students. One teacher captured this process well with the comment that some of the new content will "em*power teachers with fun facts to bring to the classroom.*"

General Interpretation of Script

Participants were asked to describe what they believed to be the most important point of the script. Space was also provided to describe content they considered missing and content that should be included in the text and web materials.

Most important points included:
- The spread of the religions, with a focus on the "how"
- Learning about religions through the pilgrimages rather than through the beliefs
- The similarities between religions and variations within each
- Different methods or means of conversion
- The dynamic nature of religion, including the idea that religion impacted the population and the population impacted religion

Content considered missing included:
- The appeal of the religions; "why" people converted
- More detail about the differences between the religions
- Present-day status

Content to include in text and web materials included:
- Primary documents including scripture from the religions
- Definitions and explanations of terms
- More information and maps about religions excluded from the video (e.g., Judaism and Hinduism)
- Details about the different sects within each religion
- More emphasis on the people, including the roles of Buddha, Christ, and Muhammed as influential figures
- Connection to modern times

In most cases, the content listed as missing was similar to content suggested for inclusion in the text and web materials. Participants often listed specific details they believed should be included either in the video or in the other unit components. A full transcript of participants' responses to these three questions is included in Appendix D.

Participants' General Comments and Suggestions

At the end of the written survey, space was provided for participants to describe any final suggestions they had for the script overall. Open-ended responses fell into two main categories:

1. **Information was too broad.**
   - Generalizations felt like stereotyping: specific examples would be better.
   - Lack of depth may decrease likelihood of holding teachers' attention.

2. **Stylistic suggestions**

- Most of the teacher-reviewers made suggestions about style, listing ways to make the video more interesting and engaging.
- Ideas included adding more vignettes, more simulations of characters and events, and more visuals, and minimizing the narrative and "*talking heads.*"
- One participant described the narration as the most important factor to consider and suggested assuring the scholars' voices are clear in the video.

A few participants suggested grammatical changes and suggested including a glossary to define terms.

UNIT 11: EMPIRES

Script Elements

After reading the *Empires* video script, participants rated the script overall on several stylistic elements on a scale from 1 (*poor*) to 5 (*excellent*).

- As shown in Table 10, the objective presentation of information was rated highest. Note: this element received the lowest ratings for the *Religions in Motion* script.

- The clarity of information and voice in which the script was written also received strong ratings.

- Lower ratings were assigned to the *innovative* nature of information and the *quality of evidence* provided. Further comments, described in the following sections, elaborate on the lack of depth or detail that participants noted for this script, particularly compared to *Religions in Motion* script.

Table 10
Ratings of Script Elements

	(N=17) Mean Rating (Scale: 1-5)
Objective/ Unbiased presentation of the information	4.00
Clarity of information	3.56
Voice in which script was written	3.56
Format/**organization** of content	3.50
Flow of narrative	3.25
Ability to hold my **interest**	3.19
Innovative coverage of information	3.06
Quality of evidence provided	2.93

- On a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely well*) participants on average reported the information in the script was conveyed in a way they could envision translated into video moderately well (average rating was 3.4 out of a possible 5).

- Participants noted the script contained less detail than did the *Religions in Motion* script. In particular, fewer visuals were described, making it difficult to envision as video.

- On the same scale, participants believed the script lent itself to a balance of elements within a video (e.g., interviews, lectures, vignettes) moderately well (average rating was 3.25 out of a possible 5).

New or Familiar Content

Participants responded to several questions designed to gather a sense of how new or familiar to them the content was in the script. Questions targeted: (a) their own degree of knowledge of the area, (b) the extent to which the information overlapped with content they have taught in the past, and (c) whether or not they had previously seen the topic covered the way it was in this script.

- Regarding the level at which the script was written, on a scale from 1 (*far below my knowledge level*) to 5 (*far above my knowledge level*), 38% of participants said the script was written *at their knowledge level* and 31% said it was written *just below* their knowledge level. The average rating was 2.25 out of 5.

- On a scale from 1 (*no overlap in content*) to 4 (*completely overlapped*), half said the information in the script had *some overlap in content* and nearly half (44%) said the content *completely overlapped* with content they have taught in their own courses.

- On a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*), participants assigned a high rating to the extent to which the script included information that was already familiar to them. Average was 4.50 out of 5.

- 50% had previously seen the topic of empires covered the way it was in the script, and 50% had not.

  - Participants who **had** seen the topic covered in a similar way were asked to describe the similarities they saw and to cite the sources.
    - Most referred to their prior familiarity with the basic coverage of empire building, the quality of empires, and comparisons of different empires.
    - Specifically, they have seen coverage of both Mongols and Mali in various series (e.g., Mali covered in the Basil Davidson *Africa* Series).

  - Participants who **had not** seen the topic covered in that way were asked to describe what they perceived to be the primary difference.
    - While most were familiar with each of the three empires, they had not seen those three presented together, and had not seen a cross-comparison of several empires within a given time period instead of over time in the same region. They enjoyed the approach and found it interesting.
    - The "*good non-Euro focus*" was recognized and appreciated.

- Participants also rated the extent to which, overall, the script achieved some of the specific series goals such as sparking new interest and presenting new information in a way that brings world history to life in a new and dynamic way.

- Shown in Table 11, on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very much*), participants assigned average ratings slightly below the scale midpoint for all statements. The lowest ratings were assigned to the extent to which the script *related historic content to contemporary life issues*.

Table 11
Extent to Which Script Met Series Goals

To what extent did the script overall…	(N=17)	Mean Rating (Scale: 1-5)
Spark new interest		2.88
Include information/content that was new to you		2.53
Convey a tension or controversy		2.06
Convey the idea that new research findings change what we *know*		2.29
Relate the historic content to contemporary life issues		2.12

- **Evaluator recommendation:** *Relating the historic content to contemporary issues is an area that could be explored naturally in the Empires video. The legacy of empires (according to the Empires video grid) is part of the one of the three big concepts or questions, "What was the meaning of empire from the perspective of people ruled, and what was the legacy of empire?" A stronger focus on the people as well as connections to modern ethnic and political identity might strengthen the appeal of this video.*

Empires Three Case Studies: Mongols, Mali, Inkas

In the *Empires* script, the construction and maintenance of empires was illustrated through three case studies, Mongols, Mali, and Inkas. Participants responded to several questions about: (a) the balance of the regional coverage across the three empires and (b) the depth versus breadth of information presented within each:

- 6% (n=1) said the regional coverage was *not at all balanced.*
- 47% (n=8) said the regional coverage was *moderately balanced.*
- 47% (n=8) said the regional coverage was *well balanced.*

- The one participant who selected *not at all balanced* elaborated and described that, rather than an imbalance, the problem was that the "*analytical hook from the intro is simply not carried through.*" The script was perceived as too descriptive and in need of more details.

- Those who rated the script as *moderately balanced* suggested ways to improve the balance:
  - 2 participants said coverage of the Inka Empire contained less detail than did Mongol or Mali

- ♦ 1 said Mali needed more depth
- ♦ 1 said the script was weighted to the Inka Empire and the rest had less detail.
- ♦ 1 said the coverage was balanced in terms of the length of each, but the "*analysis of rise and fall factors*" was not balanced.

- ▪ Within each empire, participants primarily perceived the information to include more breadth, or broad, general coverage, than depth or level of detail.

	Mongol Empire	Mali Empire	Inkas
Not enough depth, too much breadth	81%	81%	75%
Just right depth vs. breadth	19%	19%	19%
Not enough breadth, too much depth	0%	0%	6%

- ▪ **Evaluator recommendations:** *As described above, each video is meant to serve as an introduction to the integrative themes and concepts for each unit that will be explored in more detail via the accompanying text and web materials. Based on the above ratings, it would be helpful to include a brief and clear description of this intent, so that viewers who perceived the coverage of information to be too broad or general will understand that the details are included in the other unit components.*

- ▪ *Additionally, the Empires script, in fact, contained less information than did the Religions in Motion script. As sent to reviewers, Religions in Motion had 43 pages and Empires had 20 pages. Empires was perceived by some as incomplete. It is possible that with more detail, including vignettes, visuals, and further explanations -- before it is translated to video -- viewers will see more balance between depth and breadth of the content.*

Big Concepts and Integrative Themes

For each unit in the BWH series, the video is intended to introduce a few general concepts and themes in order to establish a framework for the more detailed exploration in the text and web components.

- ▪ On a scale from 1 (*not at all understandable*) to 5 (*completely understandable*) participants rated *the commonalities between empires in different times and places* highest. As seen in Table 12, participants did not perceive a strong sense of the meaning of empire from the perspective of the people ruled.

Table 12
Understandable Big Concepts and General Themes

Topic conveyed: (N=17)	Mean Rating (Scale: 1-5)
Commonalities between empires in different times and places	3.82
Evolution of the Mongol Empire in Eurasia	3.59
The role of technology in an empire	3.56
Evolution of the Mali Empire in West Africa	3.53
The role of charismatic leaders in creating empires	3.47
Differences between empires in different times and places	3.47
How empires maintain control through military means	3.41
Evolution of the Inkas Empire in Andean America	3.12
The role of a common language in creating and maintaining an empire	2.94
How nomadic peoples have been able to create centralized empires	2.88
Legacies of different empires	2.69
Meaning of an empire from the perspective of the people ruled	2.35

- **Evaluator recommendation:** *The concepts listed in the above table are those specified by series producers as the integrative themes introduced through the Empires video. As is, two primary points to be conveyed were not presented as clearly as others: (1) A focus on the <u>people</u> of empires, including both how nomadic peoples were able to create centralized empires and the meaning of an empire from the perspective of the people ruled and (2) the legacies of different empires. As described earlier, these are areas for the producers to develop more fully before the video is produced.*

Learned from the Script

Participants were asked to comment on the extent to which they learned new information about the topic of empires after reading the script.

Regarding the degree to which the script enhanced or challenged their understanding of the topic:
- 53% (n=9) said the script enhanced but did not challenge their understanding
- 6% (n=1) said the script enhanced and challenged their understanding
- 41% (n=7) said the script neither enhanced nor challenged their understanding

Participants were asked to describe what they learned from the script. Open-ended responses were coded and categorized as follows.

- 2 participants described an appreciation for identifying new connections and commonalities among the three empires covered; they believe knowledge of these similarities will help with their teaching.

- 2 participants mentioned particular content learned, including increased general knowledge of the Mali empire, how historians measure the success of empires, and the legacies "*both real and imagined*" of empires.

- 5 participants said they did not learn anything, either because they currently teach the information covered in the script (remember, 44% said the content *completely overlapped* with content they teach), or they were familiar with the "*basic*" or "*general*" information that was provided (and commented on the need for more depth of information).
  - Participants highlighted the differences between the *Empires* script and *Religions in Motion* script; they noted that *Empires* was missing experts providing details, an element included in the *Religions in Motion* script, and that *Empires* was not written as well and did not provide as much new information as did *Religions in Motion*.
  - One participant noted that despite a personal knowledge of the topic, others would learn from this script.

- **Evaluator recommendation:** *These comments support the previously described opportunity for producers to include more detail, with a particular focus on the people involved in empires. This focus, along with more vignettes and visuals, should increase viewers' interest and present a more engaging picture of the rise and fall of empires in different parts of the world.*

Script to Video

Participants were reminded that the script they read was to be made into a video. They were asked to describe whether they would consider the video useful alone or would need to watch more of the videos in the series to benefit from the information.

- Nearly two thirds (63%) would be satisfied watching just this video.
  - They found it clear and to the point as a thematic unit. The script was perceived as providing "*a prototype of 'empire'*" that could be applied to various times and places for eventual student lessons.

- 31% would not be satisfied watching this video alone.
  - Rather than placing it in the context of the overall series, however, most again described the need for more details to see a more complete picture with connections to change over time and to see "*more of an historical setting for comparison.*"

Script Notes

Participants were asked to comment directly on the script as they were reading it and to note areas they found to be: (a) *clear or confusing*, (b) *new or familiar to them*, and (c) *interesting or needing more to hold their attention*. While one participant limited comments to these three areas, most instead wrote down thoughts they had about each segment. As was the case for *Religions in Motion*, in parts of the script where reviewers saw a list of ideas to be discussed rather than the actual text, they noted some difficulty with interpretation. This coincides with their expressed desire for more specific details to be included in each script and also reflects their lack of experience reading and interpreting video scripts.

Participants' general written notes corresponded with specific findings that have been reported throughout this report. General comments are summarized here and the full transcript of comments in included in Appendix E.

- Throughout the *Empires* script participants suggested the inclusion of more visuals and more details.

- Similar to the *Religions in Motion* script, participants suggested particular information they believed should be added. Most commonly noted as missing was more information about the fall of each empire.

- The script opening was not considered to include a "*good hook,*" although the segment shortly after the open that began with the question, "What comes to our minds when we think of 'Empire'?" was considered by some to pique interest.

- Participants commended writers for addressing some controversial issues and making important links. These included:
    - The juxtaposition of violence to create empires and peace and prosperity of those living within their borders
    - Toward the end of the Inka segment, the link made between all 3 empires

- In several sections, participants suggested adding more definitions or explanations of terms as used and tying concepts to modern concrete example as explanation of that concept.

- Specific details to add to parts of the script included:
    - Brief reference near the beginning to what was going on in Euro/North America at the time of the 3 empires to be discussed to add some perspective
    - Information about Pachacuti's enemies and the civil war when describing his "counterattack"
    - Include Chinggis Khan's real name, Temujin

- An area where participants suggested a correction was the spelling of "Inka." Most thought it should be spelled "Inca."

General Interpretation of Script

Participants were asked to describe what they believed to be the most important point of the script. Space was also provided to describe content they considered missing and content that should be included in the text and web materials.

Most important points included:
- Historical overview of empires
- Similarities and common characteristics between empires, making thematic comparisons
- Factors important in creating empire and factors important in sustaining empire (staying in power)
- Role of strong, charismatic leaders and military in successful empires

Content considered missing included:
- Historical background about how empires gained strength
- Structure of "running an empire"
- Factors that led to the downfalls
- Focus on people, culture, environment

Content suggested for inclusion in text and web materials included:
- Charts comparing characteristics of empires, timelines, pictures, maps
- Focus on the people
- More on the downfalls of empires
- More on who else forms empires, acknowledging that not all are nomads
- Connection to modern times

In general, participants noted the video script was missing details and needed more anecdotal stories and examples, particularly about charismatic leaders. More of the specific details listed can be seen in the full transcript of responses to these three questions in Appendix E.

Final General Comments and Suggestions

At the end of the written survey, space was provided for participants to describe any final suggestions they had for the script overall. Open-ended responses fell into two main categories:

1. **Information was too broad**
   - Overall, reviewers found the *Empires* script to be too general.
   - One participant described the script as "*superficial*" and "*too bare with general sketches*" compared to the unique cases compared in *Religions in Motion*.
   - Participants wanted to see "*more enriching details*" about: (a) the rise and fall of empires, (b) common elements across the empires, (c) the lives of average citizens, culture, and society within each empire.

2. **Stylistic suggestions**

- Participants made suggestions about the style in which the script was written including ideas to engage viewers' interest and improve the cohesiveness of the video.
- They reported that commonalities mentioned in the script introduction were not realized throughout the script and transitions between the three cases were considered too abrupt.
- Nearly all participants described a need for more visuals throughout the script.

CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE OR INTEREST

Before reading either script and again after reading both, participants rated their current knowledge of concepts script developers intended to convey on a scale from 1 (*not at all knowledgeable*) to 5 (*extremely knowledgeable*). They also rated their interest on the same topics on a scale from 1 (*not at all interested*) to 5 (*extremely interested*).

Both knowledge and interest ratings were gathered in order to present a more complete picture of participants' baseline knowledge and interest and to develop a context in which to interpret any changes that arose after reading the scripts. For example, in a formative evaluation conducted for OPB of a professional development series about biology, evaluators found that topics for which reviewers had the least interest were also those about which they reported the least knowledge both before and after reviewing the content.

- As demonstrated in Table 13, before reading the scripts, participants' knowledge and interest were both above the midpoint of the scale. Average interest ratings were significantly higher than knowledge ratings for all concepts related to both scripts.

Table 13
Knowledge vs. Interest Ratings <u>Before</u> Reading Scripts

N=17	Mean Rating (Scale: 1-5)	
	Knowledge	Interest
How religions change over time	3.59**	4.59**
How religion is transmitted across cultures	3.94**	4.71**
How religions interact	3.88**	4.88**
How religions adapt to diverse cultural circumstances	3.53**	4.77**
How empires are constructed	3.82*	4.41*
How empires function and maintain themselves	3.77*	4.29*
Historical and cultural influences that shaped empires	3.77**	4.65**
Economic systems that supported empires	3.53*	4.12*
Religious and ideological symbols and sanctions for empire	3.53**	4.41**
Relationship between technology and environment	3.71	4.24
The origins of agriculture	3.47	3.71
The origins of domestication of animals	3.24	3.35
How humans have adapted to different environments	3.88	4.12
Key components in complex societies	3.77	4.24
The origins of urban life	3.47*	4.12*

*p=<.05
**p=<.01

- After reading both scripts, interest ratings were still higher than knowledge ratings. Fewer, however, were statistically significant. For several concepts, after reading the scripts participants' knowledge increased slightly and interest decreased slightly. In statistics, this is called "regression to the mean." Rather than indicating a meaningful increase in knowledge or decrease in interest, participants whose ratings were at the high or low end of the range of responses shift toward the average response. All ratings tighten around the mean and individual ratings come closer to the group average.

Table 14
Knowledge vs. Interest Ratings <u>After</u> Reading Scripts

N=16	Mean Rating (Scale: 1-5)	
	Knowledge	Interest
How religions change over time	3.75	4.13
How religion is transmitted across cultures	4.00	4.38
How religions interact	3.75**	4.50**
How religions adapt to diverse cultural circumstances	3.88**	4.44**
How empires are constructed	3.94	4.19
How empires function and maintain themselves	3.81*	4.31*
Historical and cultural influences that shaped empires	3.81**	4.75**
Economic systems that supported empires	3.69	4.13
Religious and ideological symbols and sanctions for empire	3.69*	4.13*
Relationship between technology and environment	3.38**	4.31**
The origins of agriculture	3.63	3.38
The origins of domestication of animals	2.88	3.06
How humans have adapted to different environments	3.63	3.94
KEY COMPONENTS IN COMPLEX SOCIETIES	3.75	4.06
THE ORIGINS OF URBAN LIFE	3.63	3.94

*p=<.05
**p=<.01

- The two tables that follow (Table 15 and Table 16) demonstrate the 'regression to the mean' phenomenon described above; ratings of knowledge are slightly higher and ratings of interest are slightly lower after reading the two scripts, but the change is not statistically significant.

- Table 15 shows average knowledge ratings before and after reading the scripts. Following with participants' reports (described above) that they were already familiar with the information in both scripts, knowledge scores increased only slightly after reading each script. Differences (primarily increases in average ratings) were not statistically significant.

Ratings indicate participants felt their knowledge was enhanced slightly after reading.

Table 15
Pre-Post Comparisons: Knowledge of General Concepts

Knowledge about… (N=16)	Mean (Scale: 1-5)	
	Pre	Post
How religions change over time	3.63	3.75
How religion is transmitted across cultures	3.94	4.00
How religions interact	3.88	3.75
How religions adapt to diverse cultural circumstances	3.50	3.88
How empires are constructed	3.88	3.94
How empires function and maintain themselves	3.81	3.81
Historical and cultural influences that shaped empires	3.81	3.81
Economic systems that supported empires	3.56	3.69
Religious and ideological symbols and sanctions for empire	3.56	3.69
Relationship between technology and environment	3.69	3.38
The origins of agriculture	3.50	3.63
The origins of domestication of animals	3.25	2.88
How humans have adapted to different environments	3.88	3.63
Key components in complex societies	3.81	3.75
The origins of urban life	3.58	3.63

- Table 16 shows average interest ratings before and after reading the scripts. Participants' interest in the topics decreased slightly after reading the scripts. The chance was statistically significant for two of the concepts, *how religions change over time* and *how religions interact*. Participants' earlier comments suggest interest ratings decreased because these were areas in which they wanted to see more details. ***Richer coverage in these dynamic areas may address the reported decrease in interest.***

Table 16
Pre-Post Comparisons: Interest in General Concepts

Interest in… (N=16)	Mean (Scale: 1-5)	
	Pre	Post
How religions change over time	4.56*	4.13*
How religion is transmitted across cultures	4.69	4.38
How religions interact	4.88**	4.50**
How religions adapt to diverse cultural circumstances	4.75	4.44
How empires are constructed	4.38	4.19
How empires function and maintain themselves	4.31	4.31
Historical and cultural influences that shaped empires	4.69	4.75
Economic systems that supported empires	4.19	4.13
Religious and ideological symbols and sanctions for empire	4.38	4.13
Relationship between technology and environment	4.25	4.31
The origins of agriculture	3.75	3.38
The origins of domestication of animals	3.38	3.06
How humans have adapted to different environments	4.06	3.93
Key components in complex societies	4.19	4.06
The origins of urban life	4.13	3.94

*p=<.05
 **p=<.01

POST SCRIPT REVIEW REFLECTION

After reading both scripts and completing the corresponding surveys, participants completed a post-survey that encouraged them to reflect and comment on the two scripts and describe their likelihood to participate in the full series and to recommend it to colleagues.

Perceived Tension or Controversy Conveyed in Script

After reading both scripts 53% of participants perceived that a particular tension or problem was conveyed and 47% did not. Those who **did** perceive a tension or problem (n=9) described the tension conveyed in each script. Examples are listed below:

- **In both scripts:**
  - Tension between flexibility and unity when a belief system sought to dominate or expand to another area
  - Tension between religions and empires and cultures
  - Problem of finding comparisons between cases and connecting each case to one another
  - Scripts led to questioning and reconsidering the concept of studying world history in a comparative framework

- **In Religions:** The script provided an antidote to the "*monolithic beliefs understanding of religion.*" The tension was perceived as underlying the information conveyed in such a way as to get at "*actual diverse practices and borrowing and adaptations.*"

- **In Empires:** Tension between conquest and its factors and with ruling or administration once the conquest is secured.

- One participant recognized that the scripts were intended to draw comparisons between world empires and religions. This was considered to be an ambitious task that held engaged the reader's interest. It was believed, however, that "*due to the lack of depth in supporting thesis, they fell short of drawing a complete conclusion.*"

Perceived Impact of New Research

After reading the scripts, one quarter of participants (n=4) perceived a sense of the impact of new research on what is known about the world and three quarters (n=12) did not. Asked to comment further, participants noted areas they considered to present innovative research and areas they found lacking.

- In the *Religions in Motion* script, topics seen as new included the religions' borrowing from each other, the Buddhist routes to China by sea, and the weight on Byzantium in the Christianity section was a new shift away from the weight usually placed on Rome.
- The *Empires* script was not perceived as presenting innovative research, but the information was considered "*new*" in terms of the choices of empires to compare.
- One participant mentioned the scripts demonstrated a new trend in historiography "*that emphasizes interaction and fluidity among societies and cultures.*"

Perceived Benefits and Likelihood to Participate

Participants were reminded that, when complete, the two scripts will be translated to video and will be part of a 26-unit professional development series comprising a video, text, and web component. They described the extent to which they believed their knowledge base would grow or stay the same after participating in the series.

- Most described some expected increase in knowledge. As noted at the beginning of the report, most have been teaching world history whether or not they have received formal training in the area. Those who have not received formal training have conducted research independently to expand their knowledge of the area. The series, they believe, will increase their knowledge, particularly those whose expertise is in U.S. and European history or world history after 1300.

- Teachers mentioned specific areas of growth including acquiring more non-Western historical examples they will then be able to present to

students and an increased ability to make connections between cultures and to form big questions and present themes to students in a way that better engages their interest.

- Two participants had a hard time predicting the extent of growth in knowledge based on just the two scripts they read. They believe that the plan for the series as a whole "*looks great*" and should enhance their knowledge base.

After reading both scripts, participants again described their likelihood to incorporate various practices into their history teaching.

- Compared to before reading the scripts, average likelihood scores were slightly lower. The change was not significant; before and after reading the scripts participants reported they were very likely to incorporate all the listed teaching practices into their history teaching in the future.

Table 18
Likelihood to Incorporate Teaching Practices in Future History Teaching

How likely are you to: (N=17)	Mean rating (Scale: 1-5)	
	Pre	Post
Bring a global/thematic approach to your lessons?	5.00	4.88
Teach with history content that is new to you as well as to your students?	4.82	4.63
Bring an interdisciplinary approach to your lessons?	4.69	4.56
Use the web to download curriculum content?	4.40	4.32

Before rating their likelihood to participate in the BWH series, participants reviewed a brief description of all 26 units. When the series is complete:
- 67% (n=10) *probably would* participate.
- 7% (n=1) *definitely would* participate.
- 27% (n=4) *probably would not* participate.

- 60% (n=9) *probably would* recommend the series to colleagues.
- 27% (n=4) *definitely would* recommend the series to colleagues.
- 7% (n=1) *probably would not* recommend the series to colleagues.
- 7% (n=1) *definitely would not* recommend the series to colleagues.
- 3 participants would recommend the series, even it they would not participate themselves.

Incorporating Content in the Classroom

- Nearly all participants either *definitely would* (60%) or *probably would* (27%) incorporate new content knowledge gained from this complete series into their classroom teaching.

- ◆ This supports the point made earlier (p. 17) that teachers immediately think about presenting their own newly acquired knowledge to students.

- ▪ Regarding the match between the series and their state and national teaching standards, most said there was a good fit, particularly for national and AP standards. A few participants noted the importance of making explicit clear and creative connections between the series and the standards.

- ▪ A few noted the lack of fit would be due to the fact that their state standards are euro-centric and not world-focused.

- ▪ **Evaluator recommendation**: *In the current political and educational climate teachers and administrators consider several factors when deciding to use or participate in a new program. Comments about the BWH series indicate a place exists for this series to fill a need and an interest. Series developers should define and promote the series in a way that will facilitate teachers' decision to participate. Several points can be emphasized:*

  - ◆ *The value of the global and thematic rather than localized and linear presentation of content*
  - ◆ *The demonstration of the dynamic nature of world history, including controversial issues and new research findings that continue to impact what is considered to be "known"*
  - ◆ *The novel presentation of content through three inter-related media (video, text, web)*
  - ◆ *The treatment and presentation of possibly familiar content in a new format that may change their thinking through new comparisons and connections*
  - ◆ *The fit between the series and state and national educational standards*

NEXT STEPS

Next phases of project development include writing fine drafts of the video scripts and producing the videos. In Spring 2004, one unit, including video and text, will be complete and will be reviewed by evaluation participants. Presented with a description of the context of the overall series, participants will be asked to provide feedback that will improve upon the flow within and across components in order for the series to meet its stated goals.

The extent to which details in content previously described as missing from the video, and ideal for inclusion in the text and web materials, are addressed in the text materials will be assessed. Participants will comment on the synergy between the text and video and proposed resources for the web.

They will point to any perceived disconnect between the resources and will suggest ways to improve correspondence between unit components.

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They will point to any perceived disconnect between the resources and will suggest ways to improve correspondence between unit components.

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