



# Women, Gender and Industrialisation in England 1700-1870 (British Studies Series)

By Katrina Honeyman

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Women have played an important role in the labor force for hundreds of years, yet it is often assumed that their work was marginal and subsidiary to the more important tasks performed by men. This book explores the ways in which men and women came to operate within two distinct labor markets during the period known as the industrial revolution and explains why industrial capitalism came to depend on a gendered hierarchy of workers. Drawing on twenty years of feminist scholarship it suggests that women workers not only contributed to the wealth of the English economy but through that contribution influenced the direction and progress of the nation's manufacturing industry. This portrayal of women as central and proactive lies in stark contrast to the definition of women workers as cheap, malleable, poorly skilled, and expendable labor that typifies historical account. This book explains the processes by which male workers undermined the value of women in the interests of their own status both at work and at home. It examines the processes by which work became gendered, the mechanisms by which gender hierarchies became established or recreated both at work and at home, the forces underlying the creation of apparently more hostile relationships between them and women during industrialization and she attempts to explain the failure of men and women to unite in order to resist exploitation by employers. Above all it emphasizes the emergence of industrial society in the 19th century as one which was centrally defined by gender.

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#### **Review**

Honeyman ably accomplishes her goal of demonstrating that women's history is not simply an interesting sidelight to the story... *Albion*

#### **About the Author**

Katrina Honeyman is Senior Lecturer in economic and social history at the University of Leeds.

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