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The Social Theories of Charles Dickens: An Analysis of Victorian Class and Industrialism

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**"THE SOCIAL THEORIES OF CHARLES DICKENS: AN ANALYSIS OF VICTORIAN
CLASS AND INDUSTRIALISM"**

An honors paper submitted to the Department of English, Linguistics, and Communication
of the University of Mary Washington
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Departmental Honors

Julia Anne Davis

May 2015

By signing your name below, you affirm that this work is the complete and final version of your paper submitted in partial fulfillment of a degree from the University of Mary Washington. You affirm the University of Mary Washington honor pledge: "I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work."

Julia Davis
(digital signature)

05/01/15

Our Great Expectations of the Upper Class

Julia Davis

4/26/15

English 415

Charles Dickens Senior Seminar

A gentleman. It sounds like something every man should aspire to be. For many, the word “gentleman” strikes up images of a James Bond like character: tall, handsome, and wearing a black suit. Already a problem has arisen- a gentleman seems to be more about accoutrements than “gentlemanly” worthy actions. What once was a word that described a man based on his superior conduct, has become a word that describes a man based on what he owns. In Victorian society, what a gentleman was, and who got to earn the coveted title, had been already been decided by clearly set societal standards. Within the rigid social order of Victorian society, it was enough for a man to have money in order to be seen as a gentleman; character and conduct no longer mattered. In Great Expectations, Charles Dickens looks at flawed way that society defines a gentleman, in order to caution against the dangerous societal constructions of class roles. By examining Pip’s “gentlemanly” emotional and moral decline, contrasted with the selfless and maternal actions of the real “gentle-man” Joe, Dickens shows that being a member of the upper class is not everything it appears to be. Dickens’ warnings seek to educate us about our lives today, as we continue to allow artificially constructed roles in society to dictate our actions and social order.

In the beginning of the novel, young and innocent Pip looks up to the Joe, the man who has been his main friend and companion. Although Joe is not a great scholar or wealthy, Pip admires him nonetheless. Fondly he recalls special moments with Joe; their routine at meal times, sharing a hymnal at church, and time spent together in front of the fire. After he receives his expectations and moves to London, Pip’s emotional decline causes him to gain a prejudice against Joe due to his class; his feelings of love change to those of embarrassment and dislike. “Not with pleasure, though I was bound to him by so many ties; no; with considerable disturbance, some mortification, and a keen sense of incongruity. If I could have kept him away

by paying money, I certainly would have paid money. My greatest reassurance was, that he was coming to Barnard's Inn, not to Hammersmith, and consequently would not fall in Bentley Drummle's way. I had little objection to his being seen by Herbert or his father, for both of whom I had a respect; but I had the sharpest sensitiveness as to his being seen by Drummle, whom I held in contempt. So, throughout life, our worst weaknesses and meannesses are usually committed for the sake of the people whom we most despise." (218) Joe's trip to London creates a clash between Pip's new found place in the upper class, and Joe's comfortable position as a blacksmith. In a short period of time in upper class society, readers see how Pip's emotions have changed to develop strong prejudices against the man who raised him. Pip did not have any thoughts against Joe when they both lived as equals in the forge; Joe's approval was the most important thing in his life. Becoming a gentleman in society is what draws Pip's awareness to Joe's differences from the upper class. He has no problem with Joe being seen by seen by Herbert, who has not found a firm place in the upper class, but cringes at the thought of him being seen by Drummle, a haughty member of the upper class. Although Pip dislikes Drummle, he clearly seeks his approval as he tries to keep his social position untainted by association with a blacksmith. His feelings against Joe are so strong that he would pay money to keep Joe away from his coveted upper class sphere. Joe has done more for Pip than the arrogant Pumblechook, pompous Mr. Wopsle, or cruel Mr. Jaggers, but Pip forgets all of this, blinded by class conventions. Pip allows his social aspirations to take precedence over his love towards his family. At this point in the novel, Pip does not realize that kindness is more important than class position. If Pip is able to treat a member of his family with this much contempt because of their social ranking, what does it say for the treatment of rest of Victorian upper class society? Pip's actions show that it was normal to treat people poorly, simply because of their status in society.

With the strong changes in Pip's emotions towards those he loves, Dickens shows how strong class conventions are and warning us about how easy it is to fall into prejudice actions. Because Joe is not seen as a gentleman in London high society, he does belong in Pip's life.

Pip's newly gained prejudice and negative emotions against his brother-in-law reflects feelings we have today against lower classes. It is commonplace in our society to discriminate against those in a lower class because of their position in society. These prejudices are dangerous because they prevent progress in society. These feelings extend to our legislative system, where tax cuts for the wealthy and health care laws threaten the wellbeing of people who are less fortunate. Wealthy business owners actively fight unions and an increase in the minimum wage. They state that raising the minimum wage would hurt business, even though large corporations are making unprecedented profits. Saying that unskilled minimum wage laborers don't deserve an increase in their pay is similar to saying that poor working class don't deserve the same chances at success and happiness as do the more affluent. Struggling to make a comfortable living should not be an accepted norm. Property owners in wealthy communities oppose tax hikes that would send resources to neighboring jurisdictions that have fewer resources, even though society as a whole benefits when all children have access to a quality education. Fox News commentators rail against any forms of public assistance, not recognizing that a large percentage of families that receive public assistance are among the working poor - people who work one or sometimes two jobs, yet still cannot make ends meet. Business people who espouse these values place financial gains over social responsibility and kindness, sometimes without even realizing it. Dickens wants us to be aware of how we discriminate against members of the lower class to show how flawed our society is. Once we're aware of our negative actions we can

begin to take the steps to fix them. Business and financial gains have become more important in our society than being a good person, just as they did for Pip.

The more time Pip spends in London, the more his actions begin to degrade, showing the negative influence of upper class society. “As I had grown accustomed to my expectations, I had insensibly begun to notice their effect upon myself and those around me. Their influence on my own character, I disguised from my recognition as much as possible, but I knew very well that it was not all good. I lived in a state on chronic uneasiness respecting my behaviour to Joe. My conscience was not by any means comfortable about Biddy. When I woke up in the night- like Camilla- I used to think, with a weariness on my spirits, that I should have been happier and better if I had never seen Miss Havisham’s face, and had risen to manhood content to be partners with Joe in the honest old forge.” (272) This passage shows that Pip knows that his actions are immoral, but he continues to behave in such a way anyway because of the draw of being a gentleman and winning Estella’s approval. Pip has a guilty conscience and regrets his behaviors, but the pull of being a member upper class and being seen as a gentleman is stronger than his feelings for his family. With Pip’s poor actions as a gentleman, Dickens is satirizing the Victorian class system. A gentleman was supposed to be the grandest role in public society, but as a gentleman Pip has become a negligent and miserable young man. Nearly every upper class man Pip meets has severe character flaws, showing Dickens’ strong warnings against the flawed upper class. Aware of these flaws, Pip has still accepted the credo that a majority of people in society will see him as less of a person if he does not have the trappings of a gentlemen, even though as a gentleman he is a terrible person. Pip continues to pursue being a gentleman, fully aware of how his goals have negatively altered his character, because society has told him it is the only way to be seen in a positive light, be formally educated, and get the woman he loves.

With Pip's regret against his actions, Dickens shows that achieving a certain class role is not the most important thing in life. Pip finally has the life he thought he always dreamed for, but thinks longingly for the life he could have had. Pip is now an "accustomed" gentleman- he treats his family poorly, influences his friends to fall into debt, ignores those who care about him, and is aware of all of his transgressions but commits them anyways. Dickens wants the reader to realize that being a gentleman, is not everything it appears to be and to stop looking up to people just for having an upper class label.

Dickens' statement against the actions of the upper class has strong meaning in our lives today, as we continue to idealize upper classes, despite their often immoral actions. We allow class conventions to dictate how we operate in society, just as Victorian society causes Pip to treat those he loves immorally. Our society as a whole has an elevated view of celebrities and those with lots of money, despite many of them not doing anything to positively further society. In many cases, their actions have a negative impact on society, but we still continue to idealize them. In the Google Top News Stories section, which compiles all the top stories from all major news networks on Sunday, April 26, directly below the Nepal earthquake that has already killed 2,500, is "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" star Bruce Jenner, who is being praised for his brave transition into a transgender lifestyle. Although it does take courage to step out as transgendered, nothing is mentioned in the article about the car accident that Jenner caused mere weeks ago, which left a 69-year-old woman dead. His poor actions were completely overshadowed by society's tendency to elevate those who have money, simple because they have the celebrity label. No manslaughter charges were filed, not because Jenner had no fault in the accident or issued any type of public apology-which he did not, but because he was a celebrity. If I committed the same actions there is no question that I would be jail or at minimum awaiting

charges. Last spring, a social media outrage took place against the arrest of teen idol Justin Bieber, who was apprehended for driving under the influence of alcohol and street racing his Lamborghini. Bieber's fans took social media by storm, tweeting about how they were worried about Bieber's safety in jail, and that he did not deserve to be arrested because "he was perfect." They felt that the normal laws of society should not apply to Bieber because of his celebrity status. As a society, we tend to put celebrities on a pedestal and fail to acknowledge their transgressions; thereby falling prey to the powerful construct of class, just like Pip. Pip cannot accept that there is anything wrong with his fellow gentlemen, because society tells him that they are great. Celebrity reality shows such as "Keeping up with the Kardashians" elevate celebrities and upper classes, supporting people who are famous just for being famous. Supermarkets do not have magazines with pictures of volunteers or those who further the development of society, but instead they're plastered with celebrities who have multiple marriages, illegal drug possession, and drive intoxicated, endangering the lives of everyone on the road. They actually make money by being bad people. By focusing on celebrity actions in tabloids, entertainment television channels, click-bait news articles, and more, our society continues to support them, promoting the idea that class is more important than morality.

Joe Gargery stands out in the novel for his maternal actions towards Pip and his perpetual kindness. After young Pip learns to read and write, he asks Joe why he never learned to do the same. "I see so much in my poor mother, of a woman drudging and slaving and breaking her honest heart and never getting no peace in her mortal days, that I'm dead afraid of going wrong in the way of not doing what's right by a woman, and I'd far rather of the two go wrong the t'other way, and be a little ill-convenienced myself. I wish it was only me that got put out, Pip I wish there warn't no Tickler for you, old chap. I wish I could take it all on myself; but this is the up-

and-down-and-straight on it, Pip, and I hope you'll overlook short-comings." (50) With this passage, Dickens shows the alternative "gentle-man" in the novel. Joe may not be rich or formally educated, but he knows more about life and being a decent person than anyone else in the novel. Readers learn alongside Pip that Joe sacrificed his education as a child in order to care for his abused mother. Ironically, this lack of education will later cause Pip to dissociate himself with Joe. Instead of worrying about the fact that he is not educated, Joe's main worry is about treating people correctly and ensuring Pip's wellbeing. He wishes he could take away the physical pain that Mrs. Joe causes Pip and does everything he can to ensure that Pip feels like he belongs, even after Pip leaves. It is clear to the reader through Joe's speech and sentence construction that he has no education, yet he has more wisdom about how the world works than any character in the novel. Conventions in society tell us to consider Joe uneducated, but his alternative way of reading people causes Joe to study how people really are. The reader looks to Joe as a role model and the one who has the real answers. Joe knows what Pip really needs to be a successful and happy young man, but his Joe's disinterested kindness is never fully appreciated because of his position in society. Joe's kind and caring actions do not meet the expectations for how men in Victorian society behaved, and after Pip gets his expectations he loses his ability to appreciate Joe's sacrifices. Pip leaves and ignores the heartfelt Joe for Estella, a woman who claims without any reservations that she has no heart, because he is just a blacksmith. Joe is the real "gentle-man" of the novel, but he gets no credit. Victorian society constantly reinforces to Pip the idea that your class position is more important than your actions. Society cannot see Joe as a gentleman, despite his generous, kind, and giving actions, because he does not fit the constructed description of what a gentleman should be. For the Victorians, being kind and maternal did not make a gentleman- having money and status did. By making Joe so selfless and

altruistic, Dickens wants the readers to see the benefits of treating people kindly and looking beyond a class label. Through Joe Dickens also shows that having a traditional education or clearly defined label in society does not make someone a gentleman. Dickens wants readers to strive to be like Joe, and not get stuck striving for an artificial label of gentleman, like Pip.

Victorian society refuses to accept Joe as a gentleman because his characteristics go against what was expected of a gentleman. Centuries later, men who try and step outside of traditional gender roles are treated in a similar way. Despite gains in gender equality in the last several decades, the accepted gender constructs still reign: a woman's place is generally in housework, while a man's place is at work. These standards of male and female roles in society were already firmly grounded in Victorian times, with men as workers and money makers and women as ornamental angels of the hearth. Just as Joe's position as a male blacksmith prevent society from appreciating his maternal kindness as a gentle-man, men today are discouraged from taking on more maternal roles as stay-at-home dads. While the number of stay-at-home dads has greatly increased in the last several years, there is still harsh judgement against men who go against what society tells them they should do. In the article "What Ruth Bader Ginsburg Taught Me About Being a Stay-at-Home Dad," former clerk assistant to Ruth Ginsburg and young lawyer Ryan Park discusses the trials and conflicts he dealt with after he decided to take time off of work to spend time with his toddler. Despite studies showing the benefits of being a stay-at-home dad and spending more time with family members, Park was very alone in his decision to put work aside. During outings with his daughter he said he could go weeks without seeing another man with his children between the hours of 9 and 5. In a 2013 Pew study, 60 percent of men described their hours taking care of their children as "very meaningful." Nearly half of fathers report dissatisfaction with the amount of time that they are able to spend with their

children. Spending more time with family and less time at work clearly has the benefits, yet men still do not make the decision because they are told they are not supposed to. Pew studies also showed that in addition to the social pressure against taking a more maternal role in society, men are actually punished for doing so. In today's society there is also a punishment for women who decide to take the "mommy track" and stay at home, but it is not as strong as that against men. Men who take time away from work for family reasons will get a 26.4 percent reduction in future financial earnings, compared to a 23.2 percent reduction for women. Men who decrease their work hours for family reasons suffer a 15.5 percent salary decline, while women's salaries decline by 9.8 percent. Men clearly suffer unless they submit to their constructed gender role. The ideas of what a father should be controls how men live their lives, just as it caused Joe to be seen as less of a gentleman, despite being more worthy for the title than anyone else in the novel.

In Great Expectations, Charles Dickens exposes problems with our conventions of class. With the flawed and dishonorable gentlemen, compared to the simple and kind gentleman blacksmith, Dickens wants us to see how a class label does not define who a person is. Society might look up to gentlemen, but by exposing their flaws, Dickens shows that being a good person is more important than any artificial class ranking. Once Pip realizes that morality and kindness is more important than social standing he grows to become a real gentleman. As long as our society continues to dictate people's actions due to class conventions, Great Expectations will continue to teach a lesson against the dangers of following concepts of class and social order. Until we start to think of a gentleman as a person who treats people kindly, instead of a tall, dark man with a nice car, we're still falling into the trap of class expectations, without even realizing it.

A Hard Time for Dickens: Analyzing Dickens' Portrayal of Industrialism in *Hard Times*

I was influenced to research the topic of industrialism in *Hard Times* from studying abroad last fall in London. After growing up in a mostly rural area, I suddenly found myself living in the middle of city I had been reading about for semesters in Victorian literature classes. The results of rapid growing industrial city were all around me. Everyday I witnessed the good and bad outcomes of industrialism. I had never read *Hard Times*, but I knew that any ideas Charles Dickens had about industrialism had to be important.

I felt that it would be extremely fruitful to research industrialism, since it continues to be relevant to our society today. The detriments of our industrious lifestyle are boiling over the surface as we face a climate crisis. Everything that has happened since the Industrial Revolution has led our world to the current state that we are in. The impenetrable black smoke that covers the city of Coketown still exists in cities such as Beijing, where citizens are told to not go outside on certain days, and to always wear masks. Many American cities put out smog warnings on the weather channel. Products of industrialism are extremely relevant on our own campus today, as students sit outside UMW President Hurley's office, hoping to convince our BOV to stop investing in dirty energy. What better place to begin to examine industrialism than the very beginning, back in the Victorian era?

I had a very different experience reading *Hard Times* than I thought I would. I thought Dickens would make inspiring statements against industry and all the horrors that come with it. He would show the struggles of the working class, and touch on everything from child labor laws and unfair wages, to dangerous factory conditions, pollution, and clemming. Given Dickens' history as a voice for the voiceless, I was surprised that he spoke so little about the multitude of issues with industrialism in what was supposed to be a novel on the harms of industrialism and utilitarian education. This drastically changed my research interests. I knew now that I wanted to know why Dickens chose to write the novel the way he did. In my research was hoping to find articles that refuted my thoughts on *Hard Times* being a weak novel for industrialism. I was disappointed with Dickens' argument against industrialism, and wanted scholars to take a stand for Dickens and change my mind. I know Dickens had the capability as a writer to make a strong argument against the negative outcomes of industrialism. Dickens championed the poor in *Bleak House*, with little Jo's dying amongst us everyday. Where was that powerful voice for characters like Stephen, who wasted away their lives in a factory? I wanted to know why Dickens didn't go further. Was there something that I missed in my own reading? Given our knowledge of Wordsworth and his strong views against cities, I also wanted to find articles that showed Wordsworthian influences on Dickens' writing. I also hoped to see comparisons between the industrialism Dickens writes about in *Hard Times* with the current state of England, since this is what first peaked my interest.

In my research I quickly discovered that many scholars did share my opinion on *Hard Times* being a weak novel on industrialism. The widely accepted opinion in the scholarly world is that *Hard Times* fails on multiple levels to speak on industrialism. Few outwardly stated that *Hard Times* was a well written novel, and those who did had to provide vast amounts of evidence to support their claims. Dickens simply did not seem to stand up for the working class the way he was expected to. I wanted to find scholars who would change my mind about *Hard Times*, but

most voices only made me more disappointed in the novel. Dickens missed an opportunity to say much on industrialism, in a time where someone really should have said something. Almost all scholars were frustrated with Dickens in some way, and many used their frustrated energy to delve deeper into their examination of the novel. Despite my disappointment in Dickens, I was surprised with the deep analyses on figurative language, which helped me get more out of the novel. Those who chose to defend Dickens brought strong evidence to support their claims and opened up sections of the novel that I did not see. After seeing so many question Dickens' stance on industrialism, I realized I needed to look more at his own personal history, and how he really felt on the current issues of the time.

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Spector, Stephen J. "*Monsters of Metonymy: Hard Times and Knowing the Working Class.*" *ELH*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (Summer, 1984): 365-84. Web. 27 Mar. 2015.

Spector, like many, questions why Dickens failed to bring his usual brilliance to his description of Coketown's workers, and instead wrote stereotyped industrial workers. Dickens simply didn't use any of his normal writing genius on the characters of Stephen and Rachel. Spector feels there isn't a clear answer to why Dickens appears so disconnected from the industrial world when writing an industrial novel. We can't simply say that Dickens didn't know the working class. Spector argues that Dickens was aware of his "middle class ignorance." Dickens recognizes the limitations of his knowledge of the working class, which is why he uses metonymy. *Hard Times* is supposed to tell the truth; Dickens intended readers to view the novel as realism. He created realism through relying on metonymy, but the limits of metonymy clearly showed in *Hard Times*. The town and workers were all referred to as part of an industrious machine, since work is what actively defines a person.

The description of industrious Coketown in chapter five, "The Key-note," is justifiably famous through Dickens use of metaphors and figurative language. While others question why human workers are only mentioned at the end of the passage, Spector says it's on purpose. The industrial workers have become synonymous with the machine. Dickens uses simple metonymy to connect workers with machines. They are the same as the objects they produce. He relies on realism and assumes that "men are like their environment" (372) We assume that the workers are alike because all aspects of the industrial own are alike. All this figurative language is not necessarily a good thing, as Spector argues the continuous metonymy throughout the novel causes Dickens to lose his reliability as an author. To many readers, Dickens appears to see the working class without knowing them. Dickens wants to go beyond the surface reading of working class and reveal the complex realities of their lives, but he fails to create a convincing real working class character. Dickens purposely lets his working class characters fade into anonymity to reflect the mass produced people that the industrial world has created. He had too much faith in powers of language and realism, which is why so many see the book as a failure. I think it's important to start with Spector's article because he directly responds to the complaints that many have against Dickens' failures in *Hard Times*. Spector's thoughts on Dickens' use of figurative language influenced other scholars, including Patricia Johnson, who quotes Spector and also bases her arguments around figurative language. Spector made me aware of deeper language and messages in the novel. I had not even considered the use of metonymy before reading this article. If I follow Spector's interpretation of the language in *Hard Times* the novel becomes much stronger. I can see why Dickens mentions the workers in the novel so little, because they're synonymous with machinery. What were Dickens' faults in the novel becomes his triumphs. Spector recognizes that Dickens' reliance on his figurative language was maybe too

strong, which I agree with, since many readers fail to see it. Despite a strong argument, I still remain convinced that Dickens could have done more to write on the behalf of industrial workers. If Dickens purposely intended to let the industrial workers fade into the background, I think it was a poor decision. However, if I did not have Spector, I would have kept my weaker thoughts on *Hard Times*.

Johnson, Patricia E. "*Hard Times and the Structure of Industrialism: The Novel as Factory.*" *Studies in the Novel*. Vol. 21. Issue 2, Summer '89: 128-38. Web. 25 Mar. 2015.

Although many scholars feel the novel is too simple and lacks seriousness, Johnson suggests that there is a deeper level of understanding of the issues of industrialism in *Hard Times*. What is seen as poor writing in *Hard Times* is actually Dickens commenting on the political, social, and economic structures of industrial capitalism. Dickens recreates dynamics of a capitalist production through the "interlocking use of metaphor and metonymy." (128) The shape of the novel itself recreates dynamics of urban industrialism. Johnson says that Dickens creates a "chilling" tribute to the power of a factory system by "allowing his own creative energy to be harnessed by it" and producing his own novel as factory. (130) The shape of the novel mimics the shape of a factory, which has a supporting framework and a core of fuel. The beginning seven and final three chapters focus on the social and political framework. Like a physical structure, as long as the framework still stands, the system will still stay in place, despite what takes place within the core. It is only in the framework of the novel that change is allowed to occur, which is why the framework of the novel and the ideals of the capitalist industrial society stay the same. The core of the novel focuses on Stephen, a working class man, and Louisa, daughter of the main Utilitarianism spokesman. Johnson argues that the two characters are metonymically represented by Dickens as the fuel, and eventual waste, of the factory system. Stephen is "fuel" for the factory system and Louisa is "fuel" for the marriage system. There is no way out of factory life and struggles for Stephen; his knowledge of the hardships are not enough to provide a way out. His death is a representation of the separation between the outer social structure and inner aspects of industrialism. The end of the book is Dickens' informing the reader of all the "goods" the system of his novel has produced. Stephen's death shows the inability for change within the inner structure. Sissy's children, who exist happily outside the factory, "unrelentingly directs our gaze" back to the factory walls. Dickens doesn't give an answer or escape to the problems of industrialism, but instead shows what it costs to maintain it.

While I felt that Johnson's analogy of relating the literal structure of novel to a factory was an interesting concept, I don't think it was a very strong point. It is not a "chilling tribute," if no one else understands it. Despite failing to see the strength in Johnson's argument, relating the novel to a factory does give another explanation to what many see as weaker points in the novel. The minimal mention of workers does put them on the same level as machines, and makes it seem like they hardly exist. I think the factory can be seen as a metaphor for the destructive forces on characters' lives, but I do not think the novel itself is supposed to be seen as a factory.

Johnson was clearly influenced by Spector, but I think Spector gives a stronger argument for how Dickens is using figurative language. Johnson made many points that I felt stretched Dickens' intentions and gave him more credit as a writer than he deserved. I feel like Johnson is important in the conversation because she brings a different interpretation of figurative language in the novel, and extensively examines the factory system. She is also a mostly positive critic on *Hard Times*, which was rare to come across in my research.

Brantlinger, Patrick. "**Dickens and the Factories.**" *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* Vol. 26.No. 3 (Dec., 1971): 270-85. University of California Press. Web. 26 Mar. 2015.
<<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2933206>>

Patrick Brantlinger, like many others, opens with acknowledging the obvious criticism against Dickens properly portraying the factory workers. Brantlinger uses Dickens history and the study of political and social movements to explain Dickens' ambivalence on industrialism. Dickens was obviously concerned about "the factory question," but how he shapes his concern in his writing is unsatisfactory to many. The omission of war between labor and capital is not the same as omission of factories and factory workers. Brantlinger believes Dickens' confusion over industrialism comes from knowledge, not ignorance, which leads to Dickens' "unique vision of society as a dismal, unfathomable tangle." (271) Brantlinger notes the industrial scenes in *Old Curiosity Shop*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Bleak House* and *Little Dorrit*. In *Bleak House* and *Little Dorrit* factory owners are treated favorably. There are no factory workers or children in *Curiosity Shop*, even though it was written during the time of 'The Ten Hours Movement'. Dickens was always sympathetic to factory reform, yet even after his first tour of factories he only had one strong paragraph on industrialism in *Nicholas Nickleby*. Dickens wouldn't directly align himself with Ten Hours movement supporters. Dickens wrote letters about how he planned to attack factories, but as he became more familiar with the industrious North as time went on, he became friendlier with them. Dickens later sided more with the Anti-Corn Laws, which showed as his portrayed class strife often in his novels, showing support for the movement. After partial victories with both the Anti-Corn and Ten Hours movement, the fad for literature about factory children disappeared.

There are many instances in *Hard Times* that show Dickens' ambivalent feelings towards factory workers. Bounderby isn't a bloody tyrant and there is no talk about him committing huge crimes of child labor, low wages or poor factory conditions; Dickens' main criticism of industrialism is that factory owners "fall short of their moral obligations." (280) He doesn't suggest the destruction of factories, establishing any different type of economic system, or passing any new factory laws to improve the lives of workers. The only real need described for the factory workers is a need of fun and imagination, and changing industrial morals. Brantlinger ends with stating that Dickens sensed the inadequacy of any reform or official suggestions he would have made about industrial reform. The "muddle of life.... can never really be understood, and never reformed except through love." (285)

In this piece Brantlinger importantly questions Dickens' knowledge of the factory system. Dickens promised to "strike a heavy blow" at industrialism, but instead he hardly swatted at it. This article is important because it relates crucial political and social movements to Dickens' own writing. Brantlinger reminded me of the number of important issues that should have affected Dickens' writings on industrialism. This made me disappointed in Dickens, and reinforced my original feelings on reading the novel. Although Dickens surely did not intend his personal letters to be examined at such a length, if he made promises to attack industrialism why didn't he follow through? At times Brantlinger seemed to have mixed feelings on Dickens. He acknowledged that Dickens had weaknesses and missed crucial writing opportunities, but seems to make excuses for him simply because he is Charles Dickens. Brantlinger is still an important voice in the scholarly conversation on *Hard Times*, and clearly influences Phillip Collins, who wrote "Dickens and Industrialism" nine years after. Brantlinger cites the same scenes in Dickens' novels as Collins, and wonders where the important message on industrialism is. I think the weakest part in Brantlinger's conversation is the ending of his article. There were an extensive

list of social issues in London that could not be “reformed by love.” I think Brantlinger only included this part to try and make Dickens look better as a writer.

Collins, Philip. "**Dickens and Industrialism**" *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*. Vol. 20.No. 4, Nineteenth Century (Autumn, 1980): 651-73. Rice University. Web. 25 Mar. 2015.

Collins opens with a quote by historian John Vincent: “All professors...in their study of the history of English literature have passed through a traumatic experience of reading that implausible melodrama, *Hard Times*.” (651) Collins, with similar feelings to Vincent, questions how much did Dickens know about industrialism, what did he understand, and how did it affect his writing? Collins says that Dickens could only claim to be an occasional visitor of industrial towns, having grown up in the South, away from industrial towns. London was a great industrial city, but there were so many other social, political, and cultural issues in the city that it made sense for Dickens to focus more on them than industrialism in his writing.

England was the first predominantly industrial community in the history of mankind and few attempted writing about it. No prominent Victorian authors had intimate connections with an industrial town, besides Elizabeth Gaskell, and few attempted writing an industrial novel. Collins argues that on industrialism, Dickens “took up neither a lifelong position nor a series of positions among which a clear development can be discerned.” (655). Dickens had good intentions, but failed to write on abuses of factory system and industrialization. Collins opens his critiques to other novels. He thinks Dickens had inconsistent, ambivalent views and failed to write strong attack on behalf of mill workers in *Nicholas Nickleby*, and there was only a brief mention in *Old Curiosity Shop*. In *David Copperfield*, he misses the chance to strongly comment on child labor while David is at Murdstone & Grinby’s. Dickens writes nothing significant on factory or industrialism until *Hard Times* and *Bleak House*.

Collins importantly comments that the usual amount of detail in Dickens’ novels is incredible, but in *Hard Times* he lacks major key elements of industrialism. We are never taken inside the factory and only meet two workers. There is no mention of child labor, unemployment or lack of employment, workplace violence, and industrial diseases, among other things. Dickens was writing a novel, not a report on Industrial England, which is reflected in the book. Dickens knew industrialism was there to stay, and showed through other writings that he felt pollution and accidents could be reduced by proper legislation. Despite these feelings, he never refers to this in *Hard Times*. Collins also refers to other publications by Dickens, where he shows a fascination with industrialism, but still has a lack of understanding and has vague and unspecific writing on the topic.

Collin’s opening quote from John Vincent peaked my interest in this article, since I had a similar experience reading the novel. I think it is extremely important to discuss how much Dickens knew about industrialism, since so much of the conversation sees negative issues with the novel. Dickens did have good intentions to make a stand against industrialism, but he fell through. It was hard to disagree with Collins’ views once he made me realize that Dickens did not mention child labor or workplace violence and conditions. I agree with Collins and think that Dickens was inconsistent on his thoughts of industrialism, which clearly shows. His writing on industrialism in *Hard Times* and previous novels shows that he was not prepared to write on the subject. Despite this, Collins also helped me realize that Dickens was tackling a completely new and unheard of subject, so it makes sense that he struggles with the industrialism.

Ketabgian, Tamara Siroone. “**Melancholy Mad Elephants’: Affect and the Animal Machine in Hard Times.**” *Victorian Studies* Vol. 45.Issue 4, Summer 2003, 649-76. Web. 28 Mar. 2015.

In this article Ketabian closely examines the meaning behind the figurative language describing machines in *Hard Times*. Ketabian opens with a 19th century parody on *Hard Times*, called *Hard Times (Refinished)* by "Charles Diggins," written by H. Yates and R.B. Brough, which was written to correct the "striking want of poetical justice" shown in the original's conclusion. Instead of one of only two industrial workers we meet tragically meeting their end down a mine shaft, and life continuing on in a monotonous pattern of machinery, life in Coketown takes a more dramatic turn. Bounderby is attacked by his own machines, which have embodied an animal machine in form of 'melancholy mad elephants.' The thoughts blatantly expressed in *Hard Times Refinished* reflected thoughts of many after reading *Hard Times*. Ketabian extensively examines the use of elephant as a metaphor. In the Victorian era the elephant was seen as an exotic hybrid of beast and machine and huge symbolic representation of "industrial labor, colonial power, mechanical behavior, and impenetrable forms of psychology." (651) The machines in *Hard Times* show how animal instinct and mechanical processes underlie even the deepest human feelings.

Her analysis is split into multiple parts: Animal Machine, Mechanical Feelings, The Mad Animal Feeling of Machines, Elephant Machine, Boz and the Regular Madness of Elephants, and Steady Hands and Mysterious Depths. I felt the strongest arguments were in 'Animal Machine' and 'Elephant Machine.' 'Animal Machine' examines the use of metaphors in describing aspect of industrialism. The most important metaphor is the "animal machine," which captures the brutishness of factory mechanism. The metaphor of "animal machine" has two parts: it envisions machines as bestial and instinctive organisms and it refers to animal bodies fueled by powerful mechanical drive. The "animal machine" became a figure of modernity and encompassed everything that humans were and everything that the Victorian industrial masses threatened to become.

In 'Mechanical Feelings' she examines how Dickens used the literal representation of engines and machines. In *Hard Times*, the machine represents the most repetitive and inhuman aspects of industrialism. The machines in Coketown continue to always work and have no emotions or feelings. In 'Mad Feelings of Machines' the more emotional aspect of machines are examined. In "The Key-Note," Dickens describes Coketown's industrial landscape relating to beasts: "serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled... vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and trembling all day long... the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness." (22) This shows how Coketown has both monotonous and inhuman machines, and insane creatures. Through metaphors, Coketown's machines figuratively become mad, disordered animals. In addition to showing characteristics of creatures, the industrial machines also show melancholy, which is connected to both extreme states of feeling and the apparent absence of emotion. Melancholy shows that the machines have a large capacity for violence and instability, showing depth to a seemingly bland monotonous life.

In 'Elephant Machine' Ketabian explains why Dickens chose to use the elephant as a metaphor to the machines and why it is so important. For Victorian readers the elephant and the steam engine would have shared a symbolic connection. Elephants were closely associated with both colonial outposts and Britain's own industrial empire. The elephant itself shows mechanical docility, yet still has the ability to have brutal and unpredictable actions. So when Dickens compares the engine to a melancholy mad elephant, he gives the machine a sense of modern wonder with a constant threat of possible danger. The elephant is also connected with Eastern oppression, colonialism, imperialism context and Asian forms of social and political oppression.

Despite Dickens' strong use of thought invoking figurative language, Ketabgian, like many, also feels he to properly represent the working class .

While this article was extremely lengthy and difficult to understand at times, I think the extensive deconstruction of figurative language is crucial to the conversation about industrialism. Ketabgian has clearly examined the figurative language analyses of scholars before her, such as Spector and Johnson, and taken it many steps further. This article brought in ideas that I had never considered when reading *Hard Times*. The analysis of the "animal machine" and the elephant shows how much attention Dickens put into his writing. The fact that Ketabgian can write several pages on a single mention of an elephant shows how deeply we can interpret Dickens' writing. Elephants represented many ideas about industrialism, colonial expansion, and the British Empire. This made me question why there is not more about colonialism mentioned in *Hard Times*, since Dickens touches so heavily on it in *Bleak House*. Couldn't Dickens have made a connection between the suffering, ignored workers of Coketown, and telescopic philanthropy? This article helped me see a deeper interpretation of the novel, although it did not change my final thoughts on the novel. After finding so much meaning in Dickens' language, Ketabgian herself still thinks Dickens did not represent very well on the working class. I thought including *Hard Times Refinished* was a very strong way to start the article, since clearly so many readers wished the novel had ended with more poetic justice, instead of continuing the cycle of repressed workers. Ketabgian acknowledges the opinions of a majority of the conversation before stating her points. This analysis also brings a modern voice to the table, since Ketabgian is the only notable voice who has published on the topic after the millennium.

Scheckner, Peter. "**Chartism, Class, And Social Struggle: A Study Of Charles Dickens.**" *Midwest Quarterly* 29.1 (1987): 93-112. *Historical Abstracts*. Web. 1 Apr. 2015.

Scheckner thinks Dickens' writing supports the idea that Dickens was not a revolutionary at all, but instead a man who advocated law and order. He examines Dickens' past in order to better understand Dickens as a writer. He analyzes how Dickens' social and political attitudes were influenced by important events of his time. Critics have long been divided over Dickens' politics and views. Scheckner feels that Dickens's inability to identify with the working class or middle class made his class identity and social outlook confusing. Dickens consistently mistrusted politicians, but his lack of class identification was what caused him to sharpen his political contradictions.

Scheckner looks at three major political events that defined Dickens' generation: The Indian Mutiny of 1857, The Jamaican Rebellion, and the Chartist Movement. During the Indian Mutiny and Jamaican Rebellion, Dickens stood with empire. The upheaval sparked Dickens' lifelong fear of uprising among British workers. The Chartist Movement cared about same social ills that Dickens claimed he cared about, yet the movement hardly shows up in his novels. In *Barnaby*, a novel generally about rioting, Dickens minimized political issues because he wanted to defuse social strife. Dickens had genuine feelings for the poor and moral principles, but was still ideologically closer to the bourgeoisie than political radicals. His compassion did not extend to rebels in British streets. *Old Curiosity Shop* can be seen as a direct response to Chartists activity, but Dickens looks backwards instead of forwards, suggesting the only hope for England is through rural artisans, clergymen, educators, and entertainers. He seems to scold the Chartists in several situations for their actions. Dickens takes readers inside a factory, but does not describe any humans, similar to his writing in *Hard Times*. He does not portray the struggling workers any better than he portrays the inept bureaucrats. Dickens portrays the Chartists as lifeless and demonic as the industrious world they are protesting. In his short story, *The Chimes*,

Dickens successfully makes a statement against the rich and politicians, but at the same time he portrays workers as passive. The poor do not decide any social matters and appear unable to cause any change. This portrayal of passive suffering is reflected in Stephen Blackpool in *Hard Times*, who patiently waits for change that never comes and lives his life in a muddle. Dickens did not show actual support or encouragement.

After reading so much criticism against Dickens and his connections to industrialism, I thought it was important to focus on the history of Dickens' life and how he personally stood on issues. Scheckner helped me see that Dickens did fail in many aspects to be the champion that he was labeled as. Looking at the Chartist movement shows how Dickens himself was passive with his actions. However, I still feel he took some credit away from Dickens. I think Scheckner completely disregards the clear statements made in *Bleak House* against the sufferings of the poor and working class. He seems to have forgotten about the scene between Mrs. Pardiggle and the brick maker, where the brick maker shows a clear knowledge for how society operates towards him. I think I could have gotten more from this article if I had read all the Dickens novels that Scheckner referred to, especially *The Chimes* since it refers to lots of Chartist events and activity. I think it's important to acknowledge how Dickens portrays lower classes, but once again I think Scheckner has missed several other Dickens characters in his analysis. Dickens portrays the poor Oliver Twist as morally good, literate, and with the capacity to make change in his life.

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Although I started my research on a different path than I thought I would, I think my research made me more aware of the intricate issue of industrialism during the Victorian era. Dickens does not make all his points blatantly obvious, which is why *Hard Times* was reviewed under such a scrutinous lens. I discovered I could generally categorize scholars' views into two opposing arguments: those who think Dickens did not do enough in his writing, and those who think he purposely wrote the way he did to make a point on the monotony of industrialism. Surprisingly, both Dickens supporters and the opposition still had problems with how the novel was written. Their distaste only caused them to dig deeper, and appeared to fuel their research. Scholars like Collins and Brantlinger helped me see what Dickens left out, while Spector and Ketabgian made me more aware of figurative language devices that bring a deeper reading to *Hard Times*. While it does not seem like it relates directly to industrialism, a deeper awareness of figurative language brings a much deeper reading to the novel. I realized there could be reasons why Dickens did not make a laundry list of the problems with industrialism, although I do not necessarily agree with all the reasons. I think on such an immense issue like industrialism Dickens could have been blunter.

If I were to write a paper on industrialism in *Hard Times*, I would want my readers to be aware of the issues that Dickens discussed, as well as what he left out. I think it's important to contrast the strong and weak points of *Hard Times*' message, in order to get a full understanding of the novel. The voices of Ketabgian, Spector, and Johnson reveal what Dickens is hiding through purposeful figurative language. The historical context of Scheckner shows the important social and political aspects of industry that Dickens failed to comment on. I would want to give my readers the chance to make their own decision on *Hard Times*.

I felt like there was a gap in the conversation in connecting Dickens' views on industrialism with the industry based society that we live in today. The field was open to make so many exigent connections about industrialism in today's society, but none took it. I think that if Dickens had written a stronger novel about industrialism, perhaps more scholars could have gone

there. There was also no conversation relating *Hard Times* with Wordsworth's influence on Dickens. Dickens was clearly influenced by Wordsworthian principles of nature in *David Copperfield*, *Bleak House*, and *Oliver Twist*. I found this absence really surprising, since Wordsworth taught us that nature was good and cities were bad. I would also want to include connections between education and industry, since the Utilitarianism education is directly linked to the monotonous factory life. Leaving my research I am still dissatisfied with Dickens and *Hard Times*. I know what Dickens is capable of as a writer, and he did not put enough heart into writing on industrialism. I wanted to end my research as a Dickens supporter, but I still feel like he fell short. I do not think another writer would have generated this much conversation. I think if *Hard Times* was written by another author it would have been dismissed as a poorly written novel that failed to cover the multifaceted topic of industrialism.

Educational: (Before becoming a gentleman)

***Pip learning to write before he has become a gentleman**

-before pip has been exposed to the prejudices of class system

- proud of his accomplishment and seeks Jo's approval

-Shows Joe's love- isn't influenced by societal conventions, doesn't criticize Pip's mistakes-

proud of Pip. Has alternative ways of learning and knowing

-foreshadows changes once Pip becomes a gentleman

- after integrated into society he's embarrassed by every aspect of Joe- before Joe's lack of a tradition education never bothered Pip- Jo's class makes Pip dread a visit the one person who

truly cares about him

- a warning- receiving a traditional, upper class education and living in London causes Pip's to forget those who love him the most