

networks

There's More Online!

- ✓ **CARTOON** Self-made Men
- ✓ **GRAPHIC ORGANIZER** Origins of Sociology
- ✓ **IMAGE** Booker T. Washington
- ✓ **SELF-CHECK QUIZ**



LESSON 2

The Origins of Sociology

Reading **HELP**DESK



Academic Vocabulary

- research
- assumption

Content Vocabulary

- positivism
- social statics
- social dynamics
- bourgeoisie
- capitalist
- proletariat
- class conflict
- mechanical solidarity
- organic solidarity
- *verstehen*
- rationalization

TAKING NOTES:

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

DESCRIBING As you read about the origins of sociology, use a graphic organizer like the one below to record information about the theories and contributions of the field's European and American pioneers.

European	American

ESSENTIAL QUESTION • *What is sociology?*

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Sociology started with the writings of European scholars such as Auguste Comte, Harriet Martineau, Herbert Spencer, Émile Durkheim, and Karl Marx. Jane Addams, W.E.B. Du Bois, Robert Ezra Park, and other scholars helped focus America's attention on social issues. After World War II, the United States took the lead in developing the field of sociology.

European Origins

GUIDING QUESTION *What were the theories of the pioneers of sociology?*

Sociology is a relatively new science. It began in late nineteenth-century Europe during a time of great social upheaval. The social and economic effects of the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution were touching all aspects of life. People were moving from farms to factory life, losing a sense of community. Some European intellectuals were fascinated and troubled by the sudden changes. They began to grapple with ideas for bringing back a sense of community and for restoring order. These ideas led to the rise of the science of sociology.

Auguste Comte

Auguste Comte (1798–1857), a Frenchman, is recognized as the father of sociology. Comte's main concern was the improvement of society. If societies were to advance, Comte believed, social behavior had to be studied scientifically. Because no science of society existed, Comte attempted to create one himself. He coined the term *sociology* to describe this science. Comte wanted to use scientific observation in the study of social behavior. He called this **positivism**. By *positivism*, he meant that sociology should be a science based on knowledge of which we can be "positive," or sure. Comte also distinguished between **social statics**, the study of social stability and order, and **social dynamics**, the study of social change. This distinction between social stability and social change remains at the center of modern sociology.

Comte published his theories in a book titled *Positive Philosophy*, but he died before people generally came to appreciate his work. His belief that sociology could use scientific procedures and promote social progress, however, was widely adopted by other European scholars.

Harriet Martineau

Harriet Martineau (1802–1876), an Englishwoman, is another important figure in the founding of sociology. She was born into a solidly middle-class home. Never in good health, Martineau had lost her sense of taste, smell, and hearing before she reached adulthood. Her writing career, which included fiction as well as sociological work, began in 1825 after the Martineau family's textile mill was lost to a business depression. Without the family income, and following a broken engagement, Martineau was forced to seek a dependable source of income to support herself. She became a popular writer of celebrity status, whose work initially outsold that of Charles Dickens.

Martineau is best known today for her translation of Comte's *Positive Philosophy*. Her English translation remains even today the most readable one. Despite being severely hearing impaired, she also made original contributions in the areas of **research** methods, political economy, and feminist theory.

In *Society in America*, Martineau established herself as a pioneering feminist theorist. Because she saw a link between slavery and the oppression of women, she was a strong and outspoken supporter of the emancipation of both women and enslaved peoples. Martineau believed women's lack of economic power helped keep them dependent. By writing about the inferior position of women in society, she helped inspire future feminist theorists.

Herbert Spencer

Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), the sole survivor of nine children, was born to an English schoolteacher. Spencer was taught exclusively by his father and uncle, mostly in mathematics and the natural sciences. He did not enjoy scholarly work or the study of Latin, Greek, English, or history, and therefore he decided not to apply to Cambridge University, his uncle's alma mater. Consequently, his higher education was largely the result of his own reading. Spencer's career became a mixture of engineering, drafting, inventing, journalism, and writing.

To explain social stability, Herbert Spencer compared society to the human body. He explained that, like a body, a society is composed of parts working together to promote its well-being and survival. People have brains, stomachs, nervous systems, and limbs. Societies have economies, religions, governments, and families. Just as the eyes and the heart make essential contributions to the functioning of the human body, religious and educational institutions are crucial for a society's functioning.

Spencer also introduced a theory of social change called *Social Darwinism*, based on Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. Spencer thought that evolutionary social change led to progress, provided people did not interfere. If left alone, natural social selection would ensure the survival of the fittest society. On these grounds, Spencer opposed social reform because it interfered with the selection process. The poor, he wrote, deserve to be poor and the rich to be rich. Society profits from allowing individuals to find their own social class level without outside help or hindrance. To interfere with the existence of poverty—or the result of any other natural process—is harmful to society. Spencer believed that the Industrial Revolution represented movement from a militaristic society to an industrial one and that violent competition would fade as industrialism progressed.

positivism the belief that knowledge should be derived from scientific observation

social statics the study of social stability and order

social dynamics the study of social change

research investigation or experimentation aimed at the discovery and interpretation of facts



Harriet Martineau.

Harriet Martineau believed that social scientists should have sympathy for the people they studied.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Speculating How might Martineau's belief in the importance of sympathy have influenced her research interests?

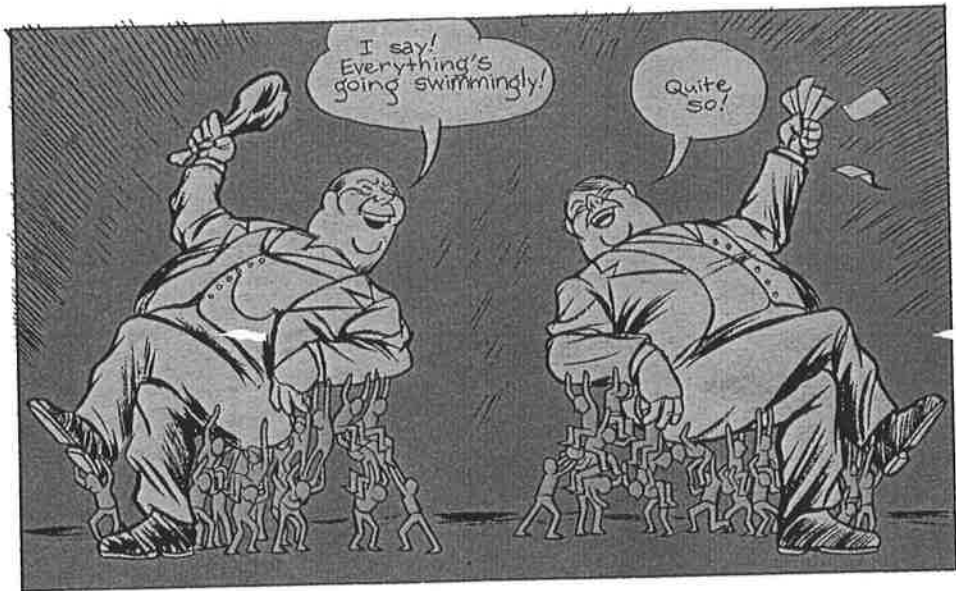
CARTOON >

SELF-MADE MEN

Karl Marx examined the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

► CRITICAL THINKING

1. **Differentiating** Which characters in the cartoon represent the bourgeoisie and which represent the proletariat?
2. **Identifying Perspectives** What is the cartoonist's point of view?



Spencer visited the United States in 1882. Corporate leaders, who saw his ideas as moral justification for their competitive actions, warmly greeted him. Later, public support for government intervention increased, and Spencer's ideas began to slip out of fashion. He reportedly died with a sense of having failed. Spencer's contribution to sociology was a discussion of how societies should be structured.

Karl Marx

Karl Marx (1818–1883), a German scholar, did not consider himself a sociologist. Marx studied law in Bonn and Berlin. He took up philosophy after meeting like-minded intellectuals. After completing his legal studies, Marx became a journalist and eventually the editor of a radical newspaper. Nevertheless, his ideas have had a major effect on the field. Marx felt great concern for the poverty and inequality suffered by the working class of his day. His life was guided by the principle that social scientists should try to change the world rather than merely study it. Marx's friend and coauthor Friedrich Engels helped put his ideas into writing.

Marx identified several social classes in nineteenth-century industrial society. Among them were farmers, servants, factory workers, craftspeople, owners of small businesses, and moneyed capitalists. He predicted that at some point all industrial societies would contain only two social classes: the *bourgeoisie* and the *proletariat*. The **bourgeoisie** (BURZH • WAH • ZEE) are those who own the means for producing wealth in industrial society (for example, factories and equipment). The means for producing wealth are called capital. Thus, those who own them are called **capitalists**. The **proletariat** work for the bourgeoisie and are paid just enough to stay alive.

For Marx, the key to the unfolding of history was **class conflict**—a clash between the bourgeoisie, who controlled the means for producing wealth, and the proletariat, who labored for them. Just as enslaved peoples overthrew slaveholders, wage workers would overtake capitalists. Out of this conflict would come a classless (*communistic*) society—one in which there would be no powerless proletariat. Planned revolution, Marx was convinced, could speed up the change from capitalism to communism. Although he believed that capitalism would eventually self-destruct, his political objective was to explain the workings of capitalism in order to hasten its fall through revolution.

bourgeoisie class owning the means for producing wealth

capitalist person who owns or controls the means for producing wealth

proletariat working class; those who labor for the bourgeoisie

class conflict the ongoing struggle between the bourgeoisie (owners) and the proletariat (working classes).

Émile Durkheim

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) was the son of a French rabbi. According to Durkheim, society exists because of a broad consensus, or agreement, among members of a society. In preindustrial times, societies were based on what sociologists call **mechanical solidarity**. With these societies, there was widespread consensus of values and beliefs, strong social pressures for conformity, and dependence on tradition and family. In contrast, industrial societies are based on **organic solidarity**—social interdependency based on a web of highly specialized roles. These specialized roles make members of a society dependent on one another for goods and services, such as the dependence between bankers and customers.

Although early sociologists emphasized the need to make sociology scientific, they did not have the research tools that are available today. Later sociologists developed the research methods to replace speculation with observation, to collect and classify data, and to use data for testing social theories. Durkheim was the most prominent of these later sociologists. He first introduced the use of statistical techniques in his groundbreaking research on suicide. In that study, he demonstrated that suicide involves more than individuals acting alone and that suicide rates vary according to group characteristics. Durkheim showed that human social behavior must be explained by social factors rather than just psychological ones. In *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*, originally published in 1897, he wrote:

PRIMARY SOURCE

“It is not mere metaphor to say of each human society that it has a greater or lesser aptitude for suicide; the expression is based on the nature of things. . . . These tendencies of the whole social body, by affecting individuals, cause them to commit suicide. The private experiences usually thought to be the proximate causes of suicide have only the influence borrowed from the victim’s moral predisposition, itself an echo of the moral state of society. To explain his detachment from life the individual accuses his most immediately surrounding circumstances; life is sad to him because he is sad. Of course his sadness comes to him from without in one sense, however not from one or another incident of his career but rather from the group to which he belongs. This is why there is nothing which cannot serve as an occasion for suicide. It all depends on the intensity with which suicidogenetic causes have affected the individual.”

—Émile Durkheim,
Suicide: A Study in Sociology, 1951

Max Weber

Max Weber (1864–1920) was the eldest son of a father who was a well-to-do German lawyer and politician. His mother, in stark contrast, was a strongly devout Calvinist who rejected the worldly lifestyle of her husband. Weber was affected psychologically by the conflicting values of his parents, which led at one point to a mental breakdown. As a university professor trained in law and economics, Weber wrote on a wide variety of topics, including the nature of power, the religions of the world, law, economics, rural and urban sociology, the nature of social classes, and the development and nature of bureaucracy. His most famous book is *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, first published in 1904–1905.

Through the quality of his research and the diversity of his interests, Weber was profoundly influential in the development of sociological theory. Human beings act on the basis of their own understanding of a situation, Weber said. Thus, sociologists must discover the personal meanings, values, beliefs, and attitudes underlying human social behavior.

mechanical solidarity

social dependency based on a widespread consensus of values and beliefs and dependence on tradition and family

organic solidarity social interdependency based on a high degree of specialization of roles

Max Weber did not begin his academic career as a sociologist, but over time he identified himself with the field.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Drawing Conclusions How might Weber’s training in law and economics have influenced his work in sociology?



Connecting Sociology to Psychology

THE PIONEERS OF PSYCHOLOGY

Like sociology, psychology emerged as a recognized discipline in the late 1800s at a time when the Western world was undergoing rapid change. Industrialization and new technologies, such as electric lights and the telephone, were changing how people lived and communicated. Just as sociologists attempted to explain the impact of change on society, psychologists attempted to explain the impact on individuals.

Also like sociology, the pioneers of psychology approached the field from many different perspectives. Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), who is considered the “father” of experimental psychology, established the first psychology laboratory in Germany in the late 1870s. Wundt was interested in studying people’s sensations and perceptions, which he thought were key to understanding the structure of the mind. He would have people perform simple activities or listen to sounds and then report their sensations. Wundt used the technique of introspection to understand people’s conscious mental experiences. *Introspection* is the process of looking into one’s own mind to understand what one thinks and feels about an experience.

William James (1842–1910) published the first psychology textbook, *The Principles of Psychology*, in 1890. In this book, James outlined most of the topics that are common in psychology textbooks today. James theorized that emotions are caused by physical changes in a person’s body. He argued that human emotions had developed over time because they served adaptive functions that helped humans survive.

Francis Galton (1822–1911) took a more biological approach to psychology. Galton, a British psychologist, was interested in the qualities passed to offspring through heredity. His views were



Wilhelm Wundt was a pioneer of psychology.

influenced by the work of his cousin, Charles Darwin, who outlined the theory of evolution. Galton pioneered the use of statistics and measurement in studying human behavior.

► CRITICAL THINKING

- 1. Making Connections** What are some of the ways that the early development of sociology and psychology are similar?
- 2. Comparing** Think about the approaches to research used by Émile Durkheim and Max Weber. What similarities do you see between those approaches and the approaches used by Wilhelm Wundt and Francis Galton?

verstehen understanding social behavior by putting yourself in the places of others

rationalization the mind-set emphasizing knowledge, reason, and planning

Weber believed that an understanding of the personal intentions of people in groups can be best accomplished through the method of **verstehen** (fehr • SHTAYUHN), understanding the social behavior of others by putting yourself mentally in their places. Putting yourself in someone else’s “shoes” allows you to shed your values temporarily and see things from a different point of view.

Weber also identified *rationalization* as a key influence in the change from a preindustrial society to an industrial one. **Rationalization** is the mind-set that emphasizes the use of knowledge, reason, and planning. The influence of rationalization marked a change from the tradition, emotion, and superstition of preindustrial society. For example, agriculture became grounded in science rather than belief in luck, fate, or magic. In stressing rationality and objectivity, Weber pioneered research techniques that helped prevent personal biases from unduly affecting sociological investigations.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Making Connections How did the various pioneers of sociology contribute to the development of sociological theory?

Sociology in America

GUIDING QUESTION *What were the contributions of early American sociologists?*

Although the early development of sociology occurred in Europe, the greatest development of sociology has taken place in the United States. Because sociology has become a science largely through the efforts of American sociologists, it is not surprising that many of the most influential sociologists worked in the United States. The global influence of American sociologists is reflected in the fact that sociologists throughout the world use sociological writings in English.

In 1892, the first department of sociology was established at the University of Chicago. From its founding until World War II, the sociology department at the University of Chicago stood at the forefront of American sociology. Such early American sociologists as Robert Ezra Park and George Herbert Mead were members of the department. After World War II, sociology departments at eastern universities such as Harvard and Columbia, Midwestern universities such as Wisconsin and Michigan, and western universities such as Stanford and the University of California at Berkeley emerged as leaders. Sociologist Robert Nisbet, for example, earned his degree from Berkeley, while Julian Samora graduated from Washington University in Missouri.

Some early contributors to American sociology, including Jane Addams and Booker T. Washington, directed much of their efforts toward solving society's problems through social activism. Challenging racism and racial discrimination became the life's work of African American sociologists such as Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois.

Jane Addams

Jane Addams (1860–1935) was the best known of the early female social reformers in the United States. She attended the Women's Medical College of Philadelphia but had to drop out because of illness.

When she was a child, Addams saw many examples of government corruption and business practices that harmed workers. She never forgot their suffering. While on one of her European trips, she saw the work being done to help the poor in London. With this example of social action, Addams began her life's work—seeking social justice. With her college friend Ellen Gates Starr, Addams cofounded Hull House in Chicago's slums. Here, people who needed refuge—immigrants, the sick, the poor, the aged—could find help.

Addams focused on the problems caused by the imbalance of power among the social classes. She invited sociologists from the University of Chicago to Hull House to witness firsthand the effects of industrialism on the lower class. In addition to her work with the lower class, Addams was active in the woman suffrage and peace movements. As a result of her tireless work for social reform, Addams was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931—the first sociologist to receive this honor. The irony is that Addams herself suffered a sort of class discrimination. She was not considered a sociologist during her lifetime because she did not teach at a university. She was considered a social worker (then considered a less prestigious career) because she was a woman and because she worked directly with the poor.

Jane Addams believed that social action could be used to improve society.

CRITICAL THINKING

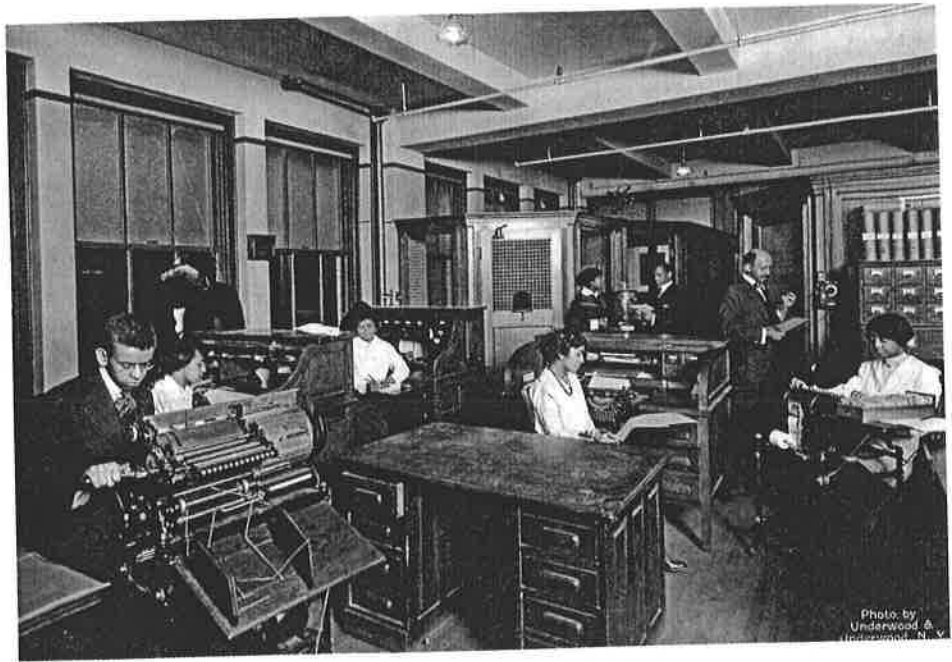
Evaluating What are some of the ways that Addams sought to improve society?



W.E.B. Du Bois (second from the right) was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He was also the long-time editor of *The Crisis*, the journal of the NAACP.

► **CRITICAL THINKING**

Assessing How does Du Bois' work with the NAACP provide evidence of his role as a social activist?



W.E.B. Du Bois

W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963), an African American educator and social activist, attended an integrated high school in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, and was the first African American to receive a diploma there. Then in 1895, Du Bois became the first African American to receive a doctorate from Harvard University. He taught at a number of predominantly African American universities during his career.

Du Bois learned firsthand about racial discrimination and segregation when he attended Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, as an undergraduate student. Partly from this experience, and from teaching in rural, all-African American schools around Nashville, Du Bois decided to attack the “Negro problem.” This racist policy was based on the **assumption** that African Americans were an inferior race. Du Bois analyzed the sophisticated social structure of African American communities, first in Philadelphia and later in other places. He published his findings in *The Philadelphia Negro*:

PRIMARY SOURCE

“Many are the misapprehensions and misstatements as to the social environment of Negroes in a great Northern city. Sometimes it is said, here they are free; they have the same chance as the Irishman, the Italian, or the Swede; at other times it is said, the environment is such that it is really more oppressive than the situation in Southern cities. The student must ignore both of these extreme statements and seek to extract from a complicated mass of facts the tangible evidence of a social atmosphere surrounding Negroes, which differs from that surrounding most whites; of a different mental attitude, moral standard, and economic judgment shown toward Negroes than toward most other folk. That such a difference exists and can now and then plainly be seen, few deny; but just how far it goes and how large a factor it is in the Negro problems, nothing but careful study and measurement can reveal.”

—W.E.B. Du Bois,
The Philadelphia Negro, 1899

Du Bois' concern for his race did not stop at the borders of the United States—he was also active in the Pan-African movement, which was concerned with the rights of all African descendants, no matter where they lived. While documenting the experience and contributions of African people throughout the world, Du Bois died in the African country of Ghana at the age of ninety-five.

assumption the act of taking for granted or supposing

Booker T. Washington

Du Bois' demands for African American civil rights and racial equality put him at odds with another voice of the African American community—Booker T. Washington (1856–1915). Washington had begun his life in slavery. After emancipation, he became an educator, founding the Tuskegee Institute in 1881. Washington held different assumptions than Du Bois about the best course of action for African Americans. He worked under the assumption that African Americans should accept segregation in return for promises of economic gains.

Robert Ezra Park

Robert Ezra Park (1864–1944) worked as an aide to Booker T. Washington at the Tuskegee Institute from 1905 to 1914. After he left Tuskegee, Park taught at the University of Chicago, where he specialized in race relations and human ecology, the study of the relationship among individuals, social groups, and their social environments. Park was interested in how populations grow and change. He wanted to know how groups are organized in different ways to enable them to compete and cooperate. Park, who began his career as a journalist, was also interested in the social function of newspapers as a record of public events. He believed that a sociologist was a kind of “superreporter,” who chronicled the long-term trends in society.

Park used the city of Chicago as his laboratory to study collective behavior and social interaction. Although he is credited with moving American sociology toward a more objective methodology, he never completely abandoned his interest in social reform.

George Herbert Mead

George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) also taught at the University of Chicago. Mead explored how our sense of self develops. According to Mead, our sense of self develops as we interact with our world. Language, symbols, and communication are at the heart of this process. Mead's work laid the foundation for the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism.

Julian Samora

Julian Samora (1920–1996) became the first known Mexican American to earn a doctorate in sociology when he graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in 1953. He went on to conduct pioneering work in Mexican American studies. Samora's focus was on civil rights and discrimination, poverty, public health, and the movement of people along the Mexican-American border. While at Notre Dame University, he founded the Mexican American Graduate Studies Program and headed the Mexican Border Studies Project.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Generalizing How did early American sociologists change the nature of sociology?



Booker T. Washington founded the Tuskegee Institute as a training school for formerly enslaved African Americans.

CRITICAL THINKING

Analyzing Cause and Effect How might Washington's life experiences have influenced his views on the best course of action for African Americans?

LESSON 2 REVIEW



Reviewing Vocabulary

- Identifying** What is the difference between social statics and social dynamics?
- Defining** What did Max Weber mean by *rationalization*?

Using Your Notes

- Describing** Use your notes to describe how both Karl Marx and Jane Addams were concerned with the issue of the imbalance of power among the social classes.

Answering the Guiding Questions

- Interpreting** What were the theories of the pioneers of sociology?
- Synthesizing** What were the contributions of early American sociologists?

Writing Activity

- Argument** Max Weber introduced the concept of *verstehen*. Write a brief plan for using *verstehen* to investigate the importance of money to your peers.