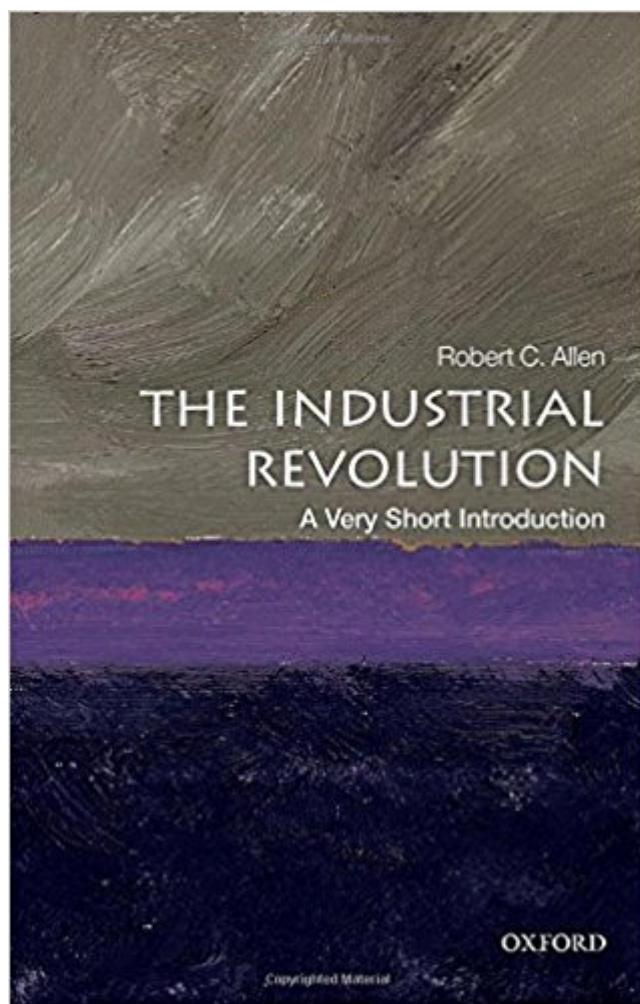


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The Industrial Revolution: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)



Synopsis

The Industrial Revolution was a pivotal point in British history that occurred between the mid-eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries and led to far reaching transformations of society. With the advent of revolutionary manufacturing technology productivity boomed. Machines were used to spin and weave cloth, steam engines were used to provide reliable power, and industry was fed by the construction of the first railways, a great network of arteries feeding the factories. Cities grew as people shifted from agriculture to industry and commerce. Hand in hand with the growth of cities came rising levels of pollution and disease. Many people lost their jobs to the new machinery, whilst working conditions in the factories were grim and pay was low. As the middle classes prospered, social unrest ran through the working classes, and the exploitation of workers led to the growth of trade unions and protest movements. In this *Very Short Introduction*, Robert C. Allen analyzes the key features of the Industrial Revolution in Britain, and the spread of industrialization to other countries. He considers the factors that combined to enable industrialization at this time, including Britain's position as a global commercial empire, and discusses the changes in technology and business organization, and their impact on different social classes and groups. Introducing the "winners" and the "losers" of the Industrial Revolution, he looks at how the changes were reflected in evolving government policies, and what contribution these made to the economic transformation.

ABOUT THE SERIES: The *Very Short Introductions* series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Book Information

Series: *Very Short Introductions*

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (April 1, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0198706782

ISBN-13: 978-0198706786

Product Dimensions: 6.7 x 0.5 x 4.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #127,833 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #35 in Books > Business &

Customer Reviews

An authoritative overview of recent perspectives on the Industrial Revolution which is very clearly written and a pleasure to read. * Nick Crafts, Professor of Economic History, University of Warwick *

Robert C. Allen is Global Distinguished Professor of Economic History at New York University Abu Dhabi research university, and a Senior Research Fellow of Nuffield College, Oxford. Allen has written on English agricultural history, international competition in the steel industry, the extinction of whales, and contemporary policies on education. His articles have won the Cole Prize, the Redlich Prize, and the Explorations Prize. His books include *Enclosure and the Yeoman: The Agricultural Development of the South Midlands, 1450-1850* (2009), and *Farm to Factory: A Re-interpretation of the Soviet Industrial Revolution* (2003), both of which won the Ranki Prize of the Economic History Association, *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective* (2009), and *Global Economic History: A Very Short Introduction* (2011). Robert Allen is a Fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Society of Canada.

This little book gives an excellent overview and gives the textile industry its proper place in history. I was particularly pleased that it explained principles often mentioned but not explained in other texts e.g. pg 79-81 explains Corn law, Schumpeter, and Mathus. It also discusses Creative Destruction which I now understand but never hear of in other texts. Provides some insights not found in other books e.g. Chartist and how they had petitioned the Parliament with 3 million signatures for the right to vote and were turned down. No wonder many people left England for more progressive freedoms and rights.

Bought this book to use with my high school sophomores. It's digestible, written in an interesting way, and contains several short chapters of about 15 pages each, so I don't feel guilty assigning them a chapter every other night. This is my first introduction to this series, but there are a lot of books within this series that look promising. Hopefully they're all as well written as this one!

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