

## Writing Assignment 1: Analyzing Contradictions in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century “Market Revolution”

**Due Date:** The assignment is due Friday, **October 14**, to your TA at the beginning of lecture. It should also be uploaded to Turnitin.com before 4:00 p.m. on that date. (Necessary passwords and instructions for Turnitin will be distributed by October 12.) Papers submitted after lecture will be considered late, and will have their grades lowered by 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g., B to B-). The penalty will increase accordingly for each additional day late. Any student turning in a late paper should consult his/her TA to discuss the situation.

**The Assignment:** In the prelude to Section Two of *A Different Mirror*, Ronald Takaki writes, “Embedded in the very birth of the United States in 1776 was a contradiction. The Founding Fathers had declared the ‘self-evident truth’ that ‘all men are created equal,’ but in 1787, they wrote into the Constitution a provision that implicitly legalized slavery...” (75).

Reflect on this quotation, as well as the definition of “contradiction” in the DOC 1 Reader. Then, write a paper that analyzes examples of “contradiction” in the 19<sup>th</sup> century United States. Develop your analysis by selecting examples from the section of the book entitled, “Contradictions,” and by selecting examples from *either* chapter 4 *or* chapter 7 (choose one). Use the following questions to guide your draft:

- In an opening paragraph, use your reading and lecture notes to summarize the major characteristics of the “market revolution.” According to Takaki, what was its relationship to cheap labor and land?
- In one to two paragraphs, develop your analysis. For example, according to Takaki, how did the major characteristics and practices of the market revolution contradict the founding principles that “all men are created equal”? What historical events, movements, or examples from the chapter best demonstrate these contradictions? Be specific in your analysis – what makes them contradictory?
- Conclude your response by describing how certain groups of people described in the chapter worked to expose and/or address the contradictions you analyzed. What criticism(s) did they have? What strategies did they use? Give at least one specific example to explain these points.

**Final Drafts:** Final drafts should be approximately 2 to 2½ pages (or less than 1,000 words) and should be typed, double-spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins. Your name, your TA’s name, and your section number should be typed at the top. (Do not use a cover page).

### Tips for Writing a Successful Response

1. You should imagine the primary reader of your paper is a friend or family member who is not attending this class and has not read the chapter (rather than your professor or TA). Thus, you cannot assume that your primary reader will know much about the chapter or the contradictions you have chosen to write about.

2. You do not need to write a traditional 5-paragraph essay that you may have been asked to write in high school. Your paper does not need to have a traditional introduction with a thesis statement or a conclusion. Instead, follow the guidelines above for beginning and concluding your paper.
3. In your response, you will want to demonstrate that you have read and analyzed the chapter and your related lecture notes. Provide readers with well-chosen details, examples, and explanations to develop your ideas. Be sure to proofread for mechanical errors.

**Works Cited and Outside Sources:** To complete the assignment, students should use course materials (lecture notes and readings) and should not use outside sources. You do not need to include a works cited page for this assignment, but proper citation of others' work is required. For example, you should cite the page numbers from the reading if you use any direct quotations.

## Evaluation Rubric

Grade Range	Description
<b>“A” Range – Exceptional Response</b>	The “A” paper really makes readers think about the topic. It demonstrates a comprehensive, complex, and especially insightful response to the topic and related course materials. It addresses all parts of the prompt and goes beyond the obvious in its explanations of contradiction. Examples are extremely well chosen and explained in depth. Proofreading and editing is superb and includes very few MLA or sentence-level errors, if any. Most importantly, it is interesting to read!
<b>“B” Range – Strong and Successful Response</b>	The “B” paper is a successful response to the assignment. It mostly anticipates a reader’s needs and concerns. It addresses the prompt, and the ideas are mostly clear and easy to follow. However, there are a few places where these components could be explored with more depth, specificity, and/or accuracy to improve the paper. For example, the examples and explanation could be slightly more developed, or they could be contextualized better. Additional reading or note taking could have improved this paper. Proofreading and editing is well done, with only a few minor issues.
<b>“C” Range – Adequate Response</b>	The “C” paper demonstrates an adequate response to the assignment. It addresses all parts of the prompt, but there are a few areas for improvement. Some elements of contradiction could be explained better. Examples are not always clearly explained or successfully applied to the notion of contradiction. In addition, a few paragraphs rely on unsupported generalizations and/or unexplained supporting details. Perhaps the writer could have anticipated reader concerns a bit more. With a little more reading, review, revision, and editing – and perhaps an office hour visit to the TA or lecturer – this could have been a “B” paper.
<b>“D” and Below Range – Incomplete Response</b>	Work that earns a grade below a “C” indicates that the paper is an incomplete response to the assignment. A paper in this range may struggle with some/all of the following: lacks a clear argument; addresses the wrong prompt; fails to follow all directions; fails to incorporate course readings and materials; does not use supporting details or evidence; has significant structural and distracting sentence-level errors. It may also contain evidence of plagiarism. A paper in this range could have strongly benefited from: additional planning and outlining work, office hour visits with the TA, appointments with Gwen Fish, and/or greater class participation.