

## Teacher Resource Set

Title	S.P.M.D.T.U. Concilio Superior
Developed by	Laura Douglas, Education ala Carte
Grade Level	8 – 12
Essential Question	<p>What role do Mutual Protection/Mutual Aid Societies play throughout history?</p> <p>What role do they play today?</p> <p>Why is the S.P.M.D.T.U. <i>Concilio Superior</i> building an important part of the Antonito community? How is this building used?</p>
Contextual Paragraph	<p>The <i>Concilio Superior</i> (Superior Council) is the main headquarters for <i>La Sociedad Proteccion Mutua De Trabajadores Unidos</i> or S.P.M.D.T.U. (The Society for the Mutual Protection of United Workers). Completed in 1925, this lodge hall is located in Antonito, a railroad era town in Conejos County. One of the most prominent buildings in the business district of Antonito, the S.P.M.D.T.U. <i>Concilio Superior</i> is situated on the northwest corner of Main and 6<sup>th</sup> Streets.</p> <p>The S.P.M.D.T.U. is a mutual aid society established in Antonito in 1900 by Celedonio Mondagrón to address the needs of Hispano workers in the San Luis Valley. The <i>Concilio Superior</i> provided a safe place for Hispanics to gather together, to conduct meetings, and to socially interact without fear of intimidation.</p> <p>The <i>Concilio Superior</i> served as a model for the S.P.M.D.T.U. lodge in San Luis, which was constructed two years later in 1927. Both buildings marked the beginning a local trend among Hispano builders to utilize steel trusses and commercial windows while replicating the more functional Southwestern design features. The size and design of the <i>Concilio Superior</i> represented the size of its membership, and reflected the society's various activities (e.g., socials, dances, and sporting events).</p>

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<b><i>Concilio Superior</i> meeting hall</b>	<b><i>Concilio Superior</i> meeting hall main-floor plan</b>	<b>Concilio Superior, Antonito, Colorado</b>	<b>S.P.M.D.T.U. <i>Concilio Superior</i>, Conejos County, CO #1</b>	<b>S.P.M.D.T.U. <i>Concilio Superior</i> in Antonito, Colorado</b>	<b>S.P.M.D.T.U. symbol</b>
View of the <i>Concilio Superior</i> for La Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos on main street in Antonito (Conejos County), CO. Shows a two-story plastered building with a shaped parapet, pilasters topped with spheres, and a recessed entry. Lettering on the building reads: "S.P.M.D.T.U. 1900" "Built 1925" and "Concilio Superior."	<i>Concilio Superior</i> meeting hall main-floor plan as depicted by Arnold Valdez in the nomination report for the placement of this building in the National Register of Historic Places, U.S. National Park Service, certified by the State Historic Preservation Office of Colorado March 2001.	Group portrait of members of the <i>Concilio Superior</i> of the Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (S.P.M.D.T.U) pose in the office of the <i>Concilio Superior</i> hall in Antonito (Conejos County), CO. Photographs and a portrait of Celedonio Mondragon, founder of the group are on the wall.	Exterior murals, <i>Concilio Superior</i> hall in Antonito.	<i>La Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos</i> (1900 – 2015) <i>Concilio Superior</i> Meeting Hall: Antonito, CO, built 1925.	The role of the S.P.M.D.T.U. is "to help workers during times of unemployment, illness, and injuries at work; to assist widows and orphans in the event of member's death; and importantly, to unite the working class against discrimination in the modern industries emerging in the region" (S.P.M.D.T.U. <i>Preámbulo</i> of 1911).
Construction on the <i>Concilio Superior</i> building was started in 1923 and completed in 1925. The adobe structure was used for meetings of the S.P.M.D.T.U., as well as sporting and social events.	This floor map shows the many uses for the building. The main floor is over 7,000 square feet with a stage at one end, eight offices and space for activities.	This photo includes the members of S.P.M.D.T.U. after the semi-annual meeting in February of 2004 at the <i>Concilio Superior</i> in Antonito.	The side of the building is decorated with three murals, painted by artist Fred Haberlein in the mid-1990s.	A statue of founder Celedonio E. Mondagrón stands next to the building.	Logo of the S.P.M.D.T.U. This image can be seen throughout the <i>Concilio Superior</i> hall, as well as on banners, standards, buttons, pins and other items.

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				Link will take you to La Gente online exhibit. Once there go to "Land Grants" topic by hovering over images on La Gente landing page. Once at the Land Grants topic, click through to SPMDTU section.	

<b>S.P.M.D.T.U. Concilio Superior Meeting Hall</b>	<b>Celedonio E. Mondragón, statue and plaque</b>	<b>S.P.M.D.T.U. Concilio Superior, Conejos County, CO #3</b>	<b>S.P.M.D.T.U. Concilio Superior, Conejos County, CO #4</b>	<b>Mural on backstage wall of the S.P.M.D.T.U. Hall</b>	<b>Interior of S.P.M.D.T.U. Hall,</b>
<i>La Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos (1900 – 2015) Concilio Superior Meeting Hall: Antonito, CO, built 1925.</i>	Celedonio E. Mondagrón, Founder of <i>La Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos</i> , Statue and Plaque. Outside of the S.P.M.D.T.U. Hall in Antonito, CO.	Exterior mural, <i>Concilio Superior</i> hall in Antonito.	Exterior mural, <i>Concilio Superior</i> hall in Antonito.	Mural on backstage wall of the S.P.M.D.T.U. Hall in Antonito.	Interior of S.P.M.D.T.U. Hall in Antonito.

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<p>The main entrance faces Main Street and is divided into three bays. At the center of the recessed center bay is a window that was used as a ticket booth. Flanking the ticket window are two paneled wood doors used for organized patrons entering into the lodge hall.</p>	<p>The history of Hispanic people in NE New Mexico and southern Colorado influenced Celedonio Mondagrón and the founding of the S.P.M.D.T.U.</p>	<p>Towards the front of the building is a second elongated mural with <i>Mestiza</i> (woman of mix-blood heritage) surrounded by well-tended fields, an adobe homestead complete with an <i>horno</i> (earthen oven), and local landscape motifs. Painted by artist Fred Haberlein in the mid-1990s.</p>	<p>The side entry is framed by a large mural depicting local landscape features with an emphasis placed on an <i>acequia</i> (a traditional irrigation ditch) tended by the contemporary families of <i>the pobladores</i> (settlers). Painted by artist Fred Haberlein in the mid-1990s.</p>	<p>Completed around 1980 by <i>Los Murulistas del Voile</i>, the interior mural depicts Mexicano nationalistic and agricultural themes. Photo circa 2015.</p>	<p>The interior of the <i>Concilio Superior</i> is a large, rustic, open space with exposed steel Warren trusses, wood rafters, and a wooden floor. Photo circa 2015.</p>
					
<a href="http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html#migration">http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html#migration</a>	<a href="http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html#migration">http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html#migration</a>	<a href="https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/c9e9bb34-c199-463a-a59d-64597163bffb/?brandi ng=NRHP image 3">https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/c9e9bb34-c199-463a-a59d-64597163bffb/?brandi ng=NRHP image 3</a>	<a href="https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/c9e9bb34-c199-463a-a59d-64597163bffb/?brandi ng=NRHP image 4">https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/c9e9bb34-c199-463a-a59d-64597163bffb/?brandi ng=NRHP image 4</a>	<a href="http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html#migration">http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html#migration</a>	<a href="http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html#migration">http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html#migration</a>
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Foundations Annotations
<b>Curriculum Connections</b>
History Geography Civics
<b>Curriculum Standards</b>
<p><b>CO State History Standard 1:</b> Formulate appropriate hypotheses about United States history based on a variety of historical sources and perspectives. (Eighth Grade)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use and interpret documents and other relevant primary and secondary sources pertaining to United States history from multiple perspectives.</li> </ul> <p><b>CO State History Standard 2:</b> The historical eras, individuals, groups, ideas and themes from the origins of the American Revolution through Reconstruction and their relationships with one another. (Eighth Grade)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>f. Analyze ideas that are critical to the understanding of American history and give examples of the ideals involved in major events and movements.</li> </ul> <p><b>CO State Civics Standard 1:</b> Analyze elements of continuity and change in the United States government and the role of citizens over time. (Eighth Grade)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Describe instances in which major political, social, economic, or cultural changes occurred and the reasons for the changes.</li> <li>b. Analyze the changing definition of citizenship and give examples of the expansion of rights.</li> </ul> <p><b>CO State Geography Standard 2:</b> Conflict and cooperation occur over space and resources. (Eighth Grade)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Interpret from a geographic perspective the expansion of the United States by addressing issues of land, security, and sovereignty.</li> </ul> <p><b>CO State Civics Standard 2:</b> The place of law in a constitutional system. (Eighth Grade)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of rule of law.</li> <li>e. Discuss the tensions between individual rights, state law, and national law.</li> <li>g. Use a variety of resources to identify and evaluate issues that involve civic responsibility, individual rights, and the common good.</li> </ul>

## Curriculum Standards (continued)

**CO State History Standard 1:** Use the historical method of inquiry to ask questions, evaluate primary and secondary sources, critically analyze and interpret data, and develop interpretations defended by evidence from a variety of primary and secondary sources. (High School)

- b. Gather and analyze historical information, including contradictory data, from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including sources located on the Internet, to support or reject hypotheses.

**CO State History Standard 2:** Analyze the key concepts of continuity and change, cause and effect, complexity, unity and diversity over time. (High School)

- g. Analyze the complexity of events in United States history.
- h. Examine and evaluate issues of unity and diversity from Reconstruction to present.

**CO State History Standard 3:** The significance of ideas as powerful forces throughout history. (High School)

- c. Evaluate the historical development and impact of political thought theory and actions.

**CO State Civics 1:** Research, formulate positions, and engage in appropriate civic participation to address local, state, or national issues or policies. (High School)

- a. Engage ethically in civic activities including discussing current issues, advocating for their rights and the rights of others, practicing their responsibilities, influencing governmental actions, and other community service learning opportunities.
- b. Evaluate how individuals and groups can effectively use the structure and functions of various levels of government to shape policy.

**CO State Civics 2:** Purposes of and limitations on the foundations, structures, and functions of government. (High School)

- c. Analyze and explain the importance of the principles of democracy and the inherent competition among values to include but not be limited to freedom and security, individual rights and common good, and rights and responsibilities.
- f. Analyze how court decisions, legislative debates, and various and diverse groups have helped to preserve, develop, and interpret the rights and ideals of the American system of government.

## Content and Thinking Objectives

Students will be able to:

- analyze and practice rights, roles, and responsibilities of citizens.
- analyze and question primary sources.
- solve problems, make decisions and analyze issues from multiple perspectives as a responsible member of society.
- develop an understanding of how people view, construct, and interpret history.

## Inquiry Questions, Activities and Strategies

### Inquiry Activities

Explore the immigration of Mexican and Mexican American families. How do organizations like the United Farm Workers intersect with S.P.M.B.T.U.? Discuss the pros and cons of such organizations. Two resources that might be helpful include:

- [http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente\\_home.html](http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/lagente/lagente_home.html)
- <https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/immigration/mexican8.html>

Ask students to research and describe when, where, who and why the *La Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos* (S.P.M.D.T.U.) was founded.

Ask students to research and list the original goals of the S.P.M.D.T.U., and explain why each was important.

Below are four activities that can provide an introduction to democratic principles, using the S.P.M.D.T.U. and the struggles of Hispanic people in Colorado from pre-1900 through present-day using these nine democratic principles: Rule of law; Equality; Liberty/Rights; Self-government/participation; Security; Property; Common good; Justice; Diversity and Life.

- Ask students to research democratic principles and define them. (NOTE: This list is not comprehensive but these are examples of the important principles in our democracy. At times these principles come into conflict and result in controversy.)
- Ask students to give examples of these democratic principles as they relate to the S.P.M.D.T.U. Ask them to give two or three historical or current examples of the democratic principles in conflict.
- Ask students to choose one of the principles and find a representation that relates to the S.P.M.D.T.U. or Hispanic issues and immigration. This might be a national symbol, a newspaper story, a cartoon, or a saying or quote that exemplifies the importance of their principle.
- Divide the class into groups of 3-4 students. From the list of nine democratic principles, ask each student to select four that he/she thinks are most germane to S.P.M.D.T.U. or Hispanic issues and immigration. Poll the group after the selections have been made. Keep a tally of the responses. Ask each member to talk about the chosen principles and explain their reasoning. Discuss the areas of agreement and disagreement within the group. (NOTE: The overall purpose of this activity is not to come to an agreement but to encourage them to think and talk about the importance of the principles from their own perspectives.)

### Inquiry Strategies

Use the Library of Congress Primary Source Analysis tools to analyze two of the primary sources related to the S.P.M.D.T.U. Concilio Superior. Ask students to share their findings with the class. [http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing\\_Primary\\_Sources.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Primary_Sources.pdf)



## Assessment Strategies

Depending upon how one uses the resources and which standards are chosen, assessment can take many forms. For example:

**CO State History Standard 2 (g)** (Eighth Grade) Research and explore the evolution and history of other Hispano/Hispanic/Latino mutual aid societies.

**CO State Geography Standard 2 (c)** (Eighth Grade) There are seven *Concilios Locales* and the *Concilio Superior* lodges. Locate all of them on a map. What patterns or commonalities can be seen in their locations?

**CO State History Standard 2 (g-h)** (High School) In each community where there is a lodge, *the S.P.M.D.T.U.'s primary* motive was to unite workers for their mutual protection by the pooling of resources. (*La Sociedad*, p. 56) Research some of these lodges and their communities. What roles did each play in their own communities? Which roles do they still play in those communities?

## Other Resources

## Web Resources

National Register of Historic Places Homepage: <https://www.nps.gov/nr/>

Arnold and Maria Valdez, "S.P.M.D.T.U. Concilio Superior," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (September 29, 2000): <https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/6f5c522e-376e-4179-ac3c-c420e252888f?branding=NRHP>

La Voz: <http://lavozeolorado.com/detail.php?id=6020>

Official Website of the S.P.M.D.T.U.: Sociedad Protección Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos. <http://www.spmdu.org/>



## Secondary Sources

José A. Rivera, *La Sociedad: Guardians of Hispanic Culture along the Rio Grande* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2010).

Jose Timoteo Lopez, *La Historia de la Sociedad Proteccion Mutua de Trabajadores Unidos* (New York: Comet Press Books, 1958).

Colorado Society of Hispanic Genealogy, *Hispanic Pioneers in Colorado and New Mexico* (Colorado Society of Hispanic Genealogy, 2006).

Virginia McConnell Simmons, *The San Luis Valley: Land of the Six-Armed Cross* (Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing, 1979).

## Preservation Connection

National Register #01000322 – S.P.M.D.T.U. Concilio Superior, 603 Main Street, Antonito, CO

<https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/6f5c522e-376e-4179-ac3c-c420e252888f?branding=NRHP>

The S.P.M.D.T.U. meeting hall is listed in the State Register of Historic Properties and the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register form describes the significance of the S.P.M.D.T.U. as an important aspect of Colorado's social history that reflects ethnic Hispano heritage in the state. It identifies the historic and current functions of the Concilio Superior as well as architectural features that make it representative of this type of architecture.

The S.P.M.D.T.U. was the organizing body for sixty-four lodges in Colorado, New Mexico and Utah. Its period of significance was 1925 to 1950. The nomination contains maps, photos and floor plans. Additionally, the nomination includes a detailed history of mutual aid societies in America dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Both Colorado and New Mexico are highlighted. This rich resource provides teachers with the opportunity to offer students the chance to explore the importance of historic preservation as an enrichment to their study of history.

## Preservation Questions

How does the S.P.M.D.T.U. Concilio Superior tell the story of Colorado's history, economics and civic engagement?

Taking building materials and site locale into consideration, how does the S.P.M.D.T.U Concilio Superior embody culture of mid-twentieth-century?

In what ways does this story still continue today and how will it continue into the future?

Working together to tell the story of our state!

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