

2017

American Labor Union Comparison

Grace Larkin

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/vulcan>



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Larkin, Grace (2017) "American Labor Union Comparison," *Vulcan Historical Review*. Vol. 21, Article 5.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/vulcan/vol21/iss2017/5>

This content has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the UAB Digital Commons, and is provided as a free open access item. All inquiries regarding this item or the UAB Digital Commons should be directed to the [UAB Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication](#).

American Labor Union Comparison

by Grace Larkin

DIFFERENCES IN the ideological fabric of the American labor movement affected the success of both the American Federation of Labor (AFL) as well as the International Workers of the World (IWW), albeit in different ways. Led by Samuel Gompers, the AFL chose to focus on independent politics to achieve legislative actions that would protect the rights and demands of the everyday worker divided according to individual industry, skill level, and economic class.¹ The relatively peaceful, middle-class, organized meetings resulted in slow-moving progress for specific unions, angering more radical members. Prompted by their unhappiness in the AFL leadership, liberal unionists such as Big Bill Haywood and Eugene Debs left to form the IWW,² or Wobblies, with direct action and leftist politics in mind. To unify all laborers as a single class to institute industrial democracy,³ the Wobblies merged the political concepts of socialist anarcho-syndicalism and Marxism.⁴ The division of the movement proves traceable to a split in

the perception of workers by labor leaders, the use of varying tactics, and each group's approach to the existing capitalist structure. The following argument will focus primarily on the actions of both unions during the early twentieth century, the differences between the two union movements, and how their differing ideologies and

“ THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT BEGAN TO DIVIDE AS VARIOUS SECTIONS OF LABOR SIDED WITH THEIR RESPECTIVE CAMPS OF SKILLED VERSUS UNSKILLED, MIDDLE CLASS VERSUS LOWER CLASS, AND CRAFT VERSUS INDUSTRIAL.

tactics affected their success. Eventually, the American Federation of Labor compromised by aligning itself with the Democratic Party and merging with another union, the Congress of Industrial Organization (CIO),⁵ adopting a more industrial unionist approach. The International Workers of the World, considered a subversive organization by the United States government for outbreaks of violence,⁶ backed away from extreme leftist political views while maintaining an industrial unionist approach.

1 Bernard Mandel, “Samuel Gompers and the Establishment of American Federation of Labor Policies,” *Social Science* 31 (1956), accessed November 21, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41884456>.

2 Joseph R. Conlin, “The I.W.W. and the Socialist Party,” *Science & Society* 31(1967): 26, accessed November 21, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40401247>.

3 Industrial Workers of the World, “Industrial Union Manifesto,” (1905), accessed November 21, 2016, https://iww.org/history/library/iww/industrial_union_manifesto.

4 Patrick Renshaw, “The IWW and the Red Scare 1917-24,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 3 (1968): 64, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/259851>

5 “Constitution of Industrial Union Department American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations,” *ILR Review* 9 (1956), accessed November 25, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2519885>.

6 Renshaw, “The IWW and the Red Scare 1917-24,” 64-68.



IWW sticker advocating their “One Big Union” strategy, courtesy of International Workers of the World.

Craft Unionism versus Industrial Unionism

The importance of ideological differences remains underestimated in the discussion of labor history, particularly in the case of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the International Workers of the World (IWW). The examination of the practical applications of their individual ideological frameworks can wholly determine the success of each of these groups. The first difference in need of careful consideration is the dichotomy

of craft unionism versus industrial unionism and the underlying motivations for the separation based on socio-economic class distinction and skill level. Craft or trade unionism focused particularly on uniting workers of the same trade or craft to leverage their bargaining chip of skilled labor against a flaw in the existing economic system. Relatively a bourgeois ideology, craft unions approached workers’ issues primarily through economic means before resorting to any sort of political activism; in particular, the AFL saw its members as “American citizens” before categorizing themselves as laborers.⁷ Using the craft union paradigm allowed for the addressing of specific trade-related needs, but the exclusion of general labor meant the stalling of overall progress across the entirety of the American labor force. As growth in the industrial section exploded, laborers gradually became less skilled as technology and mass production took hold of the American economy.

The traditional methods of the labor movement would need to adapt to meet different demands; industrial unionism formed from the gaps in practice of the trade union paradigm. Industrial unionism implied one large union, or the big union method, which in simpler terms meant inclusion of all sorts of workers at varying levels of skill. Usually, industrial unions constituted the mass-production labor force and laborers of the non-skilled variety. A larger pool of representation meant the possibility of a louder voice for quicker results, but the drawback of disunity via lack of brotherhood based on trade or very specific needs remaining unmet drew criticism for supporters of the industrial union movement. Primarily in a lower socioeconomic class, the labor class recognized the hardships of maintaining a bargaining chip with less

⁷ Max Handman, “Conflicting Ideologies in the American Labor Movement,” *American Journal of Sociology* 43 (1938): 537-538, accessed November 27, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2768481>.

specialization in a trade, especially when industrial labor remained overwhelmingly underrepresented in unions.⁸ The industrial class laborers strictly questioned the competitiveness and greed of the economic structure and demanded state intervention⁹ to rebalance the power struggle between employers and employees, directly clashing ideologically with the craft unionists. Socioeconomic-based racial pride cut short any chance at the industrial laborers to be welcomed into the open arms of union brotherhood. Craft unionists felt superior because of their trade skills to the general laborer, further engendering a spirit of disunion and competition within the American labor movement. The American labor movement began to divide as various sections of labor sided with their respective camps of skilled versus unskilled, middle class versus lower class, and craft versus industrial.

Craft unionists saw existing economic capitalism as a permanent structure, and they found little reason to replace it. Instead, craft unionism, as in the case of the American Federation of Labor, worked within capitalism by removing workers' issues through careful mediation and economic means, possibly strengthening their collective to improve their specific lot.¹⁰ Industrial unionists also shared the respect of collective solidarity as a means to achieve goals, but industrial actions reflected the homogenous representation of both unskilled and skilled workers as a social class,¹¹ rather than within an economic context. Industrial unionists demanded solidarity



—Courtesy of The American Federationist.

THE UNION MAN'S BURDEN
Every Organized Worker Carries an Unorganized Worker "Strapped to His Back"

Cartoon from the AFL newspaper in 1922, courtesy of The Railroad Trainmen.

⁸ Ibid., 527.

⁹ Ibid., 538.

¹⁰ Jack Barbash, "Unions and Politics," *Challenge* 12 (1964): 36, accessed November 23, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40721080>.

¹¹ Robert F. Hoxie, "Trade Unionism in the United States," *Journal of Political Economy* 22 (1914): 208, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1820431>.

across the entirety of a labor front,¹² so class recognition as laborers demanded modification of the existing capitalist structure. The International Workers of the World proposed to merge the political and industrial sectors to empower the laboring class as a political entity to solve workers' problems.¹³ The already strenuous ideological dichotomy had teetered under the process of amalgamation, or the joining of various unions to work collectively for change. Although a federation of unions, the AFL withstood such industry modifications through no definitive action, but rather again their ideology.¹⁴ Bureaucratic conservatives within the organization opposed the loss of influence of the individual trades as well as the divisive agendas of certain political affiliations. However, the revolutionary leaders of industrial organizations like the IWW plowed ahead with an inevitable political agenda as solidarity swept laborers into a national movement.¹⁵

Political Efficacy of Tactics

The split in ideological approach to laborer identity and whether or not to dismantle the existing capitalist structure affected the role of political affiliation or activism as these two labor organizations conducted their

business. The leaders of the International Workers of the World sought improvement of labor conditions via improvement of the social condition, not unlike many leftist political affiliations,¹⁶ leading to revolutionary tactics and political activism. Aligned with the Socialist Party of America from 1910-1913, the International Workers of the World practiced direct action through non-violent protests such as strikes, boycotts, and the passing out of propagandistic materials. The party's main interest lay in encouraging the labor movement for social reform; American socialists aided and supported the IWW, quite the militant labor union.¹⁷ Eager to produce legislation that guaranteed a minimum wage, maximum hours, and political democratization, many socialists asserted that the agency of revolution rested on the shoulders of the unions, and they actively promoted the tactics of the International Workers of the World.

Militancy on behalf of labor unions did have a few drawbacks. Big Bill Haywood introduced the tactic of sabotage, or striking on the job by slowing the flow of labor.¹⁸ Misunderstood as active destruction of life or property, the IWW's inclusion of more radical tactics crushed the faith of conservative socialists, which led to a loss in membership numbers and in socialist votes. Violence and militancy equally restricted the movements of industrial labor activists. The aggressive militancy

12 Amy Hewes, "The Changing Structure of the Bargaining Unit of Labor," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 39 (1925): 613, accessed November 25, 2016. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1883268>.

13 Robert F. Hoxie, "The Truth About the I.W.W.," *Journal of Political Economy* 21 (1913): 787-791, accessed November 29, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1819758>.

14 Hewes, "The Changing Structure of the Bargaining Unit of Labor," 632.

15 Larry Peterson, "The One Big Union in International Perspective: Revolutionary Industrial Unionism 1900-1925," *Labour / Le Travail* 7 (1981): 42-47, accessed November 29, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25140021>.

16 The author specifically remarks upon similarities between the IWW and anarchists, syndicalists, and socialists, generally grouping them together under the umbrella term of "social reformers". William M. Leiserson, "'Growing Pains' of the American Labor Movement," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 224 (1942): 4, accessed November 30, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1022978>.

17 Joseph R. Conlin, "The I.W.W. and the Socialist Party," 23-26.

18 Known as the "Haywood Element," extreme militancy affected both the IWW and the Socialist Party of America in negative ways, mainly in membership and votes. *Ibid.*, 27-29.

with which the International Workers of the World previously triumphed backfired as the United States government eventually classified the union as a subversive group; contrary to its poor reputation, some historians note that the IWW won public opinion through sheer controversy.¹⁹

Led by Big Bill Haywood and Eugene Debs, the IWW actually abhorred violence on principle, that while violence “is the basis of every political state in existence, [it] has no place in the foundation or superstructure of this organization.”²⁰ The union instead imagined a new vision of society in which all minor strikes were simply practice for the eventual general strike to ultimately cripple the economy and place power in the hands of the working class. A notorious nonviolent tactic included sending the children of strikers out of town. This action made a splash in the media concerning the carelessness of authorities when handling strikes while relieving stress on union funds.²¹ The question of violence remains a valid consideration of history when regarding the International Workers of the World, as many of their strikes ended in arrests and bloodshed. Several historians have pointed to xenophobic and conservative



IWW headquarters with leader Big Bill Haywood on the right, courtesy of Industrial Workers of the World.

backlash, especially in the case of the Centralia lumber industry strikes in 1917. Local members of the American Legion and the IWW disputed over class struggles and union meetings, sadly resulting in a destructive bloody riot that dissolved the strikes and led to martyr-status for several IWW members convicted of murder.²² Incidents such as the Centralia riot littered the history of the IWW,²³ yet history may interpret the IWW not as transgressors of violence, but as victims.

In opposition to the earnest nature of organization promoted by the IWW, the American Federation of Labor seemed to wait for the labor force to organize into groups before assisting in achieving goals,²⁴ rather than actively pushing a political agenda such as the Wobblies’ tactics. Using a more defensive approach that focused on

19 See Conlin, Tyler, Genini, and Richardson.

20 Joseph Conlin, “The IWW and the Question of Violence,” *The Wisconsin Magazine of History* 51 (1968): 319, accessed November 30, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4634357>.

21 Joseph R. Conlin, “The I.W.W. and the Socialist Party,” 34.

22 Robert L. Tyler, “Violence at Centralia, 1919,” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 45 (1954): 119-121, accessed November 30, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40487099>.

23 Other examples include the Everett Massacre in 1916 (see Richardson) and the violent year of beatings and jail time during the Fresno Free Speech Fight (see Genini). John G. Richardson, “Mill Owners and Wobblies: The Event Structure of the Everett Massacre of 1916,” *Social Science History*, 33 (2009), accessed December 1, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40267998>. Ronald Genini, “Industrial Workers of the World and Their Fresno Free Speech Fight, 1910-1911,” *California Historical Quarterly* 53, (1974), accessed December 1, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25157499>.

24 William M. Leiserson, “‘Growing Pains’ of the American Labor Movement,” 8.

legislative action within the existing construct rather than forcing the construct to bend to its will, the American Federation of Labor used less aggressive methods than the IWW. Whilst the IWW chose leftist rhetoric, sabotage, angry propaganda, and marching rallies to further their ideals, the AFL made great use of the “closed shop” and boycott methods.²⁵ The closed shop essentially functioned as a unionized shop in which all members belonged to the same union, primarily the American Federation of Labor, and thus solved their employee-employer arguments with in-house arbitration through the union body. While entirely supportive of one’s right to do so, strikes existed only as “reserve weapons, to be kept ready but not used until other methods fail,”²⁶ and the organization threatened the withdrawal of important support²⁷ if a local union chapter went on strike without the AFL’s blessing. Contrary to the International Workers of the World’s enthusiastic zeal for political motivation for the American labor movement, the American Federation of Labor remained primarily apolitical until its later years beneath Democratically-aligned William Green.

Aligning any union politically remained restricted as well, specifically if the movement could be deemed radical, and therefore detracting from the AFL’s labor agenda. The American Federation of Labor specifically armed themselves against claims of socialism and



Samuel Gompers, leader of the AFL, seated at his desk, can be located in the background of this photograph, courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

communism because of the militant nature of such political theories, a stance that could possibly disrupt their middle-class support. One could find long-time president of the AFL, Samuel Gompers, guiltily incongruous of anti-radical politics, especially when examining the labor leader’s sources on labor theory. He regularly quoted Karl Marx in several of his writings, claiming that the “fundamental concept on which the A. F. of L... later developed”²⁸ stemmed from his understanding of Marx’s conception of labor organization and controlling economic power. Gompers, as leader of the AFL, set the tone for his unionists, and that argument remained defensibly against political action until the labor movement had gained enough organization and strength to achieve

25 Jay Newton Baker, “The American Federation of Labor,” *The Yale Law Journal* 22 (1912): 83-86, accessed December 1, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/785647>.

26 George G. Groat, “Trade Unionism and the American Federation of Labor,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 179 (1935): 15, accessed December 1, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1020274>.

27 Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, “Strikes Reported by the American Federation of Labor, 1914-1915,” *Monthly Review of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics* 2 (1916), accessed December 1, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41822953>.

28 John R. Commons, “Karl Marx and Samuel Gompers,” *Political Science Quarterly* 41 (1926): 281, accessed December 4, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2142097>.

political success without disrupting the success of their economic agenda.²⁹

Ostracizing local members of the same trades, but only those not belonging to the right union or shop, the AFL began to attempt cooperation with other unions to bring about broad, sweeping reforms through easy organization. The “If you can’t lick ‘em, join ‘em,”³⁰ philosophy of the AFL deepened the ideological wedge between the craft unionists and industrial union movement, as well as incurring a blow to their reputation amongst employers. Boycotts provided a wider audience for support, as the AFL specifically targeted companies for union members to avoid. The traditionally craft union approach worked for the AFL simply due to its middle-class mindset, and the use of economic means to achieve economic ends without resorting to the dirtiness of politics suited the conservative leadership.³¹ The American Federation of Labor firmly believed it could achieve labor progress without the intervention of the government.

Educating the Masses

As the differences between craft unionism and industrial unionism clearly delineated themselves within the tactics and political affiliations of the American Fed-

eration of Labor and the International Workers of the World labor unions, another notable difference stemming from ideology proved to be the approach to education. Both labor unions stressed the importance of education, but viewed education quite differently. The American Federation of Labor interpreted education as a learnable skill within the existing capitalist society. As a transitional element to incorporate the unskilled laborers (mostly industrial unionists) into the fold of craft unionism, leader Samuel Gompers insisted that industrial education “must meet the needs of the worker as well as the requirements of the employer”³² whilst being organized for public accessibility to benefit the community’s next generation.³³ Viewing education as skills to gain also led to the AFL’s push to reform education in favor of workers and their families.

At a union convention meeting in 1917, the AFL debated various improvements to not only the school system’s syllabi but to the entire way American public school functioned. The union strove to return the power to the people through the democratic election of school boards, the inclusion of vocational and craft trade training classes to the existing school program, and the establishment of a teachers’ union.³⁴ Union leaders hoped to establish a consistent replenishment of the workforce, ensuring the maintenance of control over labor production, through the gain of vocational skills taught at school. The AFL sought to control part of public education to further

29 Bernard Mandel, “Samuel Gompers—An Evaluation,” *Social Science* 39 (1964): 211, accessed December 4, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41885042>.

30 James O. Morris, “The AFL in the 1920’s: A Strategy of Defense,” *ILR Review* 11 (1958): 573, accessed December 4, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2519356>.

31 William Green, “The American Federation of Labor’s Wage Policy,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 248 (1946): 5, accessed December 4, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1025571>.

32 Samuel Gompers, “Attitude of the American Federation of Labor Toward Industrial Education,” *The Journal of Education* 83 (1916): 147, accessed December 5, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42825806>.

33 Ibid., 148.

34 Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor, “Convention Proceedings of the American Federation of Labor,” *Monthly Review of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics* 4 (1917): 9, accessed December 5, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41823242>.

promote economic-based labor skills, but the education of their members also had to be controlled.

“ THE SPLIT IN IDEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO LABORER IDENTITY AND WHETHER OR NOT TO DISMANTLE THE EXISTING CAPITALIST STRUCTURE AFFECTED THE ROLE OF POLITICAL AFFILIATION OR ACTIVISM AS THESE TWO LABOR ORGANIZATIONS CONDUCTED THEIR BUSINESS.

The *Federationist* newspaper, edited by both Gompers and Green over a period of consecutive years, actively manipulated educational material provided by academics, intellectuals, and contributors from outside union ranks. The AFL adamantly refused to allow intellectuals such as economists and professors (deemed non-wage earners or non-laborers)³⁵ to provide commentary on how the labor movement should conduct its business; the union's catty slight of academia in their press seemed more ideologically motivated, rather than being based on fear of educating their members. Besides the urge for political activism by many intellectuals, Gompers and his men diametrically opposed the academic support for more radical groups like the IWW who employed industrial unionism.³⁶ Gradually, as the American Federation of Labor loosened their middle-class conservatism and began politically aligning in later years, the newspaper editorials softened, allowing for workers to gain a more intellectual understanding of their conditions and meth-

ods of improving them.

Contrarily, the International Workers of the World viewed education as promotion of a philosophy, or way of life, or in other terms, the realignment of a laborer's worldview through the spread of socialist and anarchist doctrine.³⁷ The IWW insisted on a common understanding of workers' conditions before organization and the reassessment of the role of the laboring class in capitalist society. At the risk of oversimplifying to the point of the view of the reductionist, the International Workers of the World viewed workers as creating wealth through production (labor) for capitalists and therefore holding the key to social and labor progress; if the workers used their power to overthrow the greedy system, they, in turn, could control the means of wealth and could distribute it as necessary.³⁸ Former American Federation of Labor member Eugene Debs stepped to the ranks of the IWW to further the socialist agenda when it could not gain traction in more conservative ranks, and he chose to arm his fellow industrial unionists with the weapon of education,³⁹ particularly in the reading, distribution, and lecturing on socialist materials, to learn how to economically and politically overthrow the capitalist system without any shedding of blood or violent action.

The more radical union leader Big Bill Haywood framed this major overhaul, known as industrial democracy, to the working American's lifestyle through replacement of the capitalist structure as development of individ-

37 Industrial Workers of the World, "Education and System: Basis of Organization" (1924), accessed November 25, 2016, https://iww.org/history/library/iww/education_and_system.

38 Industrial Workers of the World, "Industrial Organization the Vital Force" (1924), accessed November 25, 2016, <https://iww.org/history/library/iww/isandisnt/4>

39 H. Wayne Morgan, "The Utopia of Eugene V. Debs," *American Quarterly* 11 (1959): 125-127, accessed December 6, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2710669>.

35 Lyle W. Cooper, "The American Federation of Labor and the Intellectuals," *Political Science Quarterly* 43 (1928), 391-392, accessed December 5, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2142973>.

36 Ibid., 393.

uals through the free opportunity to learn skills and gain experiences, which included the encouragement of not only of schooling but of leisure time as well as a valuable learning tool. The freedom to do so could only be brought about by the active dismantling of the existing economic paradigm, which for the IWW, appropriated all workers at all skill levels, regardless of trade division. Haywood hoped to promote a peaceful, all-inclusive coup against capitalism through the success of educationally sharing socialism, perhaps best stated by himself:

Socialism is a message of hope. It is addressed to the working class. It will save the working class, or rather, show the working class how to save itself. The world does not need to be cursed by long labor, by low wages, by starvation, by worry, and by disease...When enough of the workers understand Socialism, believe in it, and are firmly resolved to have it, the time will be ripe for the change. That change is coming. It is coming soon. Every added recruit who will read and think brings it nearer.⁴⁰

Ideologically incompatible understandings of education led to fundamentally different approaches to politics, economics, worker-employer relations, labor theory, and class theory by these vastly opposite union groups. The International Workers of the World likened the class struggle to “wage slavery,”⁴¹ the epitome of all world

40 William D. Haywood and Frank Bohm, “Industrial Socialism,” unknown date. Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, Chicago, IL, 10, accessed November 25, 2016, <https://iww.org/PDF/history/library/Haywood/haywood%20industrial%20socialism%207th%20ed.pdf>.

41 Eugene V. Debs, “Revolutionary Unionism,” (speech delivered in Chicago, November 25, 1905). Charles H. Kerr Publishing Company, Chicago, IL: 3-6, accessed November 25, 2016, <http://>

problems, and sought to alter the laboring force’s future by systematically and actively destroying and then replacing the existing social hierarchy based on economics and politics; education served as the method to distribute the IWW’s message and methods. The American Federation of Labor hoped to incorporate labor as an option, rather than the only option à la the leftist-based IWW, within the already established system of capitalist society. Working within such parameters, education represented the gain of skills and therefore respect as individual laborers possibly transitioned into a higher socioeconomic status.

Conclusion

While the International Workers of the World and the American Federation of Labor retain several differences, their dedication to their union members reveal similarities. Both unions fought for the improvement of their members’ livelihoods, living conditions, and futures through active organization and cohesive solidarity. The differences between the IWW and the AFL starkly divide the groups, unfortunately cleaving the American labor movement of the early twentieth century into two camps. Radical leftist politics served as the vehicle of motivation for the International Workers of the World to improve the conditions of the laborer within a class construct. The middle-class mindset of the American Federation of Labor hindered political alignment but thoroughly propelled their cause forward as a safer option for Americans wanting to participate in union activities.

The divisory line of definition between craft and industrial unionism equally separated the IWW and AFL

www.iww.org/PDF/history/library/Debs/Debs7.pdf.

functioning as a viable representative of the laboring folk.

in terms of their methods of executing their respective agendas. The Wobblies chose harsher, more active, and emotionally aggressive tactics such as wildcat strikes, street-corner proselytizing, sabotage, and propaganda to promote a peaceful takeover of capitalism in favor of instituting an industrial democracy. The more radical union wanted to place economic and therefore social power back in the hands of the worker, and an entire change to one's psychological perception of the world proved to be the requirements. On the other hand, the American Federation of Labor played a safer game, using an easily digestible campaign of unionized shops, sedate discussion forums, and passive boycotts. While the IWW suggested non-violence, history interprets the AFL's proposal to the labor movement as more pacifistic.

Education reflected this pacifistic approach; the International Workers of the World weaponized knowledge, quite literally arming their members with the philosophies and concepts necessary to repudiate and revoke capitalism as both an economic and social structure, while the AFL gently nudged their members towards skill-based education rather than an entire lifestyle change. The leaders of the more conservative of the two unions carefully selected the information disseminated to their workers, right down to the type of intellectual included within the editorial pages of the *Federationist* newspaper and pamphlets. Ultimately, the ideological foundations of these two unions determined their approaches to the labor movement within early twentieth century America. Ideology established the tactics, so the more extreme the ideology, the more extreme the tactics used by a burgeoning labor movement. Overall, the International Workers of the World proved to be the more brazen and outspoken of the two unions, whereas the American Federation of Labor slowly incorporated more conservative aspects of industrial unionism into their own agenda to continue