

BRITAIN BEFORE 1760

Prior to the industrial revolution, the gap between the classes was not so severe as to polarize one group from the others. Lower prices on food, increased techniques and developments within agriculture, and the addition of new crops created a new type of farmer capable of generating more earnings while at the same time, and more importantly, holding some social stability within this class. This stability, or social reforms for the "poor", was evident with the lower class successfully striking down wage cuts, monopolies, and taxes, while at the same time gaining coverage from government humanitarian efforts.

STATISTICAL EVIDENCE OF THE IMPACT OF INDUSTRY BEFORE 1850

By 1801 30% of the population of England lived in cities that were over crowded and facing serious housing shortages with unsanitary living conditions. D.R. Green and A.G. Parton, *'Slums and Slum Life in Victorian England: London and Birmingham in Mid Century - Urban Change and Slum Formation'*, examined surveys in Maresfield of 205 houses with 845 rooms that were occupied by 859 families. The city of London alone faced housing shortages from 1831 to 1861 with an overall decline of 30%, packing as many families in old warehouses, mills, and "old houses subdivided and in some cases over thirty people were crowded into no more than four rooms." Green and Parton show a correlation of low wages and available housing with high mortality rates and illnesses among the poor, especially with female headed households, as reasons for the development of slums.

LITERARY / ANECDOTAL / DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF THE IMPACT OF INDUSTRY BEFORE 1850.

In William Blake's *Jerusalem* (1804) he clearly shows a disdain for industrial growth from a countryside community he envisioned as. "In England's green and pleasant land," to that "Among these dark and Satanic mills." Blake, along with Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village* (1770), show a shift from small farm communities to the developing cities with a loss of humanity and faith based community. Both pose a good versus evil scenario, right and wrong, and god and the devil with venturing out from these farming towns to the big cities. Goldsmith writes, "I see the rural virtues leave the land". This loss of religion for a pursuit of prosperity is the key for a deteriorating society.

COUNTER-ARGUMENTS OR COUNTER-EVIDENCE TO THE MOST LIKEY ARGUMENTS FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

Those saying the industrial revolution benefited the British people would simply state that more jobs were created which in turn provided a good income for all. Arnstein quickly points out with reference to cotton mills. "They gave work to at most one person in thirty As to the wages earned, majority of the working class earned less than 10s.0d. a week well under the poverty line. They would say that Parliament did act by passing legislation to protect the working class with the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. Not only did the new Poor laws not address the basic needs of human life, but it also stigmatized an already deprived community by forcing pauper uniforms, holding back basic rights to vote, all while allowing for corrupt commissioners to literally take from the poor and give to the rich.

MOST VALUABLE SOURCES USED.

A Declaration by the Framework Knitters (181?). *The Luddites*. Shows concern of a lost art/craft being replaced by individuals with no skills to the trade. *Saddler Committee, Testimony (183?)*. *Child Labor in England*. Clear evidence of child labor abuses and a counter argument for *An Act for the Preservation of the Health and Morals of Apprentices (180?)* showing no improvements within England's industries. *The National Petition (1839)*. *The Chartist Program*. "The energies of a mighty Kingdom have been wasted in building up the power of selfish and ignorant men, and its resources squandered for their aggrandisement." Here the focus should have been on social and economic reform for all in a country that was able to provide for the entire population, not redistributed to the middle class solely. *The Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population of Great Britain (184?)*. Disease in the slums was directly related to the living and working conditions which was in desperate need of government reform.