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Economics 303Y1

The Economic History of Modern Europe to 1914

Topic No. 6: [10]

The Social Consequences of Urban Industrialization, ca. 1770-1840: The British Standard of Living during the Industrial Revolution

READINGS:

All readings are listed in the chronological order of **original** publication, when that can be ascertained, except for collections of readings (listed in order of the publication of the volumes).

You are expected to read at least two articles or essays: preferably selecting from those by Hobsbawm, Hartwell, Lindert, Williamson, von Tunzelmann, Mokyr, Hunt, Crafts, Flinn, Taylor, etc., as indicated by the asterisks. Some of these contributions, if not the most recent, may also be found in one or more of the essay collections.

Notes:

(1) **On econometrics and economic history:**

Students without a strong background in econometrics and micro-economic theory (i.e. most students) will generally find those essays written before 1974/75 easier to read than those written subsequently. For this reason, the essays in this debate have been segregated between those written before and after 1974/75: in sections B and C below.

(2) **Marxists vs. Conservatives:**

The earliest views on this debate were dominated by those socialist opponents of industrial capitalism, most especially Karl Marx and his followers; and much later, their views provoked a conservative reaction, led principally by T.S. Ashton in the post-WW II era. Subsequently, from the late 1950s, the classic debate came to be that between the Marxist economic historian Eric Hobsbawm (of 'General Crisis' fame) and the conservative economic historian R.M. Hartwell, and their respective ideological followers. Since the mid-1970s, this debate, relying more and more on econometric analyses of the available data, has been rather less politically motivated, though hardly free from the traditional left-right split on these social issues.

A. Collections of Essays: in chronological order of publication.

1. Philip A.M. Taylor, ed., The Industrial Revolution in Britain: Triumph or Disaster? (Problems in European Civilization Series, Boston, 1958). Excerpts of essays:
 - (a) Arnold Toynbee, 'The Classical Definition of the Industrial Revolution', pp. 1-6.
 - * (b) Karl Marx, 'The Origin of the Industrial Capitalist', pp. 27-33.
[from Karl Marx, Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production, 3 vols. (1887 English edition edited by Frederick Engels). See especially Vol. I, parts iii - vii.]
 - (c) J.L. and Barbara Hammond, 'The Industrial Revolution: The Rulers and the Masses', pp. 34-44.
 - * (d) Thomas S. Ashton, 'Workers' Living Standards: A Modern Revision', pp. 45-56.
 - (e) W.W. Rostow, 'The Trade Cycle, Living Standards, and Movements of Discontent', pp. 57-63.
 - (f) Paul Mantoux, 'The Destruction of the Peasant Village', pp. 64-73.
 - (g) J. D. Chambers, 'Enclosures and the Rural Population: A Revision', pp. 74-84.
 - (h) George Clark, 'The Industrial Revolution: A Reappraisal', pp. 85-88.

2. R.M. Hartwell, The Industrial Revolution and Economic Growth (London and New York, 1971). His collected essays, including:
 - (a) 'The Great Discontinuity', pp. 42-59.
 - (b) 'Poverty and Crime in the Eighteenth Century', pp. 60-80.
 - (c) 'Interpretations of the Industrial Revolution in England', pp. 81-105.
 - * (d) 'The Rising Standard of Living in England, 1800-1850', pp. 313-43.
 - (e) 'The Standard of Living: An Answer to the Pessimists', pp. 344-60.
 - (f) 'The Making of the English Working Class?' pp. 361-76. [A review of E.P. Thompson's The Making of the English Working Class].
 - (g) 'The Rise of Modern Industry: A Review', pp. 377-89. [A review of J.L. and Barbara Hammond's The Rise of Modern Industry.]

- (h) 'Children as Slaves', pp. 390-408.
3. Sima Lieberman, ed., Europe and the Industrial Revolution (Cambridge, Mass. 1972), Section IV: 'The Industrial Revolution, Good or Evil?' See her introduction to this section, pp. 159-62.
- * (a) E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The British Standard of Living, 1790-1850', pp. 163-92.
- (b) Elizabeth B. Gilboy, 'The Cost of Living and Real Wages in Eighteenth-Century England', pp. 193-208.
- * (c) R. M. Hartwell, 'The Rising Standard of Living in England, 1800-1850', pp. 209-36.
4. Norman Gash, ed., The Long Debate on Poverty: Essays on Industrialization and 'The Condition of England' (London: Institute of Economic Affairs, revised edn. 1974):
- (a) Norman Gash, 'The State of the Debate', pp. xvii-xxxii.
- (b) R.M. Hartwell, 'The Consequences of the Industrial Revolution in England for the Poor', pp. 1-22.
- (c) George Mingay, 'The Transformation of Agriculture', pp. 23-60.
- (d) Rhodes Boyson, 'Industrialisation and the Life of the Lancashire Factory Worker', pp. 61-88.
- (e) Norman McCord, 'Aspects of the Relief of Poverty in Early 19th Century Britain', pp. 89-110.
- (f) C. G. Hanson, 'Welfare Before the Welfare State', pp. 111-40.
- (g) A. W. Coats, 'The Classical Economists, Industrialisation, and Poverty', pp. 141-68.
- (h) W. H. Chaloner and W. O. Henderson, 'Friedrich Engels and the England of the 'Hungry Forties'', pp. 169-86.
- (i) J.M. Jefferson, 'Industrialisation and Poverty: In Fact and Fiction', pp. 187-238.
5. Arthur J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain in the Industrial Revolution, Debates in Economic History series (London, 1975).
- * (a) A.J. Taylor, 'Introduction', pp. vii-lv.
- * (b) E.W. Gilboy, 'The Cost of Living and Real Wages in Eighteenth-Century England', pp. 1-20.

- (c) R.S. Tucker, 'Real Wages of Artisans in London, 1729-1935', pp. 21-35.
 - (d) T.S. Ashton, 'The Standard of Life of the Workers in England, 1790-1830', pp. 36-57.
 - * (e) E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The British Standard of Living, 1790-1850', pp. 58-92.
 - * (f) R.M. Hartwell, 'The Rising Standard of Living in England, 1800-50', pp. 93-123.
 - (g) E.P. Thompson, 'The Making of the English Working Class: Standards and Experiences', pp. 124-53.
 - (h) R.S. Neale, 'The Standard of Living, 1780-1844: A Regional and Class Study', pp. 154-78.
 - * (i) E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The Standard of Living Debate', pp. 179-88.
 - * (j) R.M. Hartwell and Stanley Engerman, 'Models of Immiseration: The Theoretical Basis of Pessimism', pp. 189-213.
6. Roderick Floud and Donald McCloskey, ed., The Economic History of Britain Since 1700, Vol. I: 1700 - 1860 (Cambridge University Press, 1981). See below no. 8, for the 2nd rev edition (Cambridge, 1994), with an entirely different set of essays.
- (a) N.C.R. Crafts, 'The Eighteenth Century: A Survey', pp. 1 - 16.
 - (b) R.D. Lee, 'British Population in the Eighteenth Century', pp. 17 - 35.
 - (c) W. A. Cole, 'Factors in Demand, 1700-80', pp. 36 - 65.
 - (d) D. N. McCloskey, 'The Industrial Revolution, 1780 - 1860: A Survey', pp. 103 - 27. A revised, expanded version appears in Joel Mokyr, ed., The Economics of the Industrial Revolution (1985), pp. 53 - 74, below.
 - (e) C. H. Feinstein, 'Capital Accumulation and the Industrial Revolution', pp. 128 - 42.
 - * (f) P. K. O'Brien and S. L. Engerman, 'Changes in Income and its Distribution during the Industrial Revolution', pp. 164-81.
 - (g) N. L. Tranter, 'The Labour Supply, 1780 - 1860', pp. 204 - 26.
 - (h) M. E. Rose, 'Social Change and the Industrial Revolution', pp. 253 -75.
- * 7. Joel Mokyr, ed., The Economics of the Industrial Revolution (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985):
- * (a) Joel Mokyr, 'The Industrial Revolution and the New Economic History', pp. 1 - 52. See especially pp. 38 - 44 on the 'Standard of Living Debate.'

- (b) Donald McCloskey, 'The Industrial Revolution, 1780 - 1860: A Survey', pp. 53 - 74.
 - (c) Joel Mokyr, 'Demand vs. Supply in the Industrial Revolution', pp. 97 - 118.
 - * (d) Brinley Thomas, 'Food Supply in the United Kingdom during the Industrial Revolution', pp. 137 - 50.
 - * (e) Peter Lindert and Jeffrey Williamson, 'English Workers' Living Standards During the Industrial Revolution: A New Look', pp. 177 - 206.
 - ** (f) Gustav N. von Tunzelmann, 'The Standard of Living Debate and Optimal Economic Growth', pp. 207 - 26.
 - (g) E. G. West, 'Literacy and the Industrial Revolution', pp. 227-40.
- **8. Roderick Floud and Donald McCloskey, eds., The Economic History of Britain Since 1700, Volume 1: 1770 - 1860 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994):
- a) Ann Kussmaul, 'The Pattern of Work as the Eighteenth Century Began', pp. 1-11.
 - b) Joel Mokyr, 'Technological Change, 1700 - 1830', pp. 12-43.
 - c) Nick Crafts, 'The Industrial Revolution', pp. 44-59.
 - d) Roger Schofield, 'British Population Change, 1700-1871', pp. 60-95.
 - e) Robert Allan, 'Agriculture During the Industrial Revolution', pp. 96-122.
 - f) Maxine Berg, 'Factories, Workshops, and Industrial Organisation', pp. 123-50.
 - g) Larry Neal, 'The Finance of Business During the Industrial Revolution', pp. 151-81.
 - h) Stanley L. Engerman, 'Mercantilism and Overseas Trade, 1700 - 1800', pp. 182-204.
 - i) Patrick O'Brien, 'Central Government and the Economy, 1688 - 1815', pp. 204-42.
 - j) Donald McCloskey, '1780-1860: A Survey', pp. 242-70.
 - k) Nick von Tunzelmann, 'Technology in the Early Nineteenth Century', pp. 271-99.
 - l) Nick Harley, 'Foreign Trade: Comparative Advantage and Performance', pp. 300-31.
 - m) Jeffrey Williamson, 'Coping With City Growth', pp. 332-56.
 - ** n) Peter H. Lindert, 'Unequal Living Standards', pp. 357-86.

9. Graeme D. Snooks, ed., Was the Industrial Revolution Necessary? (Lodon and New York, Routledge: 1994).
- a) Graeme D. Snooks, 'New Perspectives on the Industrial Revolution', pp. 1-26.
 - b) E. A. Wrigley, 'The Classical Economists, the Stationary State, and the Industrial Revolution', pp. 27-42.
 - c) Graeme D. Snooks, 'Great Waves of Economic Change: the Industrial Revolution in Historical Perspective, 1000 to 2000', pp. 43-78.
 - d) R. V. Jackson, 'What Was the Rate of Economic Growth During the Industrial Revolution?' pp. 79-95.
 - e) Stephen Nicholas and Deborah Oxley, 'The Industrial Revolution and the Genesis of the Male Breadwinner', pp. 96-111.
 - f) Stanley L. Engerman, 'The Industrial Revolution Revisited', pp. 112-23.
- *10. 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: see the following
- a) Joel Mokyr, 'Accounting for the Industrial Revolution', pp. 1-27
 - b) Pat Hudson, 'Industrial Organsiation and Structure', pp. 28-56
 - c) E. A. Wrigley, 'British Population during the "Long" Eighteenth Century, 1680 - 1840', pp. 67-95.
 - d) Robert Allen, 'Agriculture during the Industrial Revolution, 1700 - 1850', pp. 96-116
 - e) Kristine Bruland, 'Industrialisation and Technological Change', pp. 117-46.
 - f) Stephen Quinn, 'Money, Finance, and Capital Markets', pp. 147 -74.
 - g) C. Knick Harley, 'Trade: Discovery, Mercantilism and Technology', pp. 175-203.
 - h) Ron Harris, 'Government and the Economy, 1688 - 1850', pp. 204-37.
 - i) Jane Humphries, 'Household Economy', pp. 238-67.
 - j) Hans-Joachim Voth, 'Living Standards and the Urban Environment', pp. 268-94.
 - k) Simon Ville, 'Transport', pp. 295-331.

- l) David Mitch, 'Education and the Skill of the British Labour Force', pp. 332-56.
- m) Maxine Berg, 'Consumption in Eighteenth- and early Nineteenth-Century Britain', pp. 357-87.
- n) T. M. Devine, 'Scotland', pp. 388-416.
- o) Roger Burt, 'The Extractive Industries', pp. 417-50.
- p) Stanley Engerman and Patrick O'Brien, 'The Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective', pp. 451-64.

B. The Traditional Debate in Articles and Essays: from 1936 to 1974/5:

The classic, and non-mathematical readings: in chronological order of publication, to about 1974/5.

1. Elizabeth Gilboy, 'The Cost of Living and Real Wages in Eighteenth-Century England', Review of Economic Statistics, 18 (1936), reprinted in:
 - (a) A.J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 1-20.
 - (b) Sima Lieberman, ed., Europe and the Industrial Revolution (1972), pp. 193-208.
2. R. S. Tucker, 'Real Wages of Artisans in London, 1729-1935', Journal of the American Statistical Association, 31 (1936), reprinted in A.J. Taylor, ed. The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 21-35.
- * 3. T. S. Ashton, 'Some Statistics of the Industrial Revolution', The Manchester School, 16 (1948), reprinted in:
 - (a) E.M. Carus-Wilson, ed., Essays in Economic History (London, 1962), Vol. III, pp. 237-51.
 - (b) A.E. Musson, ed., Science, Technology, and Economic Growth in the Eighteenth Century (1972), pp. 115-21 (excerpts only).
- * 4. T.S. Ashton, 'The Standard of Life of the Workers in England, 1790-1830', Journal of Economic History, 9 (1949), Supplement; reprinted in:
 - (a) A.J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 36-57.
 - (b) P.A.M. Taylor, ed., The Industrial Revolution in Britain: Triumph or Disaster? (1958): excerpts only as 'Workers Living Standards', pp. 45-56.
- ** 5. E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The British Standard of Living, 1790-1850', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 10 (1957), 46-68, available in:

- (a) A.J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 58-93.
- (b) Sima Lieberman, ed., Europe and the Industrial Revolution (1972), pp. 163-92.
- ** 6. A. J. Taylor, 'Progress and Poverty in Britain, 1790-1850: A Re-appraisal', History, 45 (1960); reprinted in E.M. Carus-Wilson, ed., Essays in Economic History, Vol. III (London, 1962), pp. 380-93.
- ** 7. R. M. Hartwell, 'The Rising Standard of Living in England, 1800-1850', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 13 (1961); reprinted in:
- (a) A.J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 92-124.
- (b) Sima Lieberman, ed., Europe and the Industrial Revolution (1972), pp. 209-36.
- (c) R. M. Hartwell, The Industrial Revolution (1971), pp. 313-43.
- * 8. E. J. Hobsbawm and R.M. Hartwell, 'The Standard of Living During the Industrial Revolution: A Discussion', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 16 (1963), 120 -
- * 9. Edward P. Thompson, 'The Making of the English Working Class: Standards and Experiences:' from his Making of the English Working Class (London, 1963), republished in A.J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 124-53.
10. J. E. Williams, 'The British Standard of Living, 1750-1850', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 19 (1966), 581-89.
- * 11. R. S. Neale, 'The Standard of Living, 1780-1844: Regional and Class Study', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 19 (1966), 590 - 606, reprinted in A.J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 154-78.
12. D.R. Adams, 'Some Evidence on English and American Wage Rates, 1790-1830', Journal of Economic History, 30 (1970), 498-520.
13. G.I. Barnsby, 'The Standard of Living in the Black Country During the Nineteenth Century', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 24 (1971), 220-39.
14. R.M. Hartwell, 'The Standard of Living: An Answer to the Pessimists' and his 'The Making of the English Working Class?' in his Industrial Revolution and Economic Growth (London, 1971), pp. 344-60, 361-76.
15. T.R. Gourvish, 'The Cost of Living in Glasgow in the Early Nineteenth Century', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 25 (1972), 65-80.
- * 16. E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The Standard of Living Debate: Essay in Postscript', in A.J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 179-88.

C. The More Recent Debate on Real Wages and the Standard of Living during the Industrial Revolution era: The Application of Statistics, Micro/Macro Theory and Econometrics.

In chronological order of publication, from 1974/75.

- * 1. Michael Flinn, 'Trends in Real Wages, 1750-1850', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 27 (1974), 395-413.
- 2. R.M. Hartwell and Stanley Engerman, 'Models of Immiseration: The Theoretical Basis of Pessimism', in A.J. Taylor, ed., The Standard of Living in Britain (1975), pp. 189-213.
- 3. T.R. Gourvish, 'Flinn and Real Wage Trends in Britain: A Comment', and:
M.W. Flinn, 'Real Wage Trends in Britain, 1750-1850: A Reply', both in:
Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 29 (1976), 136-42, 143-45.
- 4. Joel Mokyr, 'Demand vs. Supply in the Industrial Revolution', Journal of Economic History, 37 (Dec. 1977), 981 - 1008; reprinted in Joel Mokyr, ed., The Economics of the Industrial Revolution (London, 1985), pp. 97 - 118.
- 5. Joel Mokyr and N. Eugene Savin, 'Some Econometric Problems in the Standard of Living Controversy', Journal of European Economic History, 7 (1978), 517-25.
- 6. G.N. von Tunzelmann, 'Trends in Real Wages, 1750-1850, Revisited', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 32 (1979), 33-49.
- * 7. 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.
- * 8. Jeffrey Williamson, 'Earnings Inequality in Nineteenth-Century Britain', Journal of Economic History, 40 (1980), 457-75. Estimates British earnings distributions for four years in the period 1827-1901 (1827, 1851, 1881, 1901), by occupations. A knowledge of econometrics would help greatly in reading this paper.
- 9. David Loschky, 'Seven Centuries of Real Income per Wage Earner Reconsidered', Economica, 47 (1980), 459 - 65.

A reconsideration and reconstructed analysis of the data in:

E. H. Phelps Brown and Sheila Hopkins, 'Seven Centuries of the Prices of Consumables, Compared with Builders' Wages-Rates', Economica, 23 (Nov. 1956), reprinted in their A Perspective of Wages and Prices (London, 1981), pp. 13 - 59 (with extra statistical appendices not provided in the original article).

- * 10. Patrick K. O'Brien and Stanley Engerman, 'Changes in Income and Its Distribution during the Industrial Revolution', in Roderick Floud and Donald McCloskey, ed., The Economic History of Britain Since 1700, Vol. I: 1700-1860 (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 164-81.
- ** 11. Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'Urban Disamenities, Dark Satanic Mills, and the British Standard of Living Debate', Journal of Economic History, 41 (1981), 75-84.
12. Sidney Pollard, 'Sheffield and Sweet Auburn -- Amenities and Living Standards in the British Industrial Revolution: A Comment', Journal of Economic History, 41 (1981), 902-904.
13. Jeffrey Williamson, 'Some Myths Die Hard -- Urban Disamenities One More Time: A Reply', Journal of Economic History, 41 (1981), 905-07.
- * 14. Jeffrey Williamson, 'Was the Industrial Revolution Worth It? Disamenities and Death in Nineteenth-Century British Towns', Explorations in Economic History, 19 (1982), 221-45.
15. Jeffrey Williamson, 'The Structure of Pay in Britain, 1710-1911', Research in Economic History, 7 (1982).
16. N.F.R. Crafts, 'Regional Price Variation in England in 1843: An Aspect of the Standard-of-Living Debate', Explorations in Economic History, 19 (1982), 51-70.
17. Brinley Thomas, 'Food Supply in the United Kingdom during the Industrial Revolution', Agricultural History, 56 (Jan. 1982), 328 - 42; reprinted in Joel Mokyr, ed., The Economics of the Industrial Revolution (London, 1985), pp. 137 - 76.
18. C. Knick Harley, 'British Industrialization Before 1841: Evidence of Slower Growth During the Industrial Revolution', Journal of Economic History, 42 (June 1982), 267 - 90.
19. Roderick Floud and Kenneth W. Wachter, 'Poverty and Physical Stature: Evidence on the Standard of Living of London Boys, 1770 - 1870', Social Science History, 6 (1982), 422 - 52.
20. Peter H. Lindert and Jeffrey Williamson, 'Revising England's Social Tables, 1688-1812', Explorations in Economic History, 19 (1982), 385-408. See also the following.
- * 21. Peter H. Lindert and Jeffrey Williamson, 'Reinterpreting England's Social Tables, 1688-1913', Explorations in Economic History, 20 (1983), 94-109.
- ** 22. Peter H. Lindert and Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'English Workers' Living Standards during the Industrial Revolution: A New Look', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 36 (1983), 1-25. Reprinted in Joel Mokyr, ed., The Economics of the Industrial Revolution (New York, 1985), pp. 177 - 205.
23. Peter H. Lindert, 'English Living Standards, Population Growth, and Wrigley-Schofield',

Explorations in Economic History, 20 (1983), 131-55.

In connection with this article, see also the following:

- E.A. Wrigley, 'The Growth of Population in Eighteenth-Century England: A Conundrum Resolved', Past and Present, No. 98 (February 1983), 121-50.
- E.A. Wrigley and R.S. Schofield, The Population History of England, 1541-1871: A Reconstruction (Cambridge, Mass. 1981).]
24. N. F. R. Crafts, 'British Economic Growth, 1700-1831: A Review of the Evidence', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 36 (1983), 177-99.
25. R.A. Cage, 'The Standard of Living Debate: Glasgow, 1800-1850', Journal of Economic History, 43 (1983), 175-82. See also R.M. Hartwell, 'Discussion', pp. 203-06.
26. Richard Steckel, 'Height and Per Capita Income', Historical Methods, 16 (1983), 1 - 7.
27. Michael Flinn, 'English Workers' Living Standards During the Industrial Revolution: A Comment', and:
Peter Lindert and Jeffrey Williamson, 'Reply to Michael Flinn', both in:
Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 37 (Feb. 1984), 88-94.
28. Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'Why Was British Growth So Slow During the Industrial Revolution?' Journal of Economic History, 44 (Sept. 1984), 687 - 712.
29. Peter Lindert, 'English Population, Wages, and Prices: 1541-1913', Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 15 (Spring 1985), 609-34.
30. Brinley Thomas, 'Escaping from Constraints: the Industrial Revolution in a Malthusian Context', Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 15 (Spring 1985), 729-54.
31. L.D. Schwarz, 'The Standard of Living in the Long-Run: London, 1700-1860', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 38 (Feb. 1985), 24-41.
- * 32. N.F.R. Crafts, 'English Workers' Real Wages During the Industrial Revolution: Some Remaining Problems', and Peter Lindert and Jeffrey Williamson, 'English Workers' Real Wages: A Reply to Crafts', Journal of Economic History, 45 (March 1985), 139-44, 145-53.
33. David Levine, 'Industrialization and the Proletarian Family in England', Past and Present, no. 107 (May 1985), 204-26.
34. Peter H. Lindert and Jeffrey Williamson, 'Growth, Equality, and History', Explorations in Economic History, 22 (Oct. 1985), 341 - 77.

- * 35. Jeffrey Williamson, Did British Capitalism Breed Inequality? (London, 1985).
- 36. N. F. R. Crafts, British Economic Growth during the Industrial Revolution (Oxford, 1985).
- ** 37. G. N. von Tunzelmann, 'The Standard of Living Debate and Optimal Economic Growth', in Joel Mokyr, ed., The Economics of the Industrial Revolution (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1985), pp. 207 - 26.

In this same volume, see also:

- (a) Joel Mokyr, 'The Industrial Revolution and the New Economic History', pp. 38 - 44, with comments on the Standard of Living Debate in the introduction to this volume.
 - (b) Peter H. Lindert and Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'English Workers' Living Standards during the Industrial Revolution: A New Look', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 36 (1983), 1-25.
- * 38. E. H. Hunt, 'Industrialization and Regional Inequality: Wages in Britain, 1760-1914', Journal of Economic History, 46 (1986), 935-62.
 - 39. N. F. R. Crafts, 'British Economic Growth, 1700 - 1850: Some Difficulties of Interpretation', Explorations in Economic History, 24 (July 1987), 245 - 68.
 - * 40. E. W. Hunt and F. W. Botham, 'Wages in Britain during the Industrial Revolution', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 40 (August 1987), 380-99.
 - 41. R. V. Jackson, 'The Structure of Pay in Nineteenth-Century Britain', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 40 (Nov. 1987), 561-70.
 - * 42. 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.
 - 43. Joel Mokyr and Cormac O Grada, 'Poor and Getting Poorer? Living Standards in Ireland Before the Famine', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 41 (May 1988), 209-35.
 - * 44. Charles Feinstein, 'The Rise and Fall of the Williamson Curve', Journal of Economic History, 48 (September 1988), 699-729. A review article on Jeffrey Williamson's Did British Capitalism Breed Inequality? (Boston, 1985).
 - 45. John A. James, 'Personal Wealth Distribution in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 41 (Nov. 1988), 543-65.
 - 46. Henk Jan Brinkman, J. W. Drukker, and Brigitte Slot, 'Height and Income: A New Method for the Estimation of Historical National Income Series', Explorations in Economic History, 25 (1988), 227 - 64.
 - * 47. L.D. Schwarz, 'Trends in Real Wage Rates, 1750 - 1790: A Reply to Hunt and Botham',

Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 43 (Feb. 1990), 90 - 98.

48. Henry Phelps Brown, 'Gregory King's Notebook and the Phelps Brown-Hopkins Price Index', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 43 (Feb. 1990), 94 - 103.
- * 49. John C. Brown, 'The Condition of England and the Standard of Living: Cotton Textiles in the Northwest, 1806 - 1850', Journal of Economic History, 50 (Sept. 1990), 591-614.
- * 50. Douglas A. Irwin, 'Was Britain Immiserized during the Industrial Revolution?' Explorations in Economic History, 28 (January 1991), 121-24. A brief note, with a mathematical model based on Britain's export sector, concluding that 'the possibility that Britain was immiserized during this period can be ruled out in general...'
51. 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.
52. David Loschky, 'New Perspectives on Seven Centuries of Real Wages', Journal of European Economic History, 21:1 (Spring 1992), 169 - 82.
- * 53. 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.
54. T. L. Richardson, 'The Agricultural Labourers' Standard of Living in Lincolnshire, 1790 - 1840: Social Protest and Public Order', Agricultural History Review, 41:1 (1993), 1 - 18.
- * 55. 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.
- ** 56. 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.
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I. Supplementary: Some Statistical Sources

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Debate Topic:

‘Resolved that the processes of modern industrialization depressed the living standards of the English working classes, ca. 1790 - ca. 1840.

QUESTIONS:

1. Did the British standard of living, or more precisely real incomes, rise or fall over this whole period? Or were there rises and falls within the period under debate? What is the overall balance: gains or losses for the workers?
2. More particularly, what was the course of real incomes and real wages of the working classes in the following periods: (a) 1770-1790; (b) 1790-1820; (c) 1820-1830; (d) 1830-1840; (e) after 1840?
3. In terms of income (and occupational wage) distributions, what distinctions can be made in these periods about the following:
 - (a) per capita incomes on a national basis and the real incomes of the working classes;
 - (b) urban and rural, industrial and agricultural labourers;
 - (c) workers in those industries participating in the ‘industrial revolution’ itself and those in industries or crafts relatively unaffected by modern industrialization in these periods; in particular urban factory workers compared to rural industrial workers;
 - (d) skilled workers & unskilled workers, urban and rural;
 - (e) the various regions of Britain: London, the South-East and South-West of England, the Midlands, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Wales, Southern Scotland.
4. Was the Industrial Revolution financed ‘at the expense of the working classes’--by ‘exploitation of labour’ (or increased exploitation of labour), in Marxist or non-Marxist terms? In that the levels of capital formation were increased over these periods, whose current consumption was sacrificed or postponed (if any)?
5. What was the more important factor in determining the real incomes of the working classes in this era (or during these periods): the movement of money wages, the course of prices, or taxation (in terms of real disposable incomes)?
6. What had the more powerful influence on consumer prices during these periods: monetary inflation and deflation, taxation, population changes, the weather and harvests, warfare, industrialization and agricultural advancement?
7. If you argue that population growth, ‘Malthusian pressures’, constituted an important variable in determining real wages, was that population growth the result of the processes of industrialization or was it independent of those forces?

8. Apart from the question of real wages, what were the other major factors affecting the 'standard of life' of the urban working classes in this period? What were the major social consequences of urban industrialization? Were workers of the pre-Industrial Revolution era better or worse off in the working, living, and general social conditions?
9. On balance, to what extent did industrialization affect the standard of living of the working classes; and to what extent did factors other than industrialization affect living standards?
10. How have recent scholarly contributions employing econometrics, particularly the articles of Jeffrey Williamson and Peter Lindert, changed our perception of the 'standard of living' debate? Have we been brought closer to the real truth?
11. What were the Old (1795-1834) and New (post-1834) Poor Laws? What remedies did they seek to provide for what social problems? How successful were they in meeting their objectives--and why did the government replace the Old with the New Poor Law in 1834? How successful were Poor Laws and Factory Legislation in improving the 'standard of life' of the working classes in the 19th century?
12. How did industrial trade unions come to be formed in 19th century Britain, and how successful were they in improving the working conditions and standard of living of the working classes?

TABLE 1

**Indices of Real Wages or Incomes of English Workers, in Five-Year Averages,
1770-74 to 1845-49 (Average of 1810-19 = Base 100)**

Years	'Basket of Consumables' Price Index	Indices of the Purchasing Power of Average Weekly Incomes (normal week) of following workers:				
		Cotton Factory Workers	Shipbuilding & Engineering	Building Workers	Compositors	Agriculture
1770-4	50.8			99.8		99.0
1775-9	49.8			120.6	140.2	100.4
1780-4	50.1			119.8	140.0	100.3
1785-9	52.9			113.0	135.4	94.9
1790-4	56.3			108.7	137.7	99.2
1795-9	68.3			108.7	126.2	108.3
1800-4	90.5			77.1	97.2	95.9
1805-9	93.7			94.9	100.7	109.1
1810-4	108.1	93.3	92.4	92.1	95.0	94.1
1815-9	91.9	108.5	109.7	107.9	106.6	106.5
1820-4	73.3	132.5	136.5	136.0	124.9	109.7
1825-9	89.3	117.7	125.5	124.9	114.8	96.8
1830-4	71.0	129.7	141.4	139.9	128.5	109.5
1835-9	72.2	126.2	141.2	137.2	130.6	107.1
1840-4	72.0	123.4	146.8	138.7	135.3	111.2
1845-9	69.9	130.8	148.7	143.5	138.6	103.8

SOURCES: (a) 'Basket of Consumables' Price Index and Purchasing Power of Builders' Wages (recalculated for the base 1810-9 from that 1450-75,) in E.H. Phelps Brown and Sheila Hopkins, 'Seven Centuries of the Prices of Consumables, Compared with Builders' Wage-Rates', in E.M. Carus-Wilson, ed., *Essays in Economic History*, vol. II, pp. 195-6.

(b) Average weekly money incomes of cotton factory workers, compositors, and those in shipbuilding & engineering and agriculture, calculated from indices (recalculated to base 1810-9) in B.R. Mitchell and P. Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (London, 1962), 348-9. [The indices of money incomes so adjusted were divided by the price index given in column 1, the Phelps-Brown & Hopkins 'basket'.]

TABLE 2

Wages and the Standard of Living in 18th Century England
Indices of Money and Real Wages of Labourers in London and Lancashire in decennial averages,
1700 - 1796 (Average of 1700-09 = 100)

Decade	Cost of Living	LONDON WAGES		LANCASHIRE WAGES	
		Money	Real	Money	Real
1700-9	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1710-9	104.0	102.3	98.4	109.1	104.9
1720-9	99.6	102.5	102.9	126.1	126.6
1730-9	90.9	107.8	118.6	135.9	149.5
1740-9	96.0	109.8	114.4	135.9	141.6
1750-9	101.6	110.7	109.0	132.4	130.3
1760-9	110.7	112.5	101.6	161.7	146.1
1770-9	125.8	112.4	89.3	203.6	161.8
1780-9	130.8	115.2	88.1	215.7	164.9
1790-9	149.7	--	--	238.6	159.4

SOURCE: Calculated from statistics in Elizabeth Gilboy, 'The Cost of Living and Real Wages in Eighteenth Century England', *Review of Economic Statistics* (1938), as re-printed in B.R. Mitchell and Phyllis Deane, eds., *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (1962), pp. 346-7.

TABLE 3

**Estimates of Nominal Annual Earnings for Eighteen Occupations
1755-1851: Adult Males, England and Wales (in current £'s)**

Occupation	1755	1781	1797	1805	1810	1815	1819	1827	1835	1851
(1L)Farm laborers	17.18	21.09	30.03	40.40	42.04	40.04	39.05	31.04	30.03	29.04
(2L)Nonfarm labor	20.75	23.13	25.09	36.87	43.94	43.94	41.47	43.64	39.29	44.83
(3L)Messengers & porters	33.99	33.54	57.66	69.43	76.01	80.69	81.35	84.39	87.20	88.88
(4L)Other gov't low-wage	28.62	46.02	46.77	52.48	57.17	60.22	60.60	59.01	58.70	66.45
(5L)Police & guards	25.76	48.08	47.04	51.26	67.89	69.34	69.18	62.95	63.33	53.62
(6L)Colliers	22.94	24.37	47.79	64.99	63.22	57.82	50.37	54.61	56.41	55.44
(1H)Gov't high-wage	78.91	104.55	133.73	151.09	176.86	195.16	219.25	222.95	270.42	234.87
(2H)Shipbuilding trades	38.82	45.26	51.71	51.32	55.25	59.20	57.23	62.22	62.74	64.12
(3H)Engineering trades	43.60	50.83	58.08	75.88	88.23	94.91	92.71	80.69	77.26	84.05
(4H)Building trades	30.51	35.57	40.64	55.30	66.35	66.35	63.02	66.35	59.72	66.35
(5H)Cotton spinners	35.96	41.93	47.90	65.18	78.21	67.60	67.60	58.50	64.56	58.64
(6H)Printing trades	46.34	54.03	66.61	71.11	79.22	79.22	71.14	70.23	70.23	74.72
(7H)Clergy	91.90	182.65	238.50	266.42	283.89	272.53	266.55	254.60	258.76	267.09
(8H)Solicitors/barristers	231.00	242.67	165.00	340.00	447.50	447.50	447.50	522.50	1166.67	1837.50
(9H)Clerks	63.62	101.57	135.26	150.44	178.11	200.79	229.64	240.29	269.11	235.81
(10H)Surgeons & doctors	62.02	88.35	174.95	217.60	217.60	217.60	217.60	175.20	200.92	200.92
(11H)Schoolmasters	15.97	16.53	43.21	43.21	51.10	51.10	69.35	69.35	81.89	81.11
(12H)Engineers/surveyors	137.51	170.00	190.00	291.43	305.00	337.50	326.43	265.71	398.89	479.00

NOTE:

(4L) = watchmen, guards, porters, messengers, Post Office letter carriers, janitors;

(1H) = clerks, Post Office sorters, ware-housemen, collectors, tax surveyors, solicitors clergymen, surgeons, medical officers, architects, engineers;

(2H) = shipwrights;

(3H) = fitters, turners, iron-moulders;

(4H) = bricklayers, masons, carpenters, plasterers;

(6H) = compositors.

SOURCE:

From Williamson, 1982b, Appendix Table 4.

Lindert and Williamson (1983) in Mokyr (1985).

TABLE 4

Trends in Nominal Full-Time Earnings for Six Labor Groups,
Compared with Three Previous Series, 1755-1851 (1851 = 100)

	(1)		(2)		(3)		(4)	(5)	(6)
	Farm laborers	Bowley's farm laborers	Middle group	Phelps Brown-Hopkins building laborers	Labor aristocracy	Tucker's London artisans	All blue collar	White collar	All workers
1755	59.16		42.95	48.5	50.86	69.8	51.05	21.62	38.62
1781	72.62	75.5	54.88	57.6	57.38	69.8	59.64	26.42	46.62
1797	103.41	93.9	72.92	66.7	64.86	81.0	74.42	32.55	58.97
1805	139.12		98.89	83.3	79.44	87.0	96.58	38.88	75.87
1810	144.76		110.95	97.0	92.03	105.6	107.81	43.01	84.89
1815	137.88		105.55	97.0	95.28	112.1	106.18	46.55	85.30
1819	134.47		99.41	97.0	91.92	103.3	101.84	50.77	84.37
1827	106.89	100.8	98.89	97.0	93.55	105.1	97.59	55.09	83.11
1835	103.41	112.3	96.98	97.0	88.68	98.9	94.11	75.03	88.77
1851	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
52 weeks' earnings in 1851	£29.04	£29.04	£52.95	£42.90	£75.15	n.a.	£52.62	£258.88	£75.51

NOTE: The indices are aggregated from the finer groups listed in Table 9.1, using wage series from Table 9.2 and employment weights. The employment weights for 1755-1815 draw on Lindert, 'English Occupations, 1670-1811', Table 3; while those for 1815-1851 are derived from censuses. The derivations of the employment weights are described in DP, Appendix A.

SOURCE: For the three previous series, see Bowley, 1900, table in back; Phelps Brown and Hopkins, 1955; Tucker, 1936, pp. 73-84. The conversion of the Phelps Brown-Hopkins series from daily to annual wages assumed 312 working days a year.

TABLE 5							
A 'Best-Guesss' Cost-of-Living Index, 1781-1850, Using Southern Urban Expenditure Weights (1850 = 100)							
	Index			Index			Index
2e+95	118.8		1805	186.7		1828	143.2
	119.3		1806	178.5		1829	143.2
	121.9		1807	169.1		1830	143.9
	118.4		1808	180.5		1831	141.3
	112.3		1809	204.9		1832	133.9
	109.6		1810	215.4		1833	124.7
	112.5		1811	204.5		1834	117.6
	115.9		1812	235.7		1835	112.8
	122.3		1813	230.0		1836	126.4
	125.9		1814	203.3		1837	129.2
	121.2		1815	182.6		1838	138.3
	118.3		1816	192.1		1839	142.3
	127.3		1817	197.5		1840	138.4
	130.7		1818	192.4		1841	133.3
	153.8		1819	182.9		1842	123.4
	159.5		1920	170.1		1843	109.6
	138.8		1821	150.5		1844	114.5
	136.9		1822	139.8		1845	112.0
	155.7		1823	146.0		1846	116.4
	207.1		1824	154.6		1847	138.0
	218.2		1825	162.3		1848	110.9
	160.9		1826	144.4		1949	101.2
	156.8		1827	140.9		1850	100.0
	160.2						

Source: DP, Appendix B.
Lindert and Williamson (1983) in Kokyr (1985).

TABLE 6						
Trends in Real Adult Male Full-Time Earnings for Selected Groups of Workers 1755-1851						
Benchmark year	Farm labour	Middle group	Artisans	All blue collar	White collar	All workers
1755	65.46	47.54	56.29	56.50	23.93	42.74
1781	61.12	46.19	48.30	50.19	22.24	39.24
1797	74.50	52.54	46.73	53.61	23.45	42.48
1805	74.51	52.96	42.55	51.73	20.82	40.64
1810	67.21	51.54	42.73	50.04	19.97	39.41
1815	75.51	57.81	52.18	58.15	25.49	46.71
1819	73.52	54.35	50.26	55.68	27.76	46.13
1827	75.86	70.18	66.39	69.25	39.10	58.99
1835	91.67	85.97	78.62	84.43	66.52	78.69
1851	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Percentage change, 1781-1851, under three sets of cost-of-living weights and price assumptions						
Most pessi- mistic	31.6%	75.1%	68.0%	61.8%	294.5%	103.7%
'Best-guess'	63.6%	116.5%	107.0%	99.2%	349.6%	154.8%
Most opti- mistic	107.0%	175.3%	164.2%	154.4%	520.3%	220.3%
<p>Note: The indices in the upper panel use the data in Tables 9.3 and 9.4, as does the row of 'best-guess' estimates in the lower panel. The most pessimistic and most optimistic variants are based on relatively unrealistic cost-of-living indices, selected as extreme cases from 16 alternatives. The most pessimistic used a cost of living index combining northern urban expenditure weights with Tucker's institutional clothing prices and Trentham cottage rents, while the most optimistic used an index combining northern rural weights with export clothing prices and no rents. Again, we prefer the 'best guess' index, combining southern urban weights with export clothing prices and Trentham rents.</p>						
<p>Source: The 1755 figures are derived by relying on the Phelps Brown-Hopkins index to extend the 1781-1850 series (Table 9.4) backwards.</p>						
<p>Source: Lindert and Williamson (1983) in Mokyr (1985)</p>						

TABLE 7			
Revised Measures of English Workers' Standard-of-Living Gains, 1781-1851			
Overall improvement, 1781-1851			
Source of improvement	Farm laborers	All blue-collar workers	All workers
1. Real full-time earnings ('Best guess', Table 9.5)	63.6%	99.2%	154.8%
a. Due to occupational change (DP, Sec. 6)	(0)	(<5.3%)	(<17.2%)
b. Due to regional migration (DP, Sec. 7)	(<3.6%)	(<3.6%)	(<3.6%)
c. Residual: real wage gains within occupations and regions	(>60.0%)	(>90.3%)	(>134.0%)
2. Diminished by an 'upper-bound' rise in unemployment, or <7.4% (see Sec. VI above)	63.6%	>91.8%	>147.4%
3. Diminished by the shift toward higher urban living costs, or <3.3%*	63.6%	>88.5%	>144.1%
4. Diminished by urban-industrial disamenities, or <2.5%*	63.6%	>86.0%	>141.6%
5. Augmented by adult mortality gains, which were not negative (Sec. VIII)	>63.6%	>86.0%	>141.6%
* These figures taken from DP, Section 8. Readers preferring the estimates in Section IX above may wish to substitute the 9.7% figure for Rows 3 and 4 together in the 'blue-collar' and 'all workers' columns.			
Source: Lindert and Williamson, 1983.			

TABLE 8									
Investment, Employment, and Output in England and Wales, 1761-1770 to 1841-1850, in 1788-1792 Prices									
Decade	Capital stock (£m)	Repairs and renewals (£m)	Capital formation (£m)	Gross investment (£m)	Labor force (000s)	Wage bill (£m)	Land rents (£m)	Land stock (£m)	Total output
(A) Agriculture									
1761-70	260	22.5	0.9	23.4	874	23.5	19.8	374	66.7
1771-80	276	24.4	1.8	26.2	908	23.8	19.7	395	69.7
1781-90	299	27.0	2.1	29.1	894	23.6	20.3	423	73.0
1791-1800	326	30.0	2.4	32.4	842	23.9	21.2	453	77.5
1801-10	351	30.8	1.8	32.6	768	24.1	24.5	435	81.2
1811-20	373	33.3	1.9	35.2	770	27.1	21.0	418	83.4
1821-30	396	35.9	1.9	37.8	820	27.3	22.0	680	97.0
1831-40	421	38.3	2.2	40.5	805	28.6	32.3	739	101.3
1841-50	455	42.3	3.5	45.8	809	29.6	37.0	886	112.4
(B) Industry									
1761-70									
1771-80	198	6.6	1.8	8.4	447	16.5	0.3	6	25.2
1781-90	219	7.5	2.3	9.8	504	18.6	0.3	7	28.7
1791-1800	248	8.9	3.7	12.5	594	21.9	0.4	8	34.8
1801-10	292	10.8	5.0	15.8	789	27.6	0.5	10	43.8
1811-20	341	11.1	4.9	16.0	988	33.7	0.6	12	50.2
1821-30	403	13.7	7.4	21.2	1204	46.0	0.7	15	67.9
1831-40	501	17.6	12.4	29.9	1473	75.6	0.9	19	106.4
1841-50	664	21.6	20.2	41.7	1862	97.0	1.8	37	140.6
	887	29.0	24.3	53.3	2217	128.3	3.9	79	185.5
<p>Notes: All figures assume full employment (hence some agricultural series have been revised upward to allow for actual unemployment). Gross investment = Repairs & renewals + Capital formation. Labor force measured as numbers of families (thousands). Labor force and Wage bill figures take into account earnings by some members of chiefly agricultural families in industrial employment. Rents for industry are 'urban rents,' derived from Feinstein (1978). Total output (= Gross Investment + Wage Bill + Land Rents) is exclusive of transfer payments, of which the most important were interest payments. Services, etc. excluded (see text).</p>									
<p>Source: Von Tunzelmann in Mokyr (1985).</p>									

