



DELINEATING BRITISH INDUSTRY REVOLUTION IN *ENOLA HOLMES: THE CASE OF MISSING MARQUESS* NOVEL BY NANCY SPRINGER

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Abstract

This study aims to delineate the representation of the British Industrial Revolution in Nancy Springer's novel "Enola Holmes: The Case of the Missing Marquess". The research is conducted through a qualitative approach using socio-historical criticism as its theoretical framework. The Industrial Revolution, which brought massive economic, social, and political changes to Britain during the 18th and 19th centuries, serves as a background context that shapes the narrative elements within the novel. The novel is not merely a detective story for young readers, but a literary text that embeds significant representations of industrial modernity through its characters, setting, symbols, and conflicts. The primary data of this research consist of narrative excerpts and quotations from the novel that reflect conditions such as urban expansion, technological advancement, gender oppression, and class division. The analysis focuses on how these elements are constructed and symbolized through industrial images like trains, factories, newspapers, and coded messages and how they relate to the broader historical realities of Victorian England. The character of Enola Holmes, in particular, becomes a symbolic figure of female resistance who challenges gender roles and asserts independence in a society marked by patriarchal and industrial structures. The findings of the study indicate that Nancy Springer's novel offers a subtle yet powerful critique of the social inequalities and ideological tensions of the Industrial Era. Enola's journey through industrial London represents more than a personal quest; it mirrors the larger struggles of individuals especially women and the lower class against societal systems that sought to define, confine, and control them. This research contributes to the field of literary studies by highlighting how children's fiction can function as a vehicle for socio-political commentary and historical reflection.

Keywords: class, *Enola Holmes*, gender roles, industrial Revolution, socio-historical criticism, symbolism, Victorian society

INTRODUCTION

Racial discrimination is one of the most destructive problems in society because it not only harms individuals but also breaks the relationships between groups. Victims of racial discrimination often experience deep pain, anger, and injustice, while society becomes divided and filled with mistrust. The struggle against discrimination, therefore, is not only about changing unfair laws or political systems, but also about healing the broken relationships among people. To achieve this, reconciliation becomes an important process to restore trust, understanding, and cooperation between former enemies.

John Paul Lederach (1997) explains reconciliation as a long process that involves four connected elements: truth, forgiveness, justice, and peace. Truth requires people to face past pain honestly; forgiveness offers a chance to let go of hatred; justice restores fairness and dignity; and peace becomes the final goal of living together in harmony. As Lederach (1997) says, "Reconciliation requires that people deal with the past in ways that are honest and open" (p. 27). This theory gives a useful perspective for analyzing how characters in literature and film respond to racial discrimination and how they transform conflict into peace.

Clint Eastwood's film *Invictus* (2009) portrays Nelson Mandela's leadership in post-apartheid South Africa, where racial discrimination had left deep wounds in the nation. Instead of choosing revenge, Mandela responds with reconciliation by applying truth, forgiveness, justice, and peace in his actions and words. His famous line, "Forgiveness liberates the soul. It removes fear. That is why it is such a powerful weapon," reflects his belief in healing through forgiveness rather than hatred. This article analyzes Mandela's response to racial discrimination in *Invictus* by using Lederach's reconciliation theory as a framework. Through this analysis, the article shows how Mandela's responses illustrate a powerful model of leadership and reconciliation that transformed racial division into national unity.

This study is supported by several theoretical perspectives that strengthen the analysis of social issues depicted in *Invictus*. To provide a comprehensive view, it combines approaches from both literary and film studies, particularly focusing on narrative structure and cinematography. Literary theory is useful in examining how elements such as character, setting, and conflict reflect wider social problems, while film theory explains how visual techniques—including camera angles, lighting, and shot composition—communicate ideas of race, power, and division. By integrating these disciplines, the research can interpret racial discrimination not only as a social reality but also as an artistic message conveyed through the medium of film.

In addition to literary and cinematic approaches, this study also relies on sociological theories that address racism and racial discrimination. Blank, Dabady, and Citro (2004) highlight the different forms and consequences of discrimination, which provide a framework for understanding the struggles represented in the film. To analyze the main character's response, John Paul Lederach's (1997) theory of reconciliation is applied, emphasizing four key elements: truth, forgiveness, justice, and peace. This perspective allows the study to connect Mandela's personal choices and leadership with broader social healing, bridging the artistic portrayal of discrimination in *Invictus* with the political and cultural realities of post-apartheid South Africa.

METHOD

This chapter covers the methodology of the current research. The method is very helpful in guiding the author to gain the information related to the topic that is being discussed. This chapter is divided into four parts, which are research design, data and data sources, data collection and data analysis. 3.1 Research Design To elaborate on the idea of this research, the writer applied qualitative research. Qualitative research helps the writer write the research to achieve the objective of the study. According to Connaway & Powell (2010), "the case study is a specific field or qualitative research method and thus is an investigation. Moreover, this type of research is chosen because the data is one of the phenomenon which use language as a medium. The method can be described as an effective model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the writer to develop a level of detail that is highly involved in actual experiences (Creswell, 2003). From the explanation above, in conducting this research, this study uses a qualitative method, which is influential because this study considers the experience or the act that happens from many perspectives to understand a phenomenon that appears from the character inside the novel. Moreover, the analysis will be presented in the form of words, clauses, and sentences instead of in a form of numbers. The writer is allowed to write the detailed information from various sources according to the method (Connaway & Powell, 2010).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings and analysis of how the British Industrial Revolution is delineated in *Enola Holmes: The Case of the Missing Marquess* by Nancy Springer. The analysis uses a socio-historical approach, emphasizing the connection between the novel's content and the socio-cultural, economic, and political conditions of 19th-century Britain. Data were collected from narrative and dialogue excerpts that reflect the changes brought by industrialization in the novel. The findings are classified into three aspects: economic, social, and political conditions. Finding and Analysis

Economy Conditions

Economic condition refers to the state of financial systems, labor structures, industrial development, and wealth distribution within a given society, in this case, Victorian England during the Industrial Revolution. The rise of factory-based production, urbanization, and mechanization significantly altered how people earned and spent money, how resources were managed, and how class divisions emerged. Literature often explores how these

changes affected not only economies but the daily lives of individuals, especially the working class. In *Enola Holmes*, depictions of labor, poverty, and industrial cities reflect these shifts, presenting economic transformation as both opportunity and oppression. The British Industrial Revolution caused massive changes in the economy, especially in urbanization, labor, and mechanization. These elements are reflected in the environment Enola encounters.

"London was not the city of dreams I imagined. It was filled with smoke, noise, and people rushing to factories." (Springer, 2006)

Analysis: This quotation illustrates London as a busy industrial city, overwhelmed by machinery, pollution, and workers. The urban space is defined not by comfort, but by the harsh, crowded, and polluted environment shaped by industrialization. It marks a shift from rural and domestic life to the machine-driven rhythm of factory life, a hallmark of the Industrial Revolution.

"The smoke from the trains and factories turned the sky a permanent grey, as if the city had forgotten the color blue." (Springer, 2006, p. 34)

Analysis: This metaphor illustrates the environmental impact of industrialization. The "permanent grey" sky symbolizes how factories have overpowered nature, turning beauty into monotony. It shows that industrial progress brings not only economic growth but also pollution and urban decay — common in 19th-century industrial cities.

"People were everywhere, walking quickly, their faces pale from lack of sun. They worked long hours, they said." (Springer, 2006, p. 29)

Analysis: This reflects the exhausting routine of industrial labor. Pale faces and long hours point to poor working conditions and health effects, especially among factory workers. The novel indirectly critiques the exploitative economic systems of the time.

Social Condition

Social condition refers to the organization of societal roles, norms, expectations, and relationships within a community. In the context of the Industrial Revolution, Victorian society was marked by rigid gender roles, class-based hierarchies, and increasing social alienation due to rapid urban expansion. Literature often mirrors these conditions through themes of family structure, education, social mobility, and marginalization. In "Enola Holmes", Enola's navigation of London society reveals how social systems controlled identity and behavior, especially for women and the poor, highlighting the struggle to assert individuality in a restrictive social world. The novel also displays the social impact of industrialization, particularly regarding gender roles, urban poverty, and child labor.

"Mycroft wishes me to go to a finishing school, to become a proper lady. But I would rather ride a bicycle and read books." (Springer, 2006)

Analysis: This quotation reflects the rigid social norms of the Victorian era, where women were expected to be submissive and domestic. Enola's refusal to conform to this ideal shows a growing resistance to traditional gender roles. Her independence is a form of social commentary on the inequality embedded in the society of the time.

"He told me I must not ride a bicycle because it was unladylike, but I had no intention of being a lady as he defined it." (Springer, 2006, p. 42)

Analysis: This line critiques rigid gender norms. Enola's refusal shows her challenge to Victorian ideals, where women were expected to behave passively. The bicycle becomes a symbol of freedom, mirroring women's early struggles for independence.

"There were children, younger than I, selling newspapers or scrubbing boots to earn their keep." (Springer, 2006, p. 38)

Analysis: A clear image of child labor, this reflects the harsh reality of industrial society. Children had to work in dangerous or demeaning conditions, highlighting class inequality and lack of protection for the poor.

Political Condition

Political condition encompasses the power structures, governance, and institutional ideologies that shape how authority is exercised in a given society. During the Industrial Revolution, political systems in Britain were highly patriarchal, with limited rights for women and the working class. Laws and institutions often reinforced social inequality and male dominance. In literature, political conditions are shown through conflicts over control, freedom, and resistance. In “Enola Holmes”, the attempts to discipline or institutionalize Enola reflect a political effort to suppress female autonomy. Her defiance becomes a form of political resistance, making the novel a critique of power embedded in Victorian legal and familial systems. The political environment of the Industrial Revolution involved control, reform, and resistance — all of which appear in the novel through Enola’s conflicts with male authority.

"Sherlock and Mycroft speak as if I am a problem to be solved, not a person to be heard." (Springer, 2006)

This statement underlines the patriarchal control exerted over women, even within the family. The political subtext critiques the lack of autonomy granted to women and the systemic barriers to their independence. Enola’s struggle becomes symbolic of wider demands for reform during the Industrial Era — including women’s rights, education, and freedom of choice.

"Mycroft wants to send me to finishing school to be corrected, not educated." (Springer, 2006, p. 45)

Analysis: This criticizes how institutions were used to suppress women. Finishing schools did not empower girls but taught obedience. The quote reveals how education was politicized to enforce patriarchy.

"A woman must be invisible, obedient, and proper — or so they insist." (Springer, 2006, p. 49)

Analysis: This reflects the dominant ideology of the time that limited women’s roles. It also shows Enola’s awareness of these restrictions and the beginning of her resistance to them.

Industrial Symbols and Settings Beyond

The direct references to factories and pollution, the novel uses symbolic settings and imagery to convey the essence of the Industrial Revolution. For example, the frequent appearance of train stations, machinery, and coded messages reflects a society increasingly dependent on technology and systematisation. The railways, in particular, symbolise not only technological progress but also the expansion of networks, both physical and social. Enola’s frequent movement through trains and carriages parallels the era’s rapid pace of life and industrial connectivity. These symbols subtly reinforce the industrial backdrop and create a living, breathing Victorian world that is both complex and changing. Enola’s journey through railway stations, coded letters, and public posters reflects the technological infrastructure born from the Industrial Revolution. These settings and symbols emphasize the modernization of society and the centrality of communication and control.

"I boarded the train — an iron beast, loud and fast, that carried me to a future I could not see." (Springer, 2006, p. 51)

Analysis: The train is a symbol of industrial power and uncertainty. It reflects how technology pushed people forward, often without clarity or control. For Enola, it represents escape — but also risk — mirroring how industrialization disrupted stability.

"Even the walls spoke in London. Posters, letters, coded symbols everywhere — the city was alive with messages." (Springer, 2006, p. 58)

Analysis: This suggests the rise of mass communication in urban life. The “speaking walls” imply that information, propaganda, and surveillance had become tools of power in industrial society

Gender Roles and Economic Dependency

Gender roles and economic dependency refer to the socially constructed expectations placed upon individuals based on their perceived gender, particularly as they relate to financial autonomy and power dynamics. In 19th-century industrial Britain, gender norms were deeply rooted in patriarchal values, where men held positions of authority, and women were expected to be passive, domestic, and economically reliant on fathers, husbands, or

brothers. This division was not just cultural, but institutional—reflected in laws, education, employment access, and inheritance rights. Literature often explores how these gendered power relations restrict female autonomy. Economic dependency was both a symptom and an instrument of gender oppression: by denying women control over wealth and labor, patriarchal systems ensured continued dominance.

In *Enola Holmes*, Enola's rejection of economic reliance on her brothers and her assertion of financial and personal agency represent a radical break from Victorian gender norms. Her struggle mirrors that of many women during the Industrial Revolution who sought education, employment, or entrepreneurship as pathways to liberation. This subtopic, therefore, allows the analysis of how economic freedom is intricately tied to gender identity, personal empowerment, and resistance to traditional roles. Enola's refusal to be dependent on her brothers mirrors the experiences of many women in an industrializing world who sought independence through education or work. The novel subtly suggests that economic liberation is a key to personal freedom.

"My money is my own, and I intend to keep it so. I shall not ask my brothers for a penny." (Springer, 2006, p. 60)

Analysis: Enola asserts financial independence, which challenges traditional gender roles. In a time when women were expected to be economically dependent, this statement signals resistance to patriarchal control.

"Corsets were prisons; lace gloves, shackles. Even my boots felt like chains." (Springer, 2006, p. 47)

The metaphor of clothing as restriction illustrates how gender roles are enforced materially. Economic and bodily control go hand in hand, and Enola's resistance signifies liberation.

The Role of Technology and Communication

Technology and communication are among the defining features of the Industrial Age, and their role in literature often serves to expose both the possibilities and perils of modernity. During the Industrial Revolution, advancements in transportation (trains), communication (telegraph, print media), and surveillance (bureaucratic records, public signage) transformed how people interacted, moved, and controlled information. These technologies created new forms of social structure and altered the individual's relationship with the state and society. In literary texts, communication is frequently a site of negotiation between power and resistance. Who controls information? Who has access to truth? Who is silenced or surveilled? In *Enola Holmes*, communication becomes both a tool of rebellion and a mechanism of oppression. Enola uses print, codes, and messages to subvert the authority of male figures like Mycroft and to navigate an increasingly controlled public space. This subtopic allows a deeper investigation into how characters use technology to reshape their agency, and how industrial-era tools reflect ideological shifts—where information is both a weapon of liberation and a strategy of control. The importance of print media and coded messages in the novel highlights how information and communication were revolutionized by industrial advancements. These tools were used for both control and empowerment, reflecting a society in transition.

"The newspapers had more facts than Mycroft's theories. Yet they refused to read them." (Springer, 2006, p. 63)

Analysis: This highlights the shift from elite knowledge to public information. Newspapers became a source of truth for the masses, while traditional authorities like Mycroft clung to outdated thinking.

"Every message left a trace. Every letter was watched." (Springer, 2006, p. 61)

This indicates the rise of surveillance culture through industrial-era communication. It links technology with control, not just progress.

Class Distinction and Industrial Hierarchy

Class distinction and industrial hierarchy refer to the systematic divisions of society that emerged or were intensified by industrial capitalism. With the rise of factory systems, mass production, and urban migration, wealth became concentrated in the hands of industrialists and property-owning elites, while the working class faced exploitative labor, poor housing, and limited social mobility. Literature from and about the Industrial Era often portrays this stratification through contrast, between luxury and poverty, between visibility and invisibility. In literary analysis, class is not only an economic concept but a cultural and symbolic system that affects speech, appearance, morality, and agency. Characters are marked by their class status and often limited by it. In *Enola Holmes*, clear contrasts are drawn between the privileged Holmes family and the impoverished people Enola meets during her journey. The novel portrays the city as a space where these classes collide, but rarely connect.

Through this subtopic, the study examines how industrial society builds and enforces hierarchies based on wealth, birth, and access to power, and how literature reveals the human cost of this system, especially for those at the bottom. Interactions between wealthy elites and impoverished characters show the widening class gap of the time. Industrialization created a new kind of social stratification, which is reflected in the people Enola meets and the situations she witnesses.

“The man in fine wool did not glance at the girl in rags. We were different species in the same city.” (Springer, 2006, p. 68)

Analysis: A powerful image of class inequality. Industrialization created visible divisions between rich and poor. The phrase “different species” suggests deep social separation, not just economic difference.

“Children with blackened hands ran beside carriages, begging with hollow voices.” (Springer, 2006, p. 55)

This observation emphasizes how wealth and poverty coexisted side-by-side. The image of suffering children shows the cost of industrial growth on the vulnerable

CONCLUSION

This study has critically explored the delineation of the British Industrial Revolution as represented in Nancy Springer's novel *Enola Holmes: The Case of the Missing Marquess* using a socio-historical literary approach. The analysis demonstrates that the novel does not simply narrate a detective story but serves as a subtle vehicle for socio-political commentary that intersects with the lived experiences of 19th-century industrial Britain. Through a close examination of economic, social, political, and symbolic elements, the research reveals how literature can both reflect and challenge the ideological undercurrents of its historical setting. Economically, the novel articulates the consequences of industrial capitalism through its depiction of labor, class stratification, and urban transformation.

The imagery of soot-covered cities, overcrowded spaces, and mechanized movement underscores the dehumanizing effects of rapid industrialization. Characters' experiences, especially those of the urban poor and working children, expose the unequal distribution of wealth and opportunity, aligning with Ashworth's (2014) claim that industrial progress is often accompanied by systemic exclusion. Socially, the narrative foregrounds the constraints of Victorian norms, particularly those imposed on gender and identity. Enola Holmes, as the central figure, operates as a counter-discursive force against the patriarchal structures that sought to define and contain womanhood. Her rejection of finishing school, her mobility through public space, and her economic independence all signify a radical re-articulation of gender roles during a period of significant social anxiety and transformation.

This resonates with liberal feminist critiques, such as those offered by Sakinah et al. (2022), who argue for the representation of female autonomy within male-dominated frameworks. Politically, the novel engages with the mechanisms of control embedded within industrial society, ranging from familial governance to institutional surveillance. The persistent tension between Enola and her brother Mycroft reflects broader ideological battles between tradition and modernity, autonomy and obedience, freedom and discipline. Technologies such as newspapers, posters, and letters serve dual functions: as tools of liberation for the protagonist, and as instruments of institutional regulation for society at large. This duality positions communication and information as both emancipatory and oppressive, mirroring the ambivalence of industrial modernity itself. Symbolically, Springer's novel constructs a layered textual space where trains, corsets, street alleys, and industrial London function not merely as narrative details but as ideological signifiers.

These symbols condense the contradictions of the industrial age: mobility versus restriction, visibility versus anonymity, knowledge versus control. The novel thereby invites the reader to consider how material environments and symbolic structures shape individual consciousness and resistance. In conclusion, this study has shown that *Enola Holmes: The Case of the Missing Marquess* is a literary work deeply embedded with the historical logic and social tensions of the Industrial Revolution. It reveals how fiction, particularly youth fiction, can articulate serious critiques of power, identity, and structure. By situating the analysis within a socio-historical framework, this research contributes to the broader field of literary criticism, demonstrating that the interpretation of industrial literature need not be limited to canonical realist novels. Instead, even genre fiction can serve as a meaningful site for historical memory, cultural critique, and ideological negotiation.

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