# The Origins of Sociology

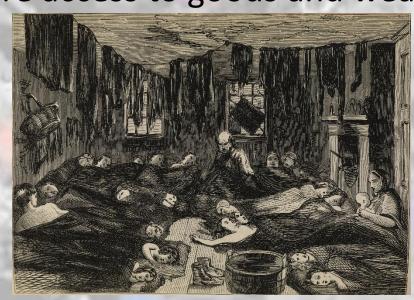
The Beginnings of Sociology as a Field of Study

#### Changing Social Conditions

- In the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century and into the 19<sup>th</sup> century Western Europe was experiencing fundamental changes in the structure of the society
  - Monarchies on the decline -> Democracies on the increase
  - Agriculture on the decline -> Industry on the increase
  - Increase in Social Liberties
  - Increase in Social Mobility
    - The ability to move up in Social Class

## Contextualizing the Origins of Sociology

- 19th Century Western Europe
  - European Society had long been dominated by hereditary Aristocratic families
    - Wealth connected to land ownership
  - Industrialization leading to more access to goods and wealth
  - Growth of large Urban Areas
    - Especially in England



### Contextualizing the Origins of Sociology

- New Social Classes emerging
  - For most of human history the majority of humans were living in Agricultural Societies
    - Divisions between Land Owners and Peasants (People who worked the land)
  - Due to industrialization humans were transitioning to Industrial Societies
    - Division between Factory Owners and Laborers





#### The Scientific Revolution

- Starting in the 17<sup>th</sup> century developments in Scientific theory and knowledge were changing how humans examined the world
  - At first used to try to explain astronomical observations to explain the Earth's position in the universe
    - Ex. Copernicus theorizing the Sun was the center of our Solar System
  - Late applied science to biological developments
    - Ex. Darwin and the Origin of Species
  - Eventually used to try to explain social order

# Early Sociologists: Auguste Comte

- French (1798-1857)
- One of the first scientists to apply the theories of physical science to studying society
- Considered the father of Sociology
  - Coined the term Sociology



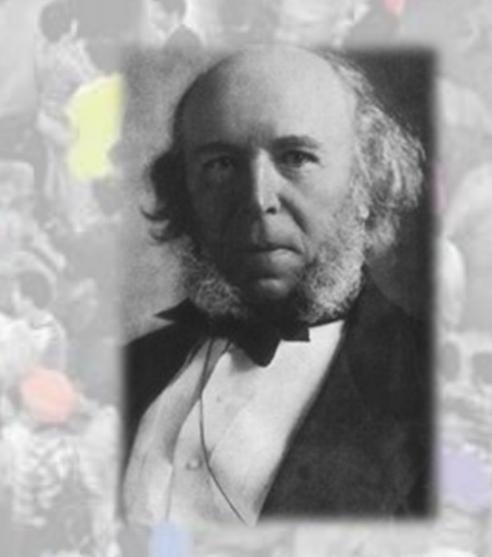
## Early Sociologists: Harriet Martineau

- British (1802-1876)
- Translated the works of Comte to English
  - Broadened field of Sociological study
- Believed principles of study should be to improve societal conditions



#### Early Sociologists: Herbert Spencer

- British(1820-1903)
- Built upon theories of Charles Darwin and applied them to the study of Sociology
  - Theory of Social Darwinism
  - Used to try to justify one group over another



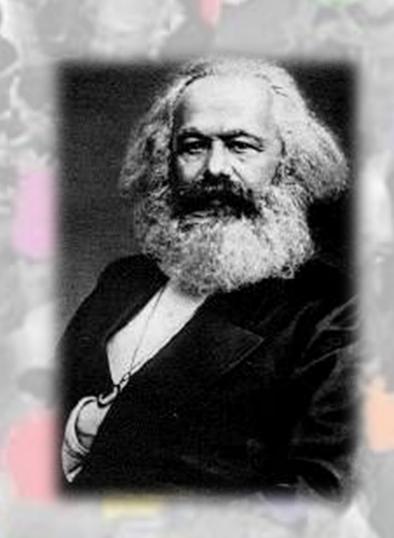
# Early Sociologists: Emile Durkheim

- French (1858-1917)
- Considered father of modern sociological study
- Empiricist
  - Focused on observable social phenomenon
- Founder of Functionalist Theory



## Early Sociologists: Karl Marx

- German (1818-1883)
- Made observations of working class in England
- Divided society between the "haves" and the "have nots"
  - Bourgeoisie—owners of the means of production (capitalists)
  - Proletariat—the workers
- Founder of the Conflict Theory



#### Early Sociologists: Max Weber

- German (1864-1920)
- Developed theory of Ideal type
  - Model to which everything else could be compared
  - Models used as a way to measure reality
- Founder of Symbolic Interactionist Theory

