

Take a stand and
argue the following:
the initial female
workers of lowell mills

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[History](#)



The initial female workers of Lowell Mills Introduction Labor exploitation refers to employment obtained from a person under poor working conditions and which the person has not willingly offered. It includes threat, movement restriction, and confinement, withholding or reduction of wages contrary to previous agreements. This can be shown in the case of the Lowell Mill girls. In the 19th century a textile industry was opened in Lowell, Massachusetts. The Lowell Mills incorporated spinning and weaving in one station. The textile workers were hired for one year contracts with possible renewal of up to four years. New employees were given fixed daily wages while experienced workers per piece of cloth. They worked 73 hours per week, 5.00a. m-7.00p. m daily (Greenlees, 165).

Each room had two male overseers and eighty women. Machines were noisy, windows were always shut to maintain best environment for threadwork. The thread particles in the air were a health risk. Doffers worked fifteen minutes every hour, replacing full bobbins with empty ones and the overseer would sometimes allow them to read, knit or go outside to play. Boarding houses where textile workers lived were near the mills, with a 10:00 pm curfew, and no men allowed in. They were overcrowded with 25 per house, up to 6 per bedroom.

They were expected to show high moral standards and attend church service. In 1836 when it was announced that the wages would be reduced, workers went on strike. The strike was not fruitful and the firm did not hear their pleas. The workers gave up and went back to their work at reduced wages. Lowell Female Labor Reform Association was later formed to push for the workers' rights.

Conclusion

The Lowell Mills was therefore a clear demonstration of labor exploitation, based on the definition given in the beginning.

Works Cited

Greenlees, Janet. *Female Labor Power: Women Workers Influence on Business Practices in the British and American Cotton Industries, 1780-1860*. New Jersey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2007.