

Synthesis...comparing sources & SAQ Practice... Industrialization

Analyze the two sources using your HIPP strategy Then, on a separate sheet of paper, write your answers to the following Short Answer Questions.

Be sure to label your answers and write in complete sentences.

- Briefly explain ONE major difference between Zinn and Schweikart/Allen's historical interpretation of the Industrialization Era.
- Briefly explain how ONE specific event, development or circumstance in this period that is NOT explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be used to support Zinn's argument.
- Briefly explain how ONE specific event, development or circumstance in this period that is NOT explicitly mentioned in the excerpts could be use to support Schweikart and Allen's argument.

Source #1: *A People's History of the United States*, Howard Zinn, 1980

Meanwhile, the government of the United States was behaving almost exactly as Karl Marx described a capitalist state: pretending neutrality to maintain order, but serving the interests of the rich. Not that the rich agreed among themselves; they had disputes over policies. But the purpose of the state was to settle upper-class disputes peacefully, control lower-class rebellion, and adopt policies that would further the long-range stability of the system. The arrangement between Democrats and Republicans to elect Rutherford Hayes in 1877 set the tone. Whether Democrats or Republicans won, national policy would not change in any important way.

Source #2: *A Patriot's History of the United States*-, Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen, 2004

It is difficult to say which of the nineteenth-century captains of industry was most important, though certainly Carnegie is in the top three. The other two, however, would have to be both John D. Rockefeller and J. P. Morgan, each a business wizard in his own right. Rockefeller probably came in for the most scorn of the three, even described as a "brooding, cautious, secretive man" who founded the "meanest monopoly known to history." When Rockefeller died, another said, "Hell must be half full." One can scarcely imagine that these comments were made about a devout Baptist, a lifelong tither, and a man who did more to provide cheap energy for the masses (and, in the process, probably saved the whales from extinction) than any other person who ever walked the earth.

Food For Thought: Which viewpoint is most consistent with Steven Lauridsen's thoughts on the Gilded Age?

"Some sage once said that all of human history can be condensed into just two most significant events: the Neolithic agricultural revolution and the modern industrial revolution. I've read some refutations that the first of these actually raised living standards at all (see Gregory Clark's *A Farewell to Alms: A Brief Economic History of the World*), so if that's true then there's only one event that has substantially changed the material conditions of the way most of the world's people live, and that's the Industrial Revolution. Essentially, the vast bulk of the population lived the same standard of living, the same caloric intake, the same lifespan whether we are talking about Neolithic inventers of farming, pyramid builders, Roman plebeians, medieval serfs, or 18th-century peasants. As far as economic historians know, this was true all around the world, on every continent, in spite of my Eurocentric examples. There were small cycles of income or standard of living, but no secular trend at all, for millennia. Whatever miniscule increase in worldwide wealth there was, was absorbed by the gradual increase in population, the classic Malthusian trap. Then came Britain's industrial revolution, which became the North Atlantic's industrial revolution during the 19th century. Suddenly, in the scope of history, everything changed. The Malthusian trap no longer applied: wealth for the first time began to be *created* at a pace that fundamentally transformed individuals' lives and societies beyond recognition. More precisely, everything changed *there*, in far NW Europe at first. The history of the world since 1760 or 1800 has been the uneven spread of wealth creation around the world. In fact, this year I relocated my life from suburban Chicago to the hyper-urbanizing Pearl River Delta in southern China largely so that I could see, experience, be part of the current stage of the world's Industrial Revolution: Literally every day 10s of 1000s of Chinese peasants are eagerly moving away from millennia of rural poverty eking out an existence pulling a plow behind a water buffalo, dying around age 40 of old age, overwork, malnutrition, or parasitic diseases from the high-waste-water in which the plow is pulled. The amazing truth is that now the poorest person (in an industrialized place) whom any of us will ever personally have a conversation with lives a vastly better, longer, materially comfortable life than even the most ostentatious king or emperor could have lived at any place or time in history up to 200 years or less ago. I could give thousands of illustrative examples, but this one can suffice: Dentistry. Today's industrial poor or the 1880s' industrial poor are yesteryear's science-fiction-level super-rich. In American history we call the time of the fastest improvement of living standards The Gilded Age. Who really thinks the most important thing to teach about that is that Rockefeller and some others got too rich? What really matters about that era is that the vast bulk of the entire population got fabulously, unprecedentedly, science-fiction-level rich by all previous historical standards." (Source: Steven Lauridsen, 2012)