

Film Response: Industrial Revolution

One of the most significant changes in day-to-day living between 1820 and 1920 is how society perceives and measures time. In 1820, living was still agrarian, which meant time was thought of according to solar cycles and seasons and relative to particular times of day such as morning, noon, and night. Next would be specific vocations, as twenty years into the nineteenth century would have shown jobs mostly dealing in farming and agriculture, but a century later, it would have most likely transitioned to a storefront, factory, or a mine working excessive backbreaking hours. Yet there's light at the end of the tunnel because U.S. railroad workers just four years prior were legally mandated to the eight-hour workday under the Adamson Act of 1916.

Small improvements were made, which contributed to the revolution's efficacy. One such development was John Kay's *Flying Shuttle* which increased the speed of weaving exponentially, which in turn increased the output of fabric mills to meet demand. The increase in which thread could be woven resulted in an increased demand for the thread necessary. To solve the issue, the *Spinning Jenny* allowed for over one hundred bobbins of thread to be produced simultaneously instead of one at a time. Carding machines added to the improved process by straightening cotton so it could be spun easier.

Oppression of those lower on the spectrum of the social hierarchy were exploited in an effort to keep labor cost as low as possible. One such demographic were the orphans of religious and government institutions. The use of enslaved people was also a free resource exploited in order to keep costs low, subsequently increasing profit. They were responsible for producing not only the sugar, coffee, and tobacco consumed by the underpaid who were exploited but also materials such as the palm oil necessary for maintaining the machinery that was at the center of their period.

The bourgeoisie, equivalent to the aristocracy and proletariat, or common working class, grew in the wake of the industrial revolution, the prior being those who owned the factories; the prior being those who owned the factories, banks, or large plots of land used for production, with the latter comprised of those who worked the factory floors and the farms. In Europe, the middle class grew out of those "in-between" the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, primarily due to their specialized skills, such as medical practitioners, educators, etc.

Women, interestingly enough, were good enough to work in fabric mills and coal mines, side by side with their male counterparts, but were not given their own earned wage; they were often forced to have it given to their husbands instead. They were also determined from work outside of the home through the cultural screen of being "angels in the household," which would perpetuate the idea that they were more so needed as the soothing balm after a horrific day.

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Work Cited:

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