

Chapter 1: What Is Sociology?

Case Study: [Street Science](#)

Section 1: [Examining Social Life](#)

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Section 2 at a Glance


The Development of Sociology

- Social upheaval in Europe during the late 1700s and 1800s encouraged scholars to closely study society.
- European scholars such as Auguste Comte, Harriet Martineau, Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Émile Durkheim, and Max Weber made important contributions to the development of the academic discipline of sociology.
- The Chicago School of sociologists introduced new ways to analyze society.

The Development of Sociology

Main Idea

Social upheaval in Europe during the late 1700s and 1800s encouraged scholars to closely study society. Their work led to the development of the academic discipline of sociology.



Reading Focus

- What factors led to the development of sociology?
- How did early European scholars lay the foundations of sociology?
- What contributions did later European scholars make to the development of sociology?
- How did American scholars contribute to the field of sociology?

Survival of the **FITTEST**



How did one early sociologist view the problem of poverty?

The life of London's poor is vividly illustrated by this sketch of a family huddled in a dank city alleyway.

The Development of Sociology

- **Political changes**
 - Focus on individual liberty and rights
 - American and French Revolutions
- **Social changes**
 - Growth of cities
 - Housing shortages
 - Crime and pollution increased
- **Economic changes**
 - Industrial Revolution
 - Growth of cities

Reading Check


Draw Conclusions

Why do you think social upheaval encouraged scholars to analyze society?


Answer: *possible answer—Social upheaval caused scholars to question conventional wisdoms and seek answers for the unraveling of the social framework*

Early European Scholars


Auguste Comte

- Considered the founder of sociology
 - Studied social order and social change
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Harriet Martineau

- Reviewed life in the United States
 - Translated Comte's work
- 

Herbert Spencer

- Compared society to a biological organism
 - Helped create **social Darwinism**
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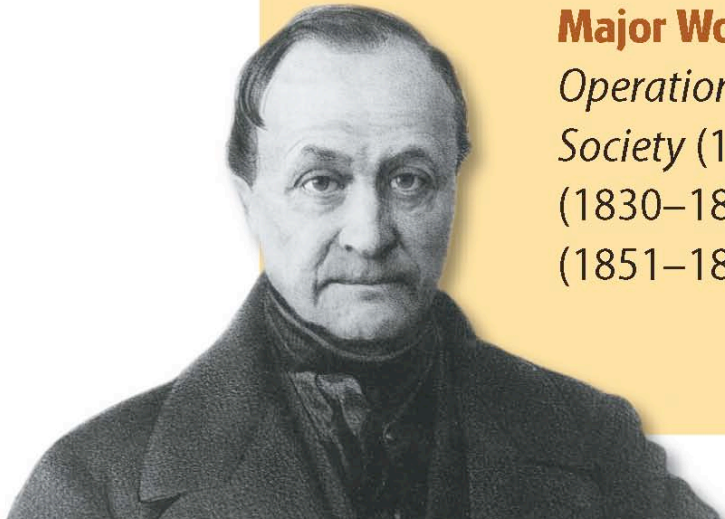
Karl Marx

- Linked societal conditions to the economy
- Believed economic imbalance would lead to conflict

Early European Scholars

Auguste Comte

Contribution Among the first scholars to apply the methods of the physical sciences to the study of society; coined the word *sociology* and is considered the founder of the subject.



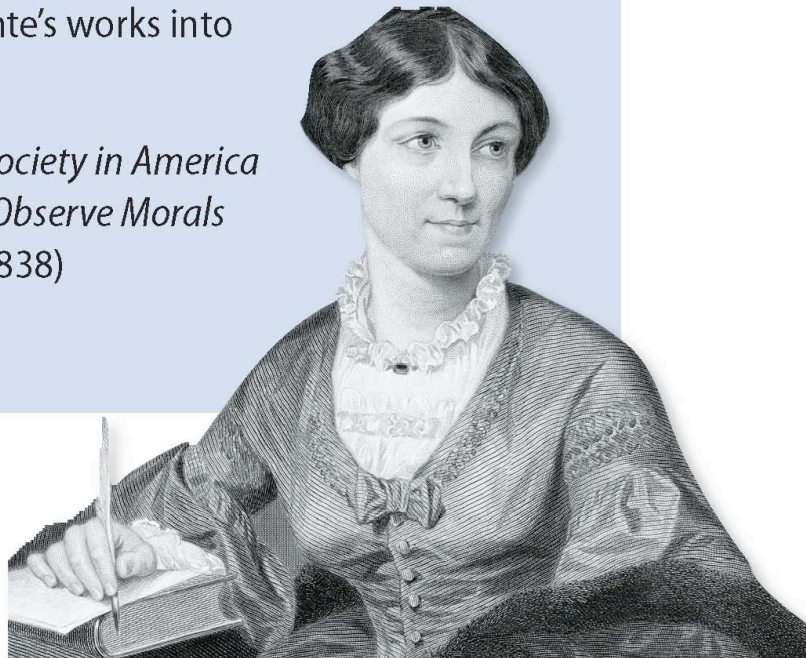
Major Works *Plan of the Scientific Operations Necessary for Reorganizing Society* (1822), *Positive Philosophy* (1830–1842), *System of Positive Polity* (1851–1854)

Early European Scholars

Harriet Martineau

Contribution Conducted early sociological studies in Britain and the United States; advocate of the idea that scholars should try to improve society, not just study it; best known for translating Comte's works into English.

Major Works *Society in America* (1837), *How to Observe Morals and Manners* (1838)

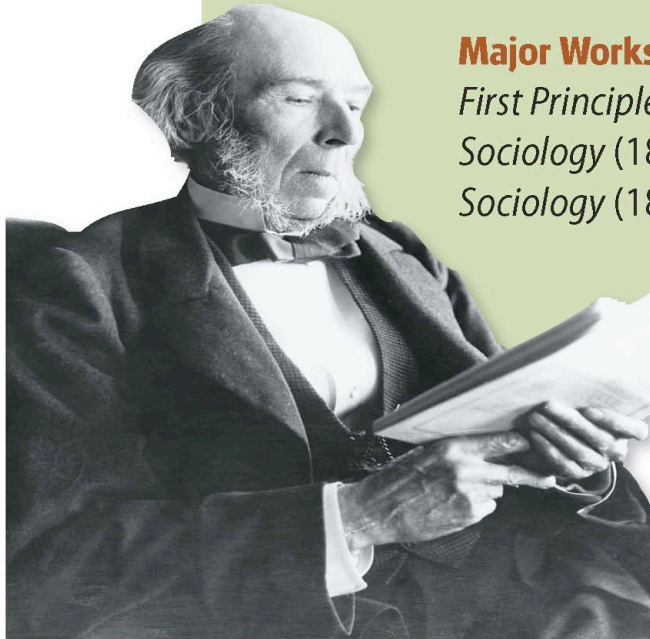


Early European Scholars

Herbert Spencer

Contribution Applied the principles of biology to society; popularized the evolutionary theory of social change and coined the phrase “survival of the fittest.”

Major Works *Social Statics* (1851), *First Principles* (1862), *The Study of Sociology* (1872), *The Principles of Sociology* (1876–1896)

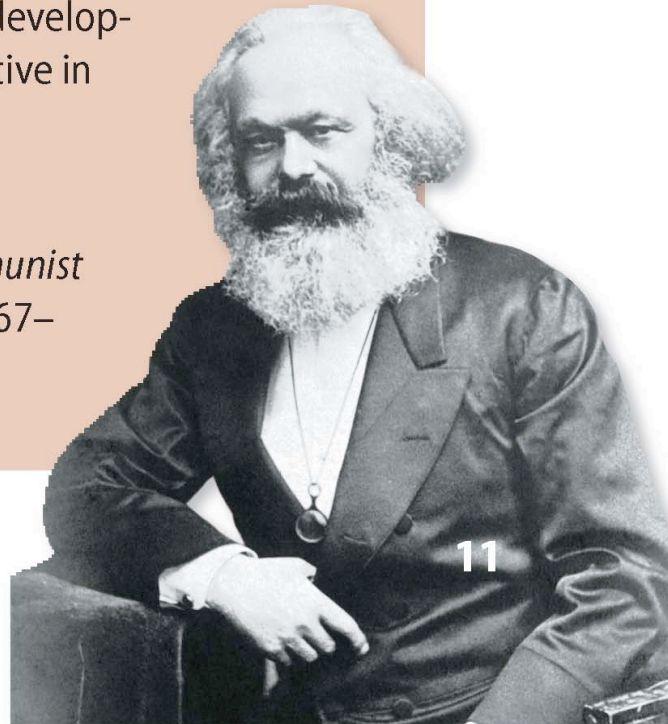


Early European Scholars

Karl Marx

Contribution Emphasized the primary role that conflict plays in social change and advocated revolution to speed up the process of change; his ideas led to the development of the conflict perspective in sociology.

Major Works *The Poverty of Philosophy* (1847), *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), *Capital* (1867–1894)



Reading Check

Contrast

How did Herbert Spencer's approach to social problems differ from the approaches of other early sociologists?

Answer: *Herbert Spencer believed social change and unrest was a natural part of the evolutionary process as society moved toward stability and perfection. He did not advocate change to solve the problems.*

Later European Scholars

Émile Durkheim

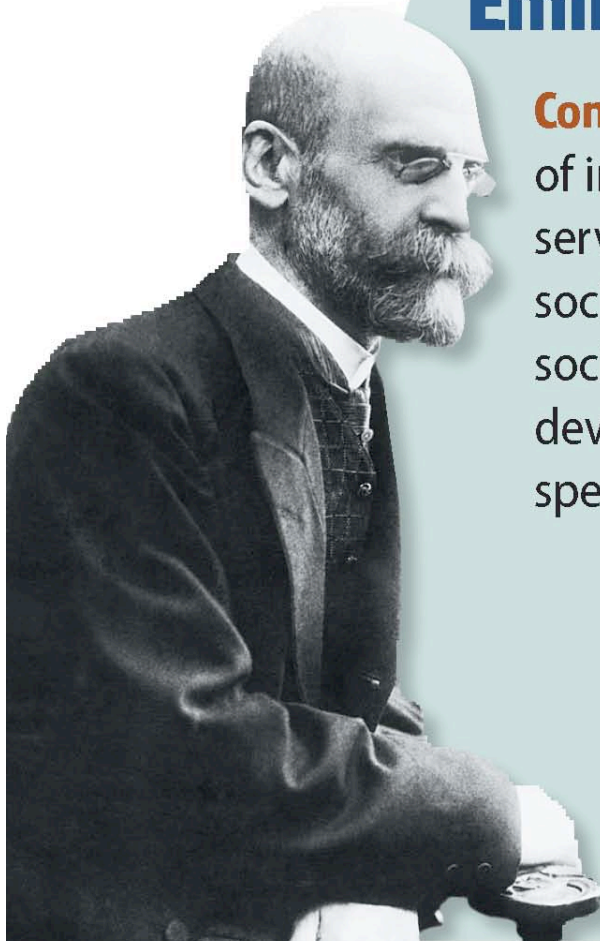
- Developed first sociology class in France
- Systematically applied the methods of science
- Viewed segments of society by their **function**
- Particularly interested in the role of religion

Max Weber

- Interested in certain groups instead of an entire society
- Used the idea of ***Verstehen*** to understand the actions of individuals
- Used the idea of **ideal type** to understand the goals of a society

Later European Scholars

Émile Durkheim



Contribution Described society as a set of interdependent parts, with each part serving a specific function; believed that sociologists should focus on observable social phenomena; influential in the development of the functionalist perspective in sociology.

Major Works *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893), *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895), *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (1897), *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912)

Later European Scholars

Max Weber

Contribution Developed the concept of the ideal type, a model against which social reality can be measured; believed that sociology should attempt to understand the meanings that individuals attach to their actions; his work influenced the development of the interactionist perspective in sociology.

Major Works *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905), *Economy and Society* (1922)



Reading Check

Contrast

How did Weber's sociological focus differ from that of Durkheim?

Answer: *Weber was interested in separate groups within society rather than society as a whole*

American Scholars

The University of Chicago department of sociology became known for a certain set of sociological theories, as well as the idea that sociologists should look for solutions to social problems.

Jane Addams

- Opened a settlement house in Chicago
- Published a series of surveys about the problems of the urban poor
- Not taken seriously as a sociologist

W.E.B. Du Bois

- Took an approach similar to the Chicago School
- Examined life in African American neighborhoods
- Encouraged scholars to examine the problems of race

Statistically Speaking...

Hull House Studies Perhaps Jane Addams' best demonstration of her commitment to both social reform and sociological analysis was *Hull House Maps and Papers*. Published in 1895, this study's most striking aspect was the color-coded maps that showed race, ethnicity, and income levels on Chicago's West Side. During her study Addams discovered the following:

18 Nationalities living in the area

\$9.44 Average weekly wage for garment workers

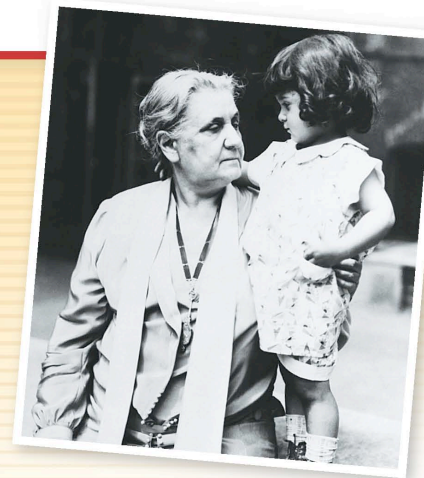
12 Hours per day worked by garment workers

\$1.25 Average daily wage for laborers

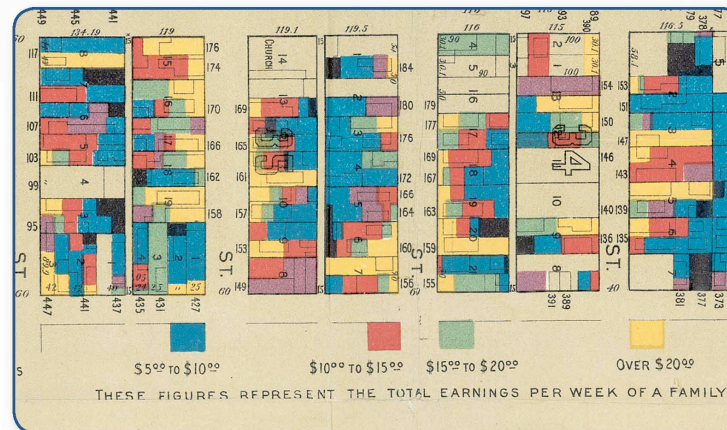
17-32 Weeks per year laborers were unemployed

\$8.47 Average monthly rent

Thinking Critically **Draw Conclusions** Why were the Hull House studies important for the development of sociology?



Jane Addams (above) thought that analyzing social problems was the first step to solving them. She presented some of her findings in color-coded maps like this one below, which shows differences in family income.

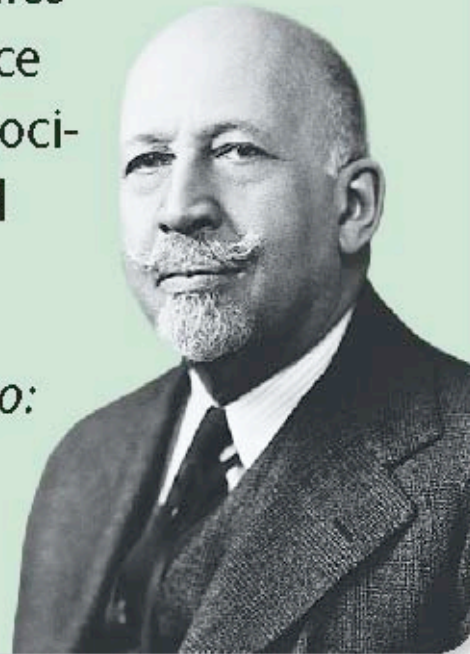


American Scholars

W.E.B. Du Bois

Contribution Used community studies to underscore the significance of race in American society; believed that sociologists should be involved in social reform as well as academic study.

Major Works *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (1899), *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)



Reading Check

Summarize

What was the Chicago School's approach to studying society?

Answer: *that the study of society should include practical solutions to identified social problems*