



A Weaver's Web

Chris Pearce

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Handloom weaver Henry Wakefield and his family live in abject poverty in the Manchester area, UK, in the early 19th century. He hates the new factories and clashes with everyone from his wife Sarah to a factory agent, a local priest, and reformers. After many setbacks, the family becomes wealthy but this leads to a whole new set of problems and devastating events for this family.

Find out what life was really like in Industrial Revolution times: family life, living and working conditions, poverty and wealth, social change and upheaval, the challenge to the Establishment, the early labour movement, the factory system, opportunities, illness including mental illness, physical disability, child birth, death, romance, orphans, religion, crime, punishment, gambling, prostitution, transport and more. The family gets caught up in the Peterloo melee (see front cover).

The story includes escapes, rescues, bribery, trickery, society parties, a fire, moving house, flooding, runaways, a road accident, floggings, torture, eviction, daring thefts and robberies, kidnapping, births, a court case, a wedding, rowdy labour meetings, asylum and jail life, a near-death experience, missing children, a cricket match, and plenty of tension between the various characters (about 150 of them plus crowd scenes).

This historical novel / family saga is available at Amazon (<http://www.amazon.com/dp/B00H52SEEK>), Google Play, Kobo, or Apple. Both the ebook (19480963) and Kindle (20256421) editions are the same.

See a number of excerpts from this novel at <https://www.goodreads.com/story/show/...> and <https://chrispearce52.wordpress.com/2....>

A Weaver's Web Details

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From Reader Review A Weaver's Web for online ebook

Barb Taub says

In 1776, a few years before we meet the Wakefield family in Chris Pearce's epic tale, *A Weaver's Web*, colonists in America were declaring their inalienable right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Up in Glasgow, a moral philosopher named Adam Smith attempted to explain the historical development of industry and commerce in Europe—and in the process invented the “dismal science” of economics. A thread running through Smith's theories is that a person's economic environment shapes their life choices.

“Nobody ever saw a dog make a fair and deliberate exchange of one bone for another with another dog. Nobody ever saw one animal by its gestures and natural cries signify to another, this is mine, that yours; I am willing to give this for that....But man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is in vain for him to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favour, and show them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. ”

? Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations: An Inquiry into the Nature & Causes of the Wealth of Nations*

When we meet Henry Wakefield, he's a thirty-seven year old handloom weaver, pursuing the craft of his father and his grandfather. His rural workshop allows him to appreciate the natural beauty on his little acre and a half, but already the sound of the future intrudes.

He watched the autumn leaves fall on the lush green grass, still wet from dew and now shimmering under a weak sun. Through mist and between low trees and bushes across the laneway, he could see the dim outlines of scores of drab cottages dotted over the valley, most of them home to other weavers and their families. Smoke poured from chimneys and hung in the air, above the mist. He listened to the birds and the cows and pigs. And he heard the faint clanking of metal from workshops in nearby Middleton.

Indeed, very soon his work and his life are interrupted and forever changed when an agent from the nearby mills tries to recruit Henry's wife Sarah and their children as workers. To the children, lacking warm clothes and living on potatoes, the mill salary sounds like riches. But Henry's knee-jerk response is passionate. “Young children taken from their mothers to work all day in a factory. No education. Starving families living in filthy dungeons. Sickness and crime. You call that prosperity?”

Henry vows, “No child of mine is going to be brought up by a factory master. I'll bring them up myself, teach them good manners, respect, Christian ways. They won't get that in a factory. They'd get in with the wrong type, start stealing, who knows what.” He turns to the two main forces in his life—the Church, and his fellow weavers and working men. But he's rebuffed by the priest. “He's in his great big house with servants and tells me I'm poor because I don't go to church enough. I seek his advice and he's too busy opening churches and fighting dissenters.”

Soon the family is evicted from their rural home. They move to Manchester, where Henry's worst fears come

to pass. Bewildered and rudderless as his family crumbles, he turns to gambling and spending time in pubs. Oldest son Albert is arrested for stealing and transported to New South Wales. And the dissenters Henry joins are dispersed when hundreds are killed or wounded in what historians come to call the Peterloo Massacre. Henry starts his own factory, using the wages earned by his wife and children as his capitol. But even as his wealth increases, Sarah's mental state crumbles with the loss of her baby. Inflexible and uncompromising in his determination to claw his way to wealth and security, Henry has her committed to a horrific lunatic asylum. At home he treats his remaining children as property, maintaining complete control over their income and lives.

Before he published *Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith wrote in what he personally considered his most important work, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759)—

“The poor man’s son, whom heaven has in its anger visited with ambition, goes beyond admiration of palaces to envy. He labours all his life to outdo his competitors, only to find the end that the rich are no happier than the poor in the things that really matter.”

A Weaver’s Web seems, at first, to be little more than the personification of Adam Smith’s warnings. Henry’s inflexible drive to acquire the money that represents safety and success certainly puts him in that mold, with very little evidence of character development or change. Usually when I review books, I look at a number of factors such as pace, plot, style, and especially character development. The pace of *A Weaver’s Web* is uneven, with the characters sometimes bogged down in repeating actions, while other huge pieces are glossed over. The plot outline is simple, and basically laid out on the jacket blurb. Character development is almost nonexistent. Normally, this would have stopped me cold. I might not have even finished this 400+ page epic. Except...

Except for a couple of things.

First was the amazing, spellbinding description of a world that I might have seen in its major historical highpoints, but never from the point of view of an individual family. But even more, what I realized, slowly and reluctantly, was that Henry wasn’t a caricature of a man who’d lost his soul to greed. His character didn’t develop or change because given his background and the economic changes around him, there was no other way for him to be. He lived in a world that saw children and wives as the property and assets of their father or husband. And that man had the responsibility and the complete right to use those assets to protect and enrich himself, and—but only through him—the family as a whole. If as an old man, Henry had a chance to read Charles Dickens, he would not see himself in the character of Scrooge. For Henry, turning his back on his past—the Church, his working class ideals, and even his wife—is a necessary and inevitable step toward finally taking proper care of his family, and thus achieving his destiny. He is pleased with himself and what he’s accomplished.

“Henry sat at the head of the table, grinning proudly at what he saw as his great achievement of the family having plenty of money and food, and living in luxury. He took in the aroma before picking up his silver knife and fork and proceeding to eat with relish. If only Father Edmond could see him and Sarah and their brood now, he thought, in a house as splendid as those of many of society’s leading figures.”

So despite what I saw as issues while reading it, I’d give *A Weaver’s Web* four stars out of five. Even with

the uneven pacing and plot, the work holds up a lens that focuses on a miniature, the lives of one common family, and through that magnifies the unfolding sweep of history. And Chris Pearce succeeds in doing this even as Henry's character settles into the inflexible and inevitable rigidity that his time, his economic status, and his background make inevitable.

I received this book for free from the publisher or author in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Serenity says

So I've started to get into these books with more of an historical aspect to them, and this book is probably the one best I've read so far. The storyline is good and the actual writing of the events and historical part was more realistic written than most and you can actually picture what's going on. I couldn't get into most historical books, mainly because it bored me and some historical things, just shouldn't be made into a book.

Anywho, I had an issue with Henry. Just what can I say? He is annoying and his view on life just made you not like Henry. Pretty much wanted to see him just disappear from the story at time. Then there are the times where you want to root for him. Not so much for him, but for his family. Times are hard for everyone, and Henry and his family are having a hard time. They need more money to get more food and have better conditions. Henry is given a chance to better their lives. Instead he turns down the job because he thinks of it as his enemy. This is where he thinks of scenarios, if he had gotten the job and how it would affect his family.

So I'm happy that Henry loves his family and wants to take care of them. So he starts his own business and eventually the family becomes wealthy. But when you have a lot of money it can do things to you or your family. You have his son stealing, then another son having a kid, oh and his wife goes cray cray.....

So overall, I enjoyed this story a lot. The book kept me interested and never bored. The story and time period was written very well. It's a very good book and my favorite historical one so far.

Nathan Mercer says

"A Weaver's Web" by Chris Pearce is a book that is set in England right at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Henry Wakefield is a handloom weaver who is set in the old ways of doing business. He eschews the new factories and all of the horrid conditions that people are forced to work in. Henry could get a job working in a factory and moving his five children and wife, Sarah, out of their one room rental cottage that leaks when it rains and has a door that won't remain closed unless it is blocked with stones.

Sarah, getting tired of just eking out an existence on found potatoes for every meal, tries to convince Henry to allow her and the two oldest sons to get jobs in a factory. Henry refuses - at least until he is evicted from his rental and is forced to move into the city life that Henry so despises.

This down-on-their-luck family moves to the city, into living conditions that Sarah considers worse than the rental cottage they had to leave. Added to the pressures is the fact that Sarah is pregnant with their sixth

child.

Henry is a man who is desperate, and desperate people either make their situations better or succumb to the pressures. Henry is forced to play life's last card that is dealt to him - but will that card get him a winning hand this last time?

Thoughts

This book is a perfect example of what is great about Indie Authors that don't let publishing companies telling them "no" stop them. Pearce mentions that several literary agents passed on the book. I think those agents might look back and think "why did I pass up that book" and kick themselves!

Pearce has obviously done his research about the period of time that the book is written in. Not only will you grow to love the characters (or hate them), you will be taken back into a time machine and actually experience the period from many different perspectives.

When I saw the length of this book, I almost hesitated to review it as it would take some time. At the end, I was wishing that it kept going.

The authors command of his characters is amazing. I found myself alternating between hoping Henry Wakefield could just catch a break and wondering how anyone could be such a jerk. This is a redemption story, but redemption sometimes comes with a great price.

One of the customer reviews says "this book needs to be made into a movie." I have to agree. I can't recommend this book enough if you like historical fiction (or even fiction in general). You will be one of the readers that can say "I read Chris Pearce before he was famous."

To those literary agents who passed on this book, I have only this to say - the days of you being a gatekeeper deciding what should and shouldn't be read are soon going to come to an end. To Chris Pearce I have this to say - you might be better off one day that an agent didn't take you up on it - because that cut will go to you when it catches everyone's attention.

Strengths

The author creates characters that almost anyone can relate to. I found myself identifying with some of them to the point where I was really feeling sorry for some of them. I can totally relate to the pressures that many husbands feel when everything is riding on your ability to make enough money. The characters will feel like close friends that you could call upon by the time you finish the book.

The setting and descriptions are awesome! I probably learned more about the Industrial Revolution from this book than I could have from a college course devoted to it. When you can learn something new and be entertained at the same time - well, that's just magical!

There was not one issue in this book that I found with grammar or misused words - and it isn't a short story we are talking about.

The one thing that bothers me is Pearce's writing style - it is so smooth and perfectly paced that I am sick

with jealousy!

Weaknesses

None what-so-ever. I would have to stretch to come up with anything and it would be so petty that I would be embarrassed to write it on here

As of now - this isn't a series. How are we going to get more! LOL.

(I was given a free electronic copy of this book in exchange for a review - the review is my honest assessment of this work.)

Margaret Millmore says

This historical fiction novel chronicling the lives of the Wakefield family takes you on a journey of love, loyalty, death, unhappiness, triumph... and so much more! The tale begins with Henry Wakefield, a hand weaver by trade, living in a modest English village and desperately trying to provide for his growing family. But with the modernization of the weaving industry, Henry finds his 'hand' made product is becoming less and less saleable, and knows, much against his better judgment that he must move his family to the larger city of Manchester, where his wife and older children will become factory workers while he attempts to continue his hand weaving.

As the story unfolds their lives change dramatically from poverty to riches; however that comes with many unforeseen perils that include death, betrayal and to a certain extent, hatred. It's a well crafted tale of "be careful what you wish for". The characters are so well written that you find yourself feeling an emotional attachment to them that will keep you turning pages until the very end.

This isn't my normal read and I was delightfully surprised at how well the author grabbed my attention until the very end.

This book was provided to me for free for an honest and unbiased review.

Annette Gisby says

3.5 stars rounded up to four

Henry Wakefield is a handloom weaver around the time of the Industrial Revolution. He hates the new emerging factories, because he knows they will soon put him and other handweavers out of a job and he forbids his family from working in them, even though they would earn better money.

His long-suffering wife Sarah, tries to get him to see reason, but Henry is adamant - none of his family are to set foot in a factory. Their eldest son Albert runs away, fed up of having little money and eating even less.

He finds work in Manchester as apprentice to a shoemaker, but is then kidnapped by factory agents who thinks he's an orphan. They make him work in a factory with other orphans, chained and fettered so they can't run away.

Evicted from their cottage, the Wakefields move to Manchester, but things only go from bad to worse.

I wanted to like this story more than I did. It's well written, well researched and you get a feel for the time and place, but it is just so depressing.

Misery upon misery just seemd to be heaped on the family - evicted from their home, then living a cellar which floods when it rains. Eking out meagre meals with what little money they have. Their son kidnapped and forced to work in a factory for pittance pay. Albert getting caught stealing and transported, Sarah ending up in an insane asylum. When Sarah gets pregnant again, instead of joy, Henry worries it's only going to be another mouth to feed and Sarah won't be able to work for a while. I don't know how Sarah put up with him.

Henry is one of the most dislikable characters I've ever read. He's quite happy to drink, gamble and whore his money away. One whore robbed him and he pretended he just lost the money in a puddle when he was drunk. He even sleeps in a chair with his trousers on, so Sarah won't find out how much money he actually has or lost at cards! I loathed him, I thought that might be too strong a word, but no. I'm trying to thing of anything that might redeem him, but no, I can't think of a thing. He is just awful to his family and ends up being the worst sort of factory owner, even after he knew what his sons had gone through in those horrible places.

If you're looking for a fluffy, light-hearted read, this is not the book for you. But if you're after an historical story with a bit of revenge thrown in, then give this one a try.

Review copy from author.

Kendra says

This book grabs you immediately, with its simple but straightforward tale about an independent weaver named Henry and his family. Henry makes his money as a weaver who works from home in his dimly lit little house, while his family gets on with life around him. Their routine is upset by a visit from a man who wants to hire on several of Henry's children and his wife to work in a Manchester factory, spinning thread. Henry's suspicious and disapproving from the word 'go' -- he's heard all about the poor conditions the factory workers have to suffer through and doesn't want to subject his family to such harsh conditions. But the recruiter wins his family over with the promise of better food (all the family has to eat are potatoes) and greater pay than Henry can earn as an independent weaver. The recruiter has sown the seed of dissent, though, and Henry's family are excited about the idea of them all moving to Manchester for a better life. When Henry goes to see the local vicar to ask for his help in convincing his family that moving isn't the way to go, Henry can't help but notice how well-off the clergyman is.

Although this story is set in the 1800s, it is every bit as relevant today as it ever was. No doubt, there were countless families back then who had to wrestle with the same conundrum as Henry does here. Although the story is set in the past, this is a no-holds-barred indictment, particularly in regards to corporatists and religion. "He's in his great big house with servants and tells me I'm poor because I don't go to church

enough," Henry grousing to his wife, at one point, and doesn't that sound so very familiar to us now?

I have to commend Mr. Pearce. This is a very timely story, told very ably, although it's troubling to know so many people are stuck in much the same situation as Henry and his family in the book.

Clare O'Beara says

This social history is an excellent and involving study of a family led by a handloom weaver who have to contend with the rise of mechanisation.

I've read many social histories and the main difference is that the primary focus here is on the husband instead of on a woman; this may account for the difficulties the author has faced in selling his work. Women are seen as the biggest market for domestic struggle and romance in changing times. However, there is plenty in this book to interest women, not least the lack of rights the wife of the story faces and how easy it is for a woman to be consigned to a lunatic asylum as 'hysterical'.

Class struggle, factory enslavement of orphans, contrasting religions and Luddites as well as social betterment rioters all take their turn. Manchester, the second largest city in Britain, did not possess a vote in Parliament. Only the wealthy could vote. Rents kept rising and work drying up, while food and other resources poured into the newly crowded cities, raising costs for people in rural areas. We see that families often had no choice but to leave a farm cottage and plod to Manchester to look for factory work. Long hours and few social outlets left them exhausted and prone to spend money in bars. Illness and malnutrition were rife in the filthy, damp, smoke-choked city.

Due to the tenacity of the weaver, we also get to see the flipside of the story, as a factory owner with huge debts works his staff and himself hard to better his family's life. If you enjoy reading this kind of story you will love the well-researched and excellently written *A Weaver's Web*. If you have not read such tales, as 'too romancey' the grit and power in these pages will place you in the setting and leave you well-informed.

Leslie OBrien says

A Weaver's Web is a wonderful story of historical fiction. Well-crafted, Pearce takes us back to the early 19th century and a world where home workers (in this case, weavers and spinners) are being pushed out in favor of modernized machines and industry. It's join the masses or starve. Ok, as history has shown, for most it's starve no matter what. That's where we meet Henry Wakefield and his family.

I'm going to pause right here. Do you ever read a story or see a movie and there's that ONE character that has you climbing the walls? The type of person that you want to punch in the nose? Or cheer on? These are the characters that when we are done reading or the movie is over, they stick with you that much longer. To me, that's good story telling. /Back to review

Henry Wakefield is the man I want to punch in the nose. (Read the book, you'll understand.) This story spans the life of this weaver and his family as they transition through life and social status. As we glimpse life in 19th century England, we see how money can change a man (the priest, the weaver, the weaver's daughter) and not for the better, while others hold true to their values (weaver's wife, Sarah).

A delight to read from start to finish, I can't say enough good things about it. It's worth the buy. You won't be disappointed.

Grady says

A mesmerizing novel of the struggle between the individual and the Industrial Revolution

As British-born Australian author Chris Pearce states in his book's preface, 'After 25 years in federal and state public service and 12.5 years in two stints in the real world, I am now writing eBooks, researching my family history, doing a bit of consultancy editing, and contributing to a couple of writing sites in the US. I also compete in tenpin bowling. I have a background in economics, statistics, history, management, marketing and accounting. My wife and I live in Brisbane, Australia.' The reason for quoting the author's version of his resume is that it offers a fine example of what to expect in the style of writing of this very fine historical fiction novel: he knows his facts from research and from personal work history, relates to the characters he creates, and relates his story in well considered prose, assuring all along the fact that the reader must remain involved with the progress of not only the paths of his characters but also the themes of the times (the early 1800s) that yet today maintain the schism between the rich and the poor, the haves and have nots. It is a book successful on all levels.

Henry Wakefield is a handloom weaver, in a long line of weavers, who ekes out a living for his wife Sarah and his five children in Northern England. The time is the early 1800s and the giant machine beasts of the Industrial Revolution are usurping individual craftsmanship. Within the first few pages of this book Henry is visited by one Daniel Crowther from Frederick Manning's cotton mill in Manchester with an offer to have Henry and his family of 'potential workers' move to Manchester and become part of the complex depersonalization of corporate management. Henry rejects the concept despite the fact that his small family is near starving from his meager earnings, loathing the Big Factory Beast who he sees as his enemy. But Henry's yearning to leave poverty, to have money and improve his status in life undermines his hatred for the factory concept. Crowther's offer of better food and greater pay places doubt in Henry's wife Sarah and his family who long to live in better conditions in Manchester. Henry's doubt and his family's pleading results in Henry's visiting the local clergyman for advice, but money has changed the vicar, too. Henry acquiesces, starts his own factory and with the wealth that ensues his family unity disintegrates: his son Albert steals and is sent to New South Wales, Sarah's mind crumbles and she is admitted to an insane asylum, another son Benjamin father's an illegitimate child. The consequences of joining the menace of big business have dire consequences for Henry, his entire family and his business. It is a web Henry has woven that in many ways reflects the spiral from individual work to industrialization.

Chris Pearce has succeeded in creating an epic about the Industrial Revolution by placing it as the center of life of a family to which we can all relate. His writing style is of very high quality, not unlike a modern day Charles Dickens writing about the new technologies that forced people into the factories and a capitalistic sense of living - the revolution moved economic power away from the aristocratic population and into the bourgeoisie. And while the book is about 19th century England, it serves as a mirror to the third world countries as they suffer the same auguries today. More than a fine novel, it is a recapitulation and a prophetic stance that deserves a wide audience.

Linda Parkinson-Hardman says

A Weaver's WebA Weaver's Web is an epic novel that takes the reader on a journey through the history of one family's battle with the industrial revolution. It's a historical novel with a strong core message about how change affects the psyche of individuals and the impact this can have on family dynamics.

Charting the changes of fortune as a poor weaver rises to wealth when he finally accepts and embraces the inevitability of the rise of mechanisation, Chris has painted a vivid picture of what life was like in 18th century. He also manages to create complex and very visual characters which allow the reader to engage fully with their experiences. We share the frustrations, not only of the reality of life, but also of the observer watching the internal battles going on in Henry Wakefield.

I must admit there were times when I was so frustrated with his entrenched view that I wanted to set the book aside. But I'm glad I got over that because the story opens up to be a true family story, encompassing the emotional journey that each member takes through it's pages.

Veritas Vincit says

To call this novel anything less than an epic would be an understatement. It is beautifully written and crafted into an immediate classic. The historical setting is impeccable and believable, as though the author had personally lived in that time, suffered through similar destitution, and had witnessed the rise and fall of a family just like the Wakefields. It was almost impossible to put this novel down, simply because it never stopped being interesting. Historical novels are often complicated and require extensive exposition, but this story never got boring. In fact, watching the drama of this fascinating family unfold could be likened to the writing of Fitzgerald or John Dos Passos, compelling and brutally sincere. Henry is one of the least likeable characters I have ever read, and yet as a reader, we want him to succeed for the good of his family, but fail because of his internal monologue and general outlook on life.

Creating a conflict in a reader's emotion is a difficult and dangerous task for an author, because they risk losing the attention and interest of the audience; everyone likes to root for a hero. The supporting characters in the family breathe life and genuine emotion into the tale, and it is hard not to become attached to at least one of them, most likely more. Sarah reminds me of the the wife from Tender is the Night, even beyond the mental health issues that she suffers from. I didn't see the climax coming, and the lack of predictability drags the reader through to the very last page. As Hawthorne said, "Families are always rising and falling in America", but it's true in England as well; this novel is a beautiful example of that, and should be read by anyone who is a fan of drama and truly spectacular prose.

Henk-Jan van der Klis says

A Weaver's Web is historical fiction set in the early 19th century Manchester and rural surroundings. Hand loom weaver Henry Wakefield, his wife Sarah and their growing family (up to five children) live in poverty, stick to old customs. When their mill is sold, the family moves to Manchester to work in local factories. It's the start of the Industrial Revolution. Entropy sets in when organized protests don't bring the promised revolution, one son runs away and ends up in New South Wales (now known as Australia). Lies, gambling and drinking don't bring happiness or economic progression. Naturalism rules in this novel. Personalities can

be related to, despised or wished more luck. A lunatic asylum for Sarah after losing a young baby. Henry Wakefield slowly climbs the social ladder and ends up as an aristocrat, the class he had always despised for treating humans like animals and organize slavery. Now he deploys slaves and orphans himself, still hiding away from transparency and honesty. The book works towards a climax in which family ties are tested to the utmost. Will revenge or love have the final word? A beautifully woven story!

Margitte says

The blurb of the book dishes out everything you need to know about the story. There's little left to the imagination.

A poor, destitute independent weaver, Henry Wakefield, struggles to keep his family fed and clothed when factories are taking over in England. Stubbornly he sticks to their home-grown potatoes and hovel-living in his quest to remain an independent weaver. Potatoes for breakfast, for lunch, for dinner. It was okay with him while all the neighbors move to the bigger towns and cities to join the starving hordes trying to find low-paying jobs as spinners and weavers in the cotton factories. As long as he could continue his weaving by day and pub crawling by night, life was still good for him. He always had money for drink and cards, hiding it from his wife.

Life changes for the family when Henry brakes out of the poverty trap by establishing his own factory and become a member of the despised upper-class who acquire their fortunes by inhumane labor practices. He not only joins their ranks, but mimic the very same work conditions, that kept his own family starved and despondent before, in his own ever-expanding business, without blinking an eye.

His greed results in the crumbling of his family members one by one. His well-meaning solutions to their problems almost destroys them.

The nineteenth-century England in which the industrial revolution awakes, harbors no sympathy for the weak. The wealthy protected their wealth, and the poor had no other aspiration but to die helplessly.

Several laws, protecting the rich, had a devastating effect on the poor and would lead to riots and upheaval in which people died in droves by the hands of the police before it is changed. However, it will take a few decades to happen, while the slums of the cities become the breeding ground for hate and revolt.

Henry, the hardheaded patriarch, who refuses to listen to his family members, is destined for disaster and it does not come from his suffering workers. It is however, the only way he will learn his lesson...

Comments: This is an immensely interesting story and contains all the elements to make this a magnificent read. Unfortunately, the slow-moving narrative, with large portions of unnecessary dialogue and the never-ending repeats, smother the book's potential completely. With good editing, this book will be a winner. It can lose at least a hundred pages and come out the better for it.

The plot was really good.

Pamela King says

A Weaver's Web has a simple, basic story line: poor family, husband makes good, wealth has impact on all family members. And that's where simplicity ends. Chris Pearce has done some very skilful 'weaving' himself.

From the first paragraph the reader is immersed in England at the time of the Industrial Revolution with hand craftsmen losing their livelihood to mechanisation.

Many writers of historic novels either write their history without checking facts or include long and boring passages to explain the relevant history. This is definitely not the case with this book. The historic story line is well researched and flawless and with Pearce's creative writing skills it becomes intriguing and fascinating. You will relive the sights and sounds of Manchester – its people, factories, poverty, grime, injustices and attempts at revolution.

The believable characters have appropriate attitudes of the day; like it or not that's the way it was. You will love or hate them, cheer them on or want to throttle them. However, you feel about each individual they will draw some emotion from you.

This is historical fiction at its best.

If you don't like reading about injustices, cruelty, male dominance and class discrimination then keep away from good historic novels that accurately depict the past and the attitudes of the day. We can't change history but we can learn from it.

I would also recommend the book to anyone researching their family history. If you have found ancestors during this period A Weaver's Web will give you a very clear understanding of what life was like for their forebears, rich or poor.

It is a shame that Chris Pearce experienced so much difficulty in getting A Weaver's Web published because it is an excellent literary work. I would even go so far to say that it is worthy of inclusion in the curriculum for students of literature as an example of prose that educates and entertains.

I got to the end and kept flicking my finger on the Kindle. It finished all too soon. Next book please Chris!

This book was provided to me for free for an honest and unbiased review.

This review is also on my website www.pam.id.au

Chris Pearce says

My inspiration for writing "A Weaver's Web" was a postgraduate creative writing course I topped from 30 students in the mid 1990s. Also, I had already done some research into early industrial Manchester, UK, the setting for the novel, as part of my non-fiction book (print only) Through the Eyes of Thomas Pamphlett:

Convict and Castaway.

I had about 50 copies printed before sending the novel to any literary agents and received unsolicited comments from 18 general readers, five of whom said they couldn't put it down. After targeting many literary agents, including one who compared my manuscript to John Steinbeck's "The Grapes of Wrath", I decided to publish it as an ebook.

Comments from a professional appraiser, literary agents, members at a US writing site, and general readers are included in a preface I wrote for the ebook version. Based on these comments, I would probably give the novel five stars but perhaps I'm a little biased.
