

Social Effects of the Industrial Revolution (1800-1920)

You Mean There Was More to the Industrial Revolution Than a Bunch of Machines?

Factories, Mines, and Child Labor

The Industrial Revolution created a great deal of change in society. One major change was the shift from work being done at home by hand in **cottage industries** to work being done in **factories**. There were harsh and unsafe working conditions in these early factories. The machines posed a significant threat to workers' lives. Even more deadly was work performed in coal mines. Owners of mines and factories had considerable control over the lives of laborers who worked long hours for low pay. An average worker would work 14 hours a day, six days a week. Fearful of losing their jobs, workers would typically not complain about the horrible conditions and low pay. Owners realized that they could pay women and children less than men. **Child labor** increased because it kept the costs of production low and the profits high. As a result, the working class lived in poverty, while the bosses who made up the **middle class** grew wealthy.

Labor Unions and Reforms

During the 1800s, working people began to demand reforms. Workers joined together in voluntary labor associations called **unions**. A union represented workers in a particular trade. Unions engaged in **collective bargaining** as well as negotiations between workers and their employers. Unions would ask for better working conditions, fewer hours, and higher pay. One of the greatest tools of labor unions was worker-organized **strikes**, refusing to work if demands were not met. Unions also **lobbied** for laws to improve the lives of workers, including women and children. By the 1830s and 1840s, the British and U.S. governments began to pass laws protecting workers. The earliest laws focused on helping child laborers. Though it was a very slow process, eventually laws would help all workers.



Labor Strikes 1870-1890

Source: <http://wps.ablongman.com/wps/media/objects/1483/1518969/DIV1378.jpg>

Pasteur's discovery of bacteria, health care increased, and people began to live longer. The middle and upper classes benefited immediately from the Industrial Revolution. For workers, it took much longer. However during the 1800s, workers formed labor unions and gained higher wages and better working conditions. As a result, they began to see the benefits of the Industrial Revolution as well.



Political Cartoon on Child Labor, 1912

Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Child_labour_cartoon_Hine_no_2870.jpg

Positive Effects of the Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution had many positive effects. Among those was an increase in wealth, the production of goods, and the standard of living. People had access to healthier diets, better housing, and cheaper goods. In addition, education increased during the Industrial Revolution. Due in part to the Edward Jenner's invention of the smallpox vaccine and Louis

Changes for Women

The Industrial Revolution marked a dramatic change for women as many of them entered the work force for the first time. Women had to compete with men for jobs. Female factory workers often made only one-third as much as men. Women began leading reforms to change this. As women became more involved in politics, some began to demand suffrage, the right to vote. By 1918, Great Britain granted women over 30 the right to vote. The United States granted women **suffrage** with the passing of the 19th amendment in 1920.



British Suffragist

Source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Women%27s_suffrage_in_the_United_Kingdom#mediaviewer/File:British_suffragette_clipped.jpg

Key Vocabulary

Cottage Industry: making goods at home by hand, in particular textiles

Factory: large buildings in which machines are used to create goods

Child Labor: the use of children as workers in factories and mines

Middle Class: a social class made up of skilled workers, professionals, business people, and wealthy farmers

Unions: an association of workers formed to bargain for better working conditions and higher wages

Suffrage: right to vote

Collective Bargaining: negotiations between workers and their employers

Strike: to refuse to work in order to force an employer to meet certain demands

Lobby: to try to influence government officials to make decisions for or against something

Quick Review

1. What title best completes the “?” in the chart?

- A. Associations of journeymen
- B. Craft guilds
- C. Secret fraternal organizations
- D. Labor unions



2. Which of the following pairs of people are best identified with medical advances?

- A. Jethro Tull and Louis Pasteur
- B. Michael Faraday and Samuel Morse
- C. Edward Jenner and Louis Pasteur
- D. James Watt and Robert Fulton

3. The young girl in the political cartoon represents a child laborer. Why did business owners prefer to use child labor?

- A. The use of children kept production costs high and raised profits.
- B. The use of children increased the output of products.
- C. The use of children increased productivity while raising costs.
- D. The use of children lowered production costs and raised profits.



4. Identify and explain one to two negative effects of the Industrial Revolution and two to three positive effects.

Connection to Today

Child labor and labor strikes exist today. Research these two topics. What nations and companies are impacted by child labor and labor strikes?

Resources

Marshall Cavendish

- Labor Movement and Unions:

<http://www.marshallcavendishdigital.com/articledisplay-result/40/8226/84573>

ABC-CLIO

- “Factory Act (1833)”

<http://worldhistory.abc-clio.com/Search/Display/308883?terms=factory+act>