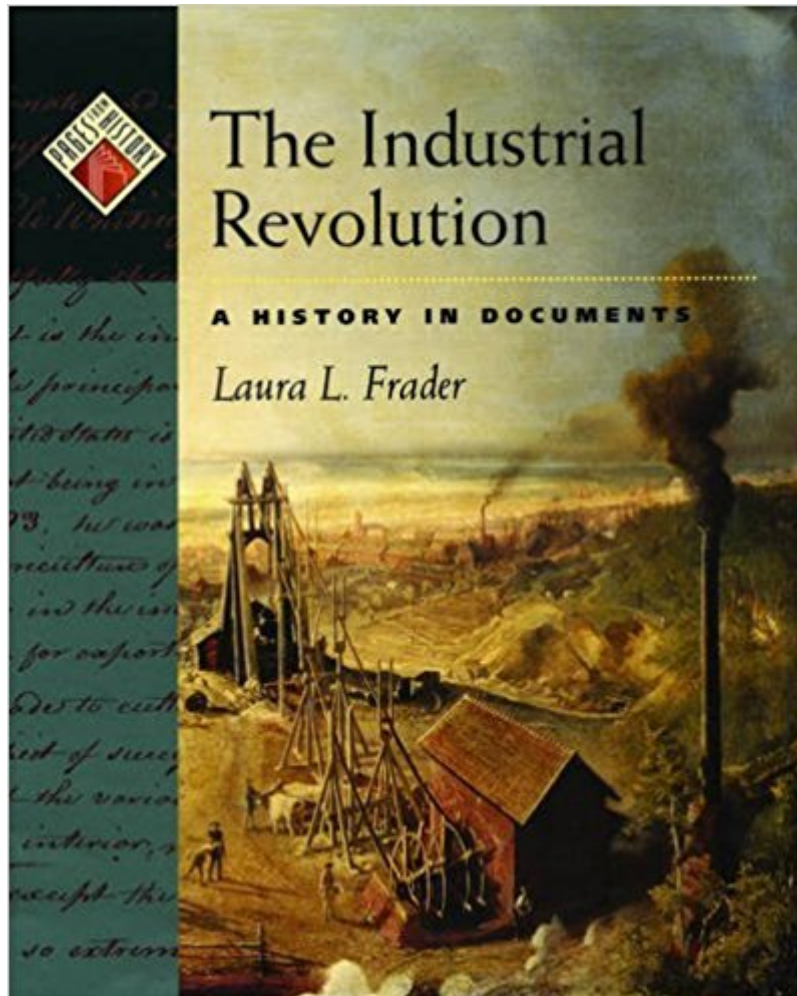




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# The Industrial Revolution: A History In Documents (Pages From History)



## Synopsis

The Industrial Revolution: A History in Documents uses a wide variety of primary source documents to chronicle a period of great international social and technological change that began in England in the 18th century. Improvements were made to the steam engine that meant that many tasks that had been done by hand in the past could be mechanized. With locomotives and steamships, goods could now be transported very quickly and within a reasonably predictable time. Other changes included the use of iron and steel, invention of new machines that increased production (including the spinning jenny), development of the factory system, and important developments in transportation and communication (including the telegraph). They all led to agricultural improvements, a wider distribution of wealth, political changes reflecting the shift in economic power, and sweeping social changes. This book relies on primary sources such as personal diaries, advice books, poems, business reports, letters, photos, and essays to tell the story behind this rapidly changing period and its far-reaching effects.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 10 Up – Frader presents the development of the Industrial Revolution through a complex mixture of documents and narrative. After a general introduction on how to read documents for context as well as content, she begins each chapter with an overview of the topic, followed by a combination of her own words in bold or as captions and primary documents. The author introduces

and places in context letters, diaries, government reports, laws, songs and poems, association statements, newspaper articles, posters, paintings, illustrations, and photographs of artifacts. The widely varied and fascinating black-and-white illustrations have good resolution and are an integral part of the narrative. The author emphasizes the socially complex results of the Industrial Revolution, including the great hardships the new labor force experienced. She concludes with an afterword in which she balances the negative with the positive social changes that have resulted from the new technologies that, through improved means of production, transportation, and communication, have brought about rising living standards, and the expansion of leisure— not only for the middle class, but for workers as well—.

Frader's style is clear and easily readable; however, the complexity and variety of the sources that constitute the total narrative make this a challenging though intriguing text for high school students. The time line at the end provides useful guideposts of significant events. A list of further reading arranged by topic completes the work.

— Judith V. Lechner, Auburn University, AL Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Dr. Frader is a Professor of history at Northeastern University. She specializes in French social and labor history and European women's and gender history, and has written extensively on these topics. Her publications include *Peasants and Protest: Agricultural Workers, Politics and Unions in the Aude, 1850-1914* (University of California Press, 1991); *Gender and Class in Modern Europe* (co-edited with Sonya O. Rose, Cornell University Press, 1996), *Race in France: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Politics of Difference* (co-edited with Herrick Chapman, Berghahn, 2004); *The Industrial Revolution* (Oxford University Press, 2006); and *Breadwinners and Citizens: Gender in the Making of the French Social Model* (Duke University Press, 2008) as well as many articles in English and French-language journals. She has served on the editorial boards of *The Journal of Modern History* and *French Historical Studies*, and serves on the editorial board of *French Politics, Culture, and Society*.

"The Industrial Revolution" is a historical nonfiction book about the Industrial Revolution and is based on documents from the time period. These documents allow the reader to see different views of the changes at the time they were occurring. The focus started out in England and, as time moved on, to America and parts of Europe. The book started by describing what life was like before the Industrial Revolution and then showed how things changed. It included excerpts from essays, diaries, books, business reports, letters, and even a few poems. It also included black and white

photographs and illustrations from the time period. The editors provided some information before the text of each document to help the reader to understand the context of the document. I found this book to be easy to understand and very informative. I'd highly recommend it to those who want to better understand the social changes--especially those in England--at the time of the Industrial Revolution.

Frader develops a thoroughgoing, readable history of the Industrial Revolution by relying exclusively on the primary sources of the period. By introducing and placing in context letters, diaries, government reports, laws, songs and poems, association statements, newspaper articles, posters, paintings, illustrations, and photographs of artifacts, Frader emphasizes the socially complex results of the Industrial Revolution, including the great hardships the new labor force experienced. It was interesting to see evidence of those hardships in the primary documents themselves and not inserted as a result of, as many historians are wont to do, the author's own narrative.

Just what the teachers wanted

I am eager to assign this as required reading in my world history courses at the university level. The primary documents are rich in information and will work well in discussion. The pictures and illustrations amplify the overall sense of the industrialization of Europe and its far-reaching effects. The book helpfully starts with the pre-industrial or proto-industrial economic system, then devotes most of its space to textile production, steam power, and mining, and finishes with the social effects and criticisms of the free-for-all period of capitalism. Socialist and trade union writings complete the book. It is very impressive. At \$38 it is a little pricey, but that's not uncommon. The good thing is that the teacher can discard the textbook and use books such as this one, and the students will appreciate it on several levels.

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