

Touro College
Department of History & Political Science
Professor Ira E. Weinstock

"From the Plough to the Microchip"
Perspectives on American Labor history

Midterm Fall 2017

Over the past several weeks, we have taken a journey through America's and to an extent the world's, for comparison, the economic, philosophical, political and social landscape in the relationship between labor and society. Several of the topics (but limited to) we discussed (and at some points, passionately) were:

- 1) Adam Smith and David Ricardo, the "creators" of modern economic theory and their impact on the relationship of economics to the marketplace, international trade and comparative advantage and the role of government policy.
- 2) The Industrial Revolution as a "catalyst of change" which transformed America from a primarily agrarian (agriculture and small specialized manufacturing) society as envisioned by Thomas Jefferson to a merchant, manufacturing, technological and global society as envisioned by Benjamin Franklin and Alexander Hamilton.
- 3) Women have played a role throughout the history of America's labor movements, from being seen as "...nimble and cheap labor..." to union organizers to company executives.

4) Throughout America's history there have been numerous social movements in which labor has played a major role. Choose two or three movements and discuss their impact on labor and society. If you would like, you may discuss a social and/or labor movement in either Europe, Africa, Asia or Latin America for a comparative approach.

Choose one of the above topics for discussion. Be creative and analytical in formulating your ideas and concepts. What is important is your "take" on the topic. The discussion should be approximately four pages, for this will allow for cohesive thought and "flow of ideas" without getting "lost in the details". Use at least five reference sources for this will allow for varied perspectives. After each reference, write a sentence describing the two or three major points of the reference and how it helped in developing your research and strengthened your discussion.

* MLA style

all 5 references must be

* relative to paper