

Revised: 2 January 2013

**Economics 303Y1: the Economic History of Modern Europe to 1914**

**Topic No. 6 [12]: The Social Consequences of Urban Industrialization in Britain, 1770 - 1850:  
The Standard of Living Debate during the 'Industrial Revolution'**

- \*\*1. Joel Mokyr, The Enlightened Economy: An Economic History of Britain, 1700 - 1850 (New Haven and London, 2009), chapter 18, 'Living Standards and Inequality', pp. 449-74.
- \*\*2. Hans-Joachim Voth, 'Living Standards and the Urban Environment', in Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson, eds., Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain, 3 vols. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), Vol I: Industrialization, 1700 - 1860, pp. 268-94.
- \*\*3. Peter H. Lindert, 'Unequal Living Standards', in Roderick Floud and Donald McCloskey, eds., The Economic History of Britain Since 1700, 2nd edition, Vol. 1: 1770 - 1860 (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 357-86. From the previous edition of this Cambridge set: but equally important.
- \* 4. Şevket Pamuk and Jan-Luiten van Zanden, 'Standards of Living', in Stephen Broadberry and Kevin H. O'Rourke, eds., The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe, 2 vols. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), Vol. I: 1700 - 1870, pp. 217-334. Note: this study concerns all of Europe, though of course including the British Isles.
- \*\*5. Charles H. Feinstein, 'Pessimism Perpetuated: Real Wages and the Standard of Living in Britain during and after the Industrial Revolution', Journal of Economic History, 58:3 (Sept. 1998), 625-58.
- \*\*6. Gregory Clark, Joseph Cummins, and Brock Smith, 'Malthus, Wages, and Preindustrial Growth', Journal of Economic History, 72:2 (June 2012), 364-92.
- \*\*7. Francesco Cinnirella, 'Optimists or Pessimists? A Reconsideration of Nutritional Status in Britain, 1740-1865', European Review of Economic History, 12:3 (December 2008), 325-54.
- \* 8. Simon Szreter and Graham Mooney, 'Urbanization, Mortality, and the Standard of Living Debate: New Estimates of the Expectation of Life at Birth in Nineteenth-Century British Cities', The Economic History Review, 2nd ser., 51:1 (February 1998), 84-112.
- \* 9. N.F.R. Crafts and Terence C. Mills, 'Trends in Real Wages in Britain, 1750-1913', Explorations in Economic History, 31:2 (April 1994), 176-94.
- \*10. Joel Mokyr, 'Is There Still Life in the Pessimist Case? Consumption During the Industrial Revolution, 1790 - 1850', Journal of Economic History, 48 (March 1988), 69 - 92.
- \*11. Gregory Clark, 'Farm Wages and Living Standards in the Industrial Revolution: England, 1670 - 1869', The Economic History Review, 2<sup>nd</sup> ser., 54:3 (August 2001), 477-505.

- \*12. P. Lindert and J. Williamson, 'English Workers' Living Standards during the Industrial Revolution: A New Look', and G. N. von Tunzelmann, 'The Standard of Living Debate and Optimal Economic Growth', both in Joel Mokyr, ed., The Economics of the Industrial Revolution (1985), pp. 178 - 226.
- \*13. N.F.R. Crafts, 'English Workers' Real Wages During the Industrial Revolution: Some Remaining Problems' (with the reply by Lindert and Williamson), Journal of Economic History, 45 (Mar1985), 139-53.
- \*14. N.F.R. Crafts, 'National Income Estimates and the British Standard of Living Debate: A Reappraisal of 1801-1831', Explorations in Economic History, 17 (1980), 176-88; and N.F.R. Crafts and C.K. Harley, 'Output Growth and the British Industrial Revolution: A Restatement of the Crafts-Harley View', Economic History Review, 2nd ser., 45:4 (November 1992), 703-30.
- \*15. Jeffrey Williamson, 'Urban Disamenities, Dark Satanic Mills, and the British Standard of Living Debate', Journal of Economic History, 41 (1981), 75 - 84.
- 16. Moshe Justman and Mark Gradstein, 'The Industrial Revolution, Political Transition, and the Subsequent Decline in Inequality in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Britain', Explorations in Economic History, 36:2 (April 1999), 109-27.
- 17. E. W. Hunt and F. W. Botham, 'Wages in Britain during the Industrial Revolution', Economic History Review, 40 (1987), 380-99; and L.D. Schwarz, 'Trends in Real Wage Rates, 1750 - 1790: A Reply to Hunt and Botham', Economic History Review, 43 (Feb. 1990), 90 - 98.
- 18. Stephen Nicholas and Deborah Oxley, 'The Living Standards of Women during the Industrial Revolution, 1795 - 1820', Economic History Review, 2nd ser., 46:4 (November 1993), 723-49.
- \*19. Stephen Nicholas and Richard H. Steckel, 'Heights and Living Standards of English Workers During the Early Years of Industrialization, 1770 - 1815', The Journal of Economic History, 51 (December 1991), 937 - 57.
- \*20. G.N. von Tunzelmann, 'Trends in Real Wages, 1750-1850, Revisited', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 32 (1979), 33-49. In reply to: Michael Flinn, 'Trends in Real Wages, 1750 - 1850', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 27 (1974), 395-413.
- \*21. Jeffrey Wagner, David Loschky, and Charles McDaniel, 'Real Income and Mortality in a Household Production Model: English Mortality from 1541 to 1871', The Journal of European Economic History, 36:1 (Spring 2007), 47-69.
- \*22. Luis Angeles, 'GDP Per Capita or Real Wages? Making Sense of Conflicting Views on Pre-Industrial Europe', Explorations in Economic History, 45:2 (April 2008), 147-63.
- \*23. A. J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain in the Industrial Revolution (1975): essays by Hobsbawm, Hartwell, Ashton, and Hartwell-Engerman. Some useful studies; but others outdated.

- \*24. Paul Johnson and Stephen Nicholas, 'Male and Female Living Standards in England and Wales, 1812 - 1857: Evidence from Criminal Height Records', The Economic History Review, 2nd ser., 48:3 (August 1995), 470-81.
- 25. Gregory Clark, Michael Huberman, and Peter H. Lindert, 'A British Food Puzzle, 1770 - 1850', Economic History Review, 2nd ser., 48:2 (May 1995), 215-37.
- 26. Sara Horrell and Jane Humphries, 'Women's Labour Force Participation and the Transition to the Male-Breadwinner Family, 1790-1865', Economic History Review, 2nd ser, 48:1 (Feb 1995), 89-117.
- \* 27. Sara Horell, Jane Humphries, and Hans-Joachim Voth, 'Destined for Deprivation: Human Capital Formation and Intergenerational Poverty in Nineteenth-Century England', Explorations in Economic History, 38:3 (July 2001), 339-365.
- 28. Stephen Nicholas and Deborah Oxley, 'Living Standards of Women in England and Wales, 1785 - 1815: New Evidence from Newgate Prison Records', The Economic History Review, 2nd ser., 49:3 (August 1996), 591-99.
- 29. Joyce Burnette, 'An Investigation of the Female-Male Wage Gap During the Industrial Revolution', The Economic History Review, 2nd ser., 50:2 (May 1997), 257-81.
- \* 30. Robert C. Allen, 'The Great Divergence in European Wages and Prices from the Middle Ages to the First World War', Explorations in Economic History, 38:4 (October 2001), 411-47.
- \* 31. Frank Geary and Tom Stark, 'Trends in Real Wages during the Industrial Revolution: A View from Across the Irish Sea', The Economic History Review, 2<sup>nd</sup> ser., 57:2 (May 2004), 362-95.
- \* 32. Gregory Clark, 'The Condition of the Working Class in England, 1209-2004', Journal of Political Economy, 113:6 (December 2005), 1307-1340.
- 33. Stephen Broadberry and Bishnupriya Gupta, 'The Early Modern Great Divergence: Wages, Prices and Economic Development in Europe and Asia, 1500-1800', The Economic History Review, 2<sup>nd</sup> ser., 59:1 (February 2006), 2-31.
- \* 34. Leonard Schwarz, 'Custom, Wages and Workload in England during Industrialization', Past and Present, no. 197 (November 2007), pp. 143-175.
- \* 36. Joyce Burnett, Work and Wages in Industrial Revolution Britain (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

**QUESTIONS:** Did the 'Industrial Revolution' c. 1780-c. 1820 depress workers' living standards?

1. What is the evidence for the course of real wages and living standards for the following periods: (a) 1770-90; (b) 1790-1820; (c) 1820-50?
2. Was the initial stage of modern British industrialization (to ca. the 1840s) financed at the expense of the living standards of the 'working classes', as the Marxists contend?

3. What factors had the more or most powerful influences on living standards during the Industrial Revolution: capital investment, industrial organization, monetary inflation, warfare, government taxation, population growth, Enclosures and agrarian changes?
4. Whose real wages fared the best from ca. 1790 to ca. 1840: those in the new industries of the Industrial Revolution or those in traditional industries and crafts?
5. If you believe that real wages of the lower middle and working classes did decline in the period ca. 1780 - 1830, which of the following factors do you think were the more or most responsible?
  - a) population growth
  - b) warfare and taxation
  - c) inflation
  - d) 'capitalist exploitation of labour': according to the Marxist model?
  - e) technological changes
6. Has the Kuznets curve any relevance for the Standard of Living Debate during the Industrial Revolution era? See the introductory lecture notes for a perspective on this issue.