CHILD LABOUR IN HUGHES' *THE BREAKER BOYS*

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in English Department

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On, 27th February 2024, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by Alva Reza Febrian (F041191117) entitled **"CHILD LABOUR IN HUGHES'** *THE BREAKER BOYS***"** submitted in fulfillment one of the requirements to obtain Sarjana Sastra (S.S.) Degree in English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

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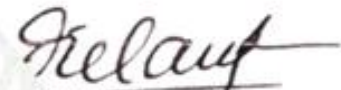
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Hereby, the writer declares that this thesis entitled:

CHILD LABOUR IN HUGHES' *THE BREAKER BOYS*

is written by himself. This thesis does not contain any materials which have been published by other people, and it does not cite other people's ideas expect the quotations and references.

If in the future it is proven that there is a part or all of the contents of this thesis are plagiarized, the author is willing to accept the sanction for his action.

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The undersigned,

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Therefore, for any errors or inadequacies that may remain in this thesis, the writer extremely welcomes the readers to give criticism and suggestion.

Makassar, 13 January 2024

The Writer,

Alva Reza Febrian

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ABSTRAK

Alva Reza Febrian. 2023**.** *Child Labour in Hughes' The Breaker Boys.* (Dibimbing oleh Burhanuddin Arafah dan A.ST.Aldilah Khaerana)

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan tentang isu buruh anak pada beberapa karakter dalam novel *The Breaker Boys* karya Pat Hughes yang terjadi pada akhir abad ke-18 dan awal abad ke-19 di Pennsylvania, Amerika Serikat. Persoalan pemicu buruh anak dan bagaimana para anak tersebut menghadapi kondisi mereka sebagai buruh dalam novel *The Breaker Boys* menjadi pembahasan utama skripsi ini.

Penelitian ini bersifat deskriptif kualitatif dengan menggunakan pendekatan sosiologi sastra untuk memaparkan isu buruh anak yang di ceritakan oleh Huges dalam karyanya *The Breaker Boys* yang terjadi pada akhir abad ke-18 dan awal abad ke-19 di Pennsylvania, Amerika Serikat.

Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, isu buruh anak dapat diidentifikasikan sebagai masalah yang dialami oleh karakter anak yaitu, Nathan Tanner, Johnny Bartelak, Stefan Bartelak, Little Mikey, Andre, Bobby, Luka, Anton, Emil, dan Patrick. Didalam novel *The Breaker Boys* karya Pat Hughes ditemukan bahwa yang memicu munculnya buruh anak adalah dorongan kebutuhan keluarga dan kemiskinan. Selanjutnya, beberapa tokoh menghadapi kondisi buruh anak dengan berpasrah diri pada keadaan seperti Anton, Patrick, Andre, dan yang lainnya, serta ada yang menolak kondisi sebagai buruh anak yaitu Nathan dan Stefan.

Kata Kunci: *Pendekatan Sosiologi Sastra, Deskriptif Kualitatif, The Breaker Boys, Pat Huges, buruh Anak, Kemiskinan.*

ABSTRACT

Alva Reza Febrian. 2023. *Child labour in Huges' The Breaker Boys.* (Supervised by Burhanuddin Arafah and A.ST. Aldilah Khaerana)

This study aims to explain the issue of child labour on several characters in the novel *The Breaker Boys* by Pat Hughes, which is set in the late 18th and early 19th century in Pennsylvania, United States. The focus is on the causes of child labour and the experiences of the children working as laborers in the novel.

This research is descriptive qualitative using a literary sociology approach to describe the issue of child labour described by Huges in his work *The Breaker Boys* which occurred in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in Pennsylvania, United States.

According to the study results, child labour is identified as a problem experienced by several child characters in the novel *The Breaker Boys* by Pat Hughes, namely Nathan Tanner, Johnny Bartelak, Stefan Bartelak, Little Mikey, Andre, Bobby, Luka, Anton, Emil, and Patrick. The driving force behind child labour is found to be family needs and poverty. Furthermore, some characters face the conditions of child labour by surrendering to the situation such as Anton, Patrick, Andre, and others, while some reject the conditions as child labourers, namely Nathan and Stefan.

Keywords: *Sociology of Literature Approach, Qualitative Descriptive, The Breaker Boys, Pat Huges, Child labor, Poverty.*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Literature is an interpretation of social conditions at a certain time that is stated in writing. Literary study is part of socio-cultural knowledge. Literature needs a scientific approach by referring to economic, social, and political conditions as the main factors that form social conditions and realities that authors express in writing, such as novels, poetry, drama, etc. All written expression, according to Klarer (2004: 1), is regarded as literature; however, not every piece of writing can be categorized as literature in the more technical definition of the term. Literature, like the other arts, is essentially an imaginative act on the writer's imagination in selecting, ordering, and interpreting life experience. Literature can be treated as a document in the history of ideas and philosophy, for literary history parallels and reflects intellectual history.

Various works of literature particularly depict childhood. Childhood is known as the time of playtime and learning from school and parents. Childhood is supposed to be a joyful moment of human life, but not every child can taste the way he or she is supposed to enjoy childhood. There are some children out there who cannot feel what childhood is supposed to be because of the social conditions they have formed due to economic conditions. The poor economic conditions hamper their access to basic human rights, such as a comfortable house, proper clothes, and a good education. Instead of enjoying their childhood, these children have to become

laborers to help their parents fulfill their daily needs. This is inseparable from the weak role and preparation of parents in raising children as expressed by (Arafah et al., 2020), that parenting requires dedication and patience, before starting to raise children, parents must analyze their parenting style, as well as students who must analyze the subject matter before starting the learning process.

Furthermore, child labour is a situation in which children work routinely for their parents, other people, or themselves to get a fee or not. According to Fallon & Tzannatos (1998: 1), child labour is one of the most devastating consequences of persistent poverty. Child labour is fundamentally a sign of poverty, and they may be trapped in a cycle of poverty that leads to their children and grandchildren experiencing similar poverty. Child labour is a widespread social issue that is prevalent in developing countries with high poverty levels. Poor poverty and inadequate institutions are the primary factors contributing to the global prevalence of child labour.

Child labour happened legally in Pennsylvania in the 18th century, during the Industrial Revolution. Coal mining rapidly occurred in Pennsylvania in the 18th century because, in 1860, anthracite coal in the United States was produced only in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, according to Swank (1878: 109–110). Due to this matter, demand for miners increased, and to fulfill the increased demand, children worked as miners. These children were called *breaker boys* because they worked at the breaker's mine. The *breaker boys* were usually kids ages under 14 who worked the mine's breaker and cleaned impurities from the coal by hand for a living. They

commonly suffered from diseases such as asthma and black lung disease. Besides that, sometimes accidents happened to these children, which caused them to lose their fingers and even their lives. Instead of playing with other children or studying at school, these children had to confront these horrible conditions every six days a week to fulfill their daily lives. This happened because of the low economic conditions they had, which put them in poverty. Due to this issue, *the Breaker boys* did not have the chance to get privileges such as a better life and a good education because only wealthy people could have these privileges at the time. Therefore, these breaker boys had to spend their childhood at mines.

The lives of children in Pennsylvania as *breaker boys* are depicted by Pat Huges in her novel, "*The Breaker Boys."* This novel is interesting because it conveys two different lives of children who live in privilege due to the wealthy background family who own mines and children who live in poverty and must work at mines. The novel talks about Nate Tanner, the son of a wealthy Pennsylvania mine owner who wants to be sent to boarding school by his family. To avoid his family's intention, Nate disappears and meets the breaker boys, who do dangerous work by separating coal from debris for their father. One of the breaker boys named Johhny Bartelak, an impoverished Polish immigrant who does dangerous, dirty work in Nate's family's mines, separating coal from debris in a filthy, dark building called a breaker, helped his parents save money so they could build a better house. Later, Johnny became friends with Nate. This novel shows the disparity in living conditions between wealthy people who have mines and impoverished people who work at mines, as portrayed in Pennsylvania in the 18th century.

Nowadays, in the modern era, we can still find child labour. According to the *International Labour Organization* (ILO), in 2020, the number of children in child labour was 160 million worldwide, accounting for almost 1 in 10 of all children worldwide (ILO, 2020). Basically, child labour phenomena are often seen in developing countries like Indonesia (Hindman H, 2009). Furthermore, Blagbrough in Hindman H, (2009: 88), according to his interviews with child domestic workers in Indonesia, mentions that those who have been working for a long time or started at a young age experience significantly reduced self-esteem and have few prospects beyond domestic service. Meanwhile, nowadays, in big cities like Makassar, children often earn money on the streets through busking, scrounging, and performing as dancing dolls at traffic lights. It is a heartbreaking situation to experience at such a young age for any child. They should go to school well to become good individuals as (Mokoginta & Arafah, 2022), stated, providing a good educational environment and good quality knowledge can help children form good character. Instead, these children spend their time on the streets.

Based on the description above, the writer is interested in analyzing Hughes's *The Breaker Boys* for its depiction of child labour in the 18th century in Pennsylvania coal mines. The living conditions of *the Breaker Boys* are part of history that is still relevant today. Children are forced to work in harsh conditions, taking on tasks that are meant for adults, and risking their lives for minimal pay instead of pursuing education or leisure activities, which is unacceptable. It is imperative that immediate action be taken to address this issue and ensure a safe and healthy environment for all children. Based on this background, the writer

intends to explore the labour that experienced by the children in Hughes' *The Breaker Boys* under the study entitled *Child Labour in Hughes' The Breaker Boys.*

1.2. Identification of the problem

Based on the information above, the writer would like to identify the following problems:

1. The *breaker boys* live as child labour

2. Poverty in Pennsylvania during the 18th Century

3. The Industrial Revolution affected all aspects of social and economic life

4. Selected characters in the novel deal with child labour

5. The relevant conditions depicted in the novel and the reality conditions that happened

1.3. Scope of the problem

The study's main objective is to examine child labour as it is portrayed in Pat Hughes' novel *The Breaker Boys* and as it affects particular characters. The sociology of literature and literary theory which relate to poverty and social class during the Industrial Revolution in Pennsylvania in the 18th century are used to analyze the child labour.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

Based on the scope of the Problem above, the writer tries to generates research questions as follows:

1. What motivates child Labour in Hughes' novel *The Breaker Boys*?

2. How do the selected characters in the novel deal to child Labour?

1.5. Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, the reseracher formulates the objective of the study as follows:

1. To find out the reason of the child labour conditions depicted in the novel.
2. To elaborate on how the selected characters deal with child labour.

1.6. Significance of the study

This thesis is required to provide theoretical and practical benefits. The theoretical and practical benefits are as follows:

1. Theoretical significance:

    a. This thesis is expected to provide an understanding of Child Labour in the Industrial Revolution in Pennsylvania in the 18th century, using analytical literary works.

    b. This thesis is expected to enrich the reader's knowledge about the history of the industrial revolution in Pennsylvania in the 18th century.

2. Practical significance:

    a. To provide readers with child labour issues and be a reference for further readers who want to conduct research on a similar topic.

    b. To provide relevant agencies reference to get more concern about child social issue, especially about child labour.

1.7. Sequences of The Writing

Chapter one consists of the background of the study, the identification of problems, the problem's scope, the problem's statement, the study's objective, the study, the significance of the study, and the sequences of the writing.

Chapter two consists of a literary review, which consists of previous studies and some theories that support the analysis of this study.

Chapter three consists of the kind of methods the writer uses to analyze Hughes' *The Breaker Boys* novel., including the method of collecting data and the method of analyzing data.

Chapter four consists of the analysis. It contains the analysis of intrinsic elements in this novel and child labour in Hughes' *The Breaker Boys*, as the extrinsic elements.

Chapter five concludes the entire study into a summary of analysis and suggestions.

CHAPTER II

LITERARY REVIEW

In the chapter, the writer describes some related previous research that examined *The Breaker Boys* novel as an object of the research and the literature review.

2.1. Previous Study

There are several previous studies related to the research that studied about child labour or child exploitation as the main topic, or using sociology literature theory in the study.

Lufini A.W. (2022) analyzed *Child Exploitation in Charles Dickens's Oliver Twist* using reception theory to find out the readers' responses about the issues depicted in Oliver Twist novel and the main character's problems experienced. The study tries to explore the readers' responses toward children's exploitation and eelaates on the impact of children's exploitation. The result shows that child exploitation occurs in lower classes. The respondents agreed that exploitation of children by the bourgeoisie and capitalists occurred in Oliver Twist's novel through 4 forms, namely discrimination, coercion into crime, violence, and exhaustion/hunger.

Kakanegi N., et al. (2018) analyzed *The Child Exploitation in Lewis Caroll's Alice's Adventures In Wonderland* using Marxist theory. The study tries to describe the kinds of exploitation of child labour and the after-effects that happen in the Industrial Revolution. The writers find that children at the domestic and industrial in the Industrial Revolution were exploited by working

hard in a bad place and having bad treatment. These factors affect low education and bad health for the children.

Wulandari N.D. (2017) analyzed *Underage Children Exploitation In A Little Princess Novel By Francess Hodgson Burnett* using the psychological approach by Carl Jung theory. The study aims to describe what factors cause child exploitation and the effect on child's psychology in the '*A Little Princess'* novel. The method used in the research is qualitative research. As a result of the research, the writer finds out the characters that got exploitation namely Sara Crew and Becky. The main character, Sara, experienced exploitation after her father's death and did not leave money for her. Sara thought that she would be like Becky because she did not have money for living. There is also an analysis of the exploitation that Becky got, she got exploitation because she didn't have a home and as an immigrant child. Next, there are several factors that caused child exploitation which are economic, education, and migration factor. Based on Carl Jung's psychological theory the writer finds that character's psychological development in the novel impacted in behavioral, emotional, social, and mental.

Isnaeni (2016) studied about *Child Labour in Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist novel*. This thesis aims to analyze the forms of Child Labour and the effects of Child labour as reflected in Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist novel to learn about the types of child labour and its effects, the researcher used a sociological approach. The data was derived from Charles Dickens' book Oliver Twist. The researcher's instrument for gathering data was taking notes.

As a result of their analysis of the data in Oliver Twist, the researchers identified four different types of child labour. They also identified three negative effects of child labour that are depicted in the book. The first form of child labour is involved domestic work, working in industries is the second, slavery and forced labour came next and lastly was trafficking in children. Physical injuries and mutilations are the first of three effects of child labour that the researcher found. The second is a lack of growth. The third was famine, malnutrition, and exhaustion.

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, all of them used different objects except the first, and the last, also all of them used diffrent approach. However, they share a common theme: the discussion of the issue of child exploitation and child labor, including its causes and effects on children, which is the focus of the author. The writer focuses on analyzing child labour in Huges' *The Breaker Boys* which took place in the late 18th and early 19th centuries of Pennsylvania and the writer uses a Sociology of Literature approach by Alan Swingewood.

2.2. Sociology of Literature

Sociology is defined as a social science or the study of public life. The term "society" refers to an institution made up of individuals who interact with one another. According to Tischler (2013: 4), sociology is the scientific study of social interactions and human civilization. In essence, sociology is the study of how societies evolve and develop. We may learn about how humans adapt to

their surroundings by studying social organizations and all economic, religious, political, and other institutions.

Literature is the art of putting one's thoughts and ideas into written form that includes instructions, teachings, or directions. Klarer (2004: 1), stated that the term literature refers to the whole of written expression, with the caveat that not every written text may be classified as literature in the strictest sense.

Literature and society are two inseparable things. Through literary works, we can see the social life of society that occurred in that period based on the literary work and background of the social life of the novelist. When an author writes a literary work, the author will refer to the social conditions in which the author grew up. It indicates that how an author lives will impact how he or she writes and creates literary work. As a result, literary writing reflects reality. Indicating that literature and society are inextricably linked because literature portrays societal conditions.

Based on the explanation above, the sociology of literature can be defined as the study of the relationship between literature and society. The sociology of literature is a literary study theory that considers literary works to be products that are intimately tied to social phenomena of the moment, whether these phenomena are related to history, the environment, the economy, or even the writers' own experiences. Baldick states the sociology of literature as follows:

> *The sociology of literature is a discipline of literary research that investigates the links between literary works and their social surroundings, such as patterns of literacy, types of audience, modes of*

publishing and theatrical presentation, and the social class positions of authors and readers (Baldick, 2001: 238).

The study of literary sociology has a very long history. Depending on their viewpoints, numerous authors have contributed to the sociology of literature. Many experts, including Karl Marx, Rene Wellek, Hippolyte Taine, Austin Warren, Alan Swingewood, and Diana Laurenson, proposed this theory.

Swingewood argues that sociology and literature share similar perspectives. Sociology objectively studies people, institutions, and social processes to understand their existence and function. Likewise, literature delves into human life, adaptation, and the desire for change. Despite commonalities, literary works surpass mere sociological facts as artistic products. They explore deeper levels and portray individual life experiences in a collective context. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, sociological studies began to revolve around the intrinsic intersection of literary works with the extrinsic. Although this is still considered banal, superficial, doubtful, and lacking in sociological insight, as suggested by Swingewood;

> *"it is also unfortunate that a small acount of knowledge and research which does exist on the whole exceedingly dubious in quality, lacking in scientifict rigour, banal in quality of its sociological 'insights', and frequently consisting of the crudest correlations between literary text and social history" (Swingewood, 1992: 18).*

In terms of literature and society, Swingewood introduces three key concepts in his literary approach: literature as a reflection of the times, literature viewed through the author's production process, and literature in relation to history. Alan Swingewood (1972: 13–21), as follows:

a. According to Swingewood, literary works are sociocultural artifacts that may be utilized to understand phenomena in the culture at the moment. The reflection of the time is what is then referred to as literary documentation. Literature is a component of the social historical record of a certain period. This viewpoint is known as the mirror image approach, and it is regarded as a clear representation of many aspects of a society's socioeconomic structure and class strife.

b. Analysis that shows how a writer is depicted in their writing. An author's views, ideals, and social environment all had a big impact on the literary works they produced. Swingewood included literature's representation of the author as one of the viewpoints as a result.

c. Relevant to the popular conception of literary production. This viewpoint is influenced by the readers as well as how society perceives the literary work. Swingewood emphasizes the value of effort and competence in his opening remarks as he traces the acceptance of literary works by various groups of people at various historical moments.

2.3. Intrinsic Elements

2.3.1. Character and characterization

A literary work must have a character in order to represent issues the author wants. Characters are people or performers who play a part in the plot that the author of a literary work depicts. According to Rainsford (2014: 14), the character serves as a mediator between the author and the reader, or between the objective truth and the reader's

interpretation of it. In addition, Abrams and Harpham (2012: 46), characters are the people portrayed in a dramatic or narrative work who the reader interprets as possessing specific moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities based on what they say in the dialogue and how they say it, as well as what they do in the action.

Furthermore, according to Forster in Rainsford (2014: 49), There are two types of fictional characters: 'round' characters and 'flat' characters. Round individuals are with multiple aspects to their personalities, and rich inner lives and the ability to develop is the narrator's and probably the reader's main concern. Flat characters exist to enrich the imaginary universe around the primary, round characters without calling unnecessary attention to themselves. Commonly the round characters are known as major characters and the flat characters as minor characters

Characterization is the process of building a character in a literary work. It includes techniques, such as dialogue, actions, thoughts, and interactions with other characters, to describe a character's physical attributes, personality, qualities, beliefs, and behaviors. Characterization helps the plot move forward and makes for a more interesting story by giving the reader a more comprehensive understanding of the character's motives, strengths, weaknesses, and flaws. According to Minderop (2005: 2), characterization is the

depiction of a character. Based on Abrams and Harpham (2012: 47), there is two types of characterization namely in showing and in telling.

1. In showing

   The reader must make all inferences about the characters' motivations and dispositions from the author's simple presentation of their talking and acting. The author can depict a character's inner thoughts, feelings, and responsiveness to events in addition to their outward speech and actions; for a highly developed form of such inner displaying, see

2. In telling

   In narrating, the author interjects authoritatively to describe and frequently evaluate the motivations and personality traits of the characters.

2.3.2. Plot

Plot is the sequence of events that make up a story, including the conflicts and resolutions that build suspense and momentum. It serves as the narrative's foundation and gives the story structure. According to Pugh and Johnson (2014: 129), The plot of a short story or novel entails its sequence of events, which are arranged in a purposeful and deliberate way to demonstrate their causal relationships. Also, Rainsford (2014: 52-53), said that plot is the sequence of developments as they unroll, for the reader, in the course of the text, together with the causal links that are made between those developments and this is

usually distinguished from the story, which is simply the implied underlying series of events, in chronological order, without any causality or sense of direction.

There are five stages of plot development of plot according to Pugh and Johnson (2014: 131-132), namely introduction or exposition, rising action or complication, climax, falling action or reversal, and lastly catastrophe or dénouement.

1. Introduction or exposition

    Introduction or exposition is the foundational details of the story, such as who the main characters are when and where the action takes place, and other features of its overall setting, which are revealed by the author.

2. Rising action or complication

    The rising action drives the plot ahead. Readers gain more insight into the personalities and goals of the characters throughout this section of the story, and the events progress in a way that builds to the climax.

3. Climax

    The climax, when events build to a crisis and turning point, is crucial to the development of a story. The clarity of the reader's or viewer's interest in the plot and its characters occurs at the climax. The story reaches its emotional and specific resolution at this point, where all the plot lines connect.

4. Falling action

> The falling action or reversal, in which the narrative's intensity lowers and it moves toward its resolution. The falling action explores the effects of the climax and ties up any loose ends in the plot. The falling action could also include fresh details that alter the reader's or viewer's perception of the events that have taken place up to this point. The falling action, which creates the scene for the conclusion of the story, is essential to the resolution.

5. Resolution

> The final stage, the resolution, offers resolution and the end. This point can be indicated by happiness, sorrow, ambivalence, or any other feeling that signifies the conclusion of the story.

2.3.3. Setting

The setting orients readers to the geography, climate, social context, time of the story's events, foreshadowing of unfolding events, architecture, and much more. According to Rainsford (2014: 365), setting of a narrative or dramatic work is the general locale, historical time, and social circumstances in which its action occurs and settings are important elements in generating the atmosphere of the work. Also similar with Rainsford, according to Nurgiyantoro (2002: 227-234), said that setting is divided into three: setting of place, setting of time, and setting of social.

1. Setting of place

   In a work of fiction, the setting of place refers to the place where the event took place or the description of geographical details. The locations or the geographical details that are used as place elements may have specific names, and initials, or could be geographical places with unclear names.

2. Setting of time

   In a work of fiction, the setting of time is important especially in English literature due to tenses matter. The setting of time refers to the "when" of the events that are described. The issue of "when" is typically connected to factual time, which is a period of time that is connected to or can be connected to historical events.

3. Setting of social

   The social setting of a work of fiction refers to how the characters interact with one another on the basis of society. The processes for the community's social life address a variety of issues in a moderately complicated setting such as lifestyle, tradition, beliefs, views of life, and ideology, etc

2.3.4. Theme

The key idea or concept that a writer attempts to get over in their writing is known as a theme in literature. It frequently involves a universal idea that connects with readers, like love, power, or

adjustment. According to Pugh and Johnson (2014: 141), an author's opinions or ideas about the events described in the narrative are revealed through the theme, which presents the message or deeper meaning of a fictional work. The author's statement of the concept would be the main focus. Abrams and Harpham (2012: 47), stated Theme is a broad idea or doctrine that an imaginative work aims to interest and persuade the reader with. It may be implicit or explicitly stated.

2.4. Historical Background of Industrial Revolutions in Pennsylvania in the late 18th and early 19th centuries

America during the 18th century in industrial evolution heavily built factories and mining. Pennsylvania became a major region for coal mining, especially anthracite coals and iron production in the United States as a result of the state's substantial iron ore and coal supplies. According to Eliasberg (1966: 421), in eastern Pennsylvania, the switch to coal began on a larger scale due to the availability of anthracite coal. By the mid-1860s, over half of the pig iron produced was smelted using anthracite. Furthermore, according to Benhart & Dunlop (1989: 173), Pennsylvania was fast becoming the centre of the colonial iron industry, and Berks County became the focal point for industrial growth in the state, this make the iron ore mining and steel industry of Pennsylvania has been extremely important in the economic development of the state.

Unfortunately, this growth has some negative issues regarding social conditions in society such as poverty in the working class and child laborer. In Pennsylvania during the Industrial Revolution commonly found child working in mines and factories according to Kelly speech in Speakman (1907: 68-69):

in which conditions are in some respects the worst to be found - from the state having the largest number of working children, the longest legal working day for women and children, the widest variety of occupations calling for the labor of boys and girls. Kelly (1907)

The conditions of the children itself are miserable according to Spargo (1905: 5), In a child's life without food, starvation is swift and mercifully complete. With only poor, nutrient-deficient food, starvation becomes a slower, partial torment. The sight of frail infants and weak children in cities and working-class areas stands as a stark testament to the widespread issue of undernourishment.

According to Darrow in Hannon (2010: 5) Darrow presented 241 witnesses, including a 12-year-old named Andy Chippie, who testified that he worked in the mines underage due to his father's death, initially earning 40 cents a day but faced an $88.17 back rent claim. Another witness, Coll, an injured miner with a large family, revealed extensive injuries: a fractured skull, a lost eye, and one severely damaged leg. Poverty and death are inseparable companions, as high death rates escalate alongside the growing waves of needs and misery. Because the several problems happened, occurred a strike. In Hannon (2010: 12) stated that in May 15 1902, the convention voted to continue the strike. There were 811 votes cast with 461 votes for a strike and 349 against a strike, which came to 57 percent of the convention voting for a strike. With this vote, the greatest

strike in American history was declared and Due to the explanation above Poverty in the working class and child labour is the main problem depicted in the Breaker Boys novel.

2.4.1. Poverty in the Working Class

Karl Marx was the first to define the working class. Marx in Boangmanalau (2008: 135), explains the relationship between labour and the product of labour or the relationship between outside factors and a natural object. furthermore, the act of production during the time for work expresses the relationship between labour and that act as something foreign that does not give the employee self-satisfaction on their own but only via the act of selling to a third party which causes inequality to labour due to the third party pursues as much profit as possible and take advantages of labour by giving a small salary which causes the labour or workers become poor.

According to (Fadillah et al., 2020) From the late 1970s onward, unemployment rates increased alongside the rise of short-term employment. This trend has made it more difficult for workers to organize and fight for their livelihoods. Unfortunately, some are left with no choice but to work for those with money and power, effectively becoming modern-day slaves. Working-class poverty is a prevalent and urgent problem. People in the working class, which consists of those who depend on low-wage or risky jobs, frequently struggle to fulfil their fundamental requirements and achieve financial

stability. Low wages are a major cause of poverty among the working class. Many workers in low-skilled or service-oriented occupations make inadequate wages, frequently less than the minimum wage required to pay for necessities like housing, healthcare, and education. This causes ongoing financial difficulty, creating a vicious cycle of poverty.

Another crucial factor is the cycle of poverty through generations. Working-class children raised in impoverished homes frequently have disadvantages in the areas of education, access to healthcare, and chances for upward mobility. The limited chances and resources available to their parents may make it more difficult for their children to escape the cycle of poverty. In addition, their children have to work and become child laborers to fulfil their daily-life basis.

2.4.2. Child Labour

Child labour is the term used to describe the exploitation of children through any type of job that robs them of their youth, prevents them from attending regular schools, and is bad for their mental, physical, social, or moral development. Millions of children around the world are impacted by this serious violation of children's rights. According to Edmonds & Pavcnik (2005: 200), the majority of children who work engage in activities that, depending on the specifics of the activity, can either be harmful or beneficial for the child. In the end, the effect of child labour on the child's well-being depends on the

counterfactual of what the child would be doing in the absence of work. Therefore, it is more effective to define child labour as embracing all forms of child work, and all child labour is by definition damaging to the children.

There are several issues of child labour, including dangerous employment, slavery, trafficking, forced labour, and work that inhibits a child's education and development. This issues, indicates children's abuse in order to get more profit without considering the impact these children. Furthermore, children who work sometimes put in long hours, in dangerous situations, and for low wages. They could suffer from psychological, emotional, and physical abuse. According to Strakova, and Vondra, in Ali, (2022: 1), kids are incredibly valuable members of society, but unfortunately, they are often taken advantage of due to their low salaries, limited mobility, and vulnerability to manipulation.

Child labour is a direct result of social and economic inequality, as well as the inability to access education. It's important to question certain cultural and religious beliefs that may perpetuate this issue. Child labour can have negative impacts on a child's physical, intellectual, and emotional development, which is why regulations should be in place to prevent it.

Child labour continues to exist due to a number of circumstances that caused it. Poverty is a crucial factor since poor families may turn

to sending their kids to work to help with the family's necessities. Another factor in terms of child labour is the lack of access to education, the scarcity of adult employment possibilities, and inadequate labour laws. In addition, child labour has a negative impact on a child's growth and well-being. They are denied an education, necessary social interactions, and leisure pursuits that are vital to their development. Additionally, it may have a long-term negative effect on a person's physical and mental health, continuing a cycle of poverty and limiting their future possibilities.