

# Pioneers of Sociology



## Auguste Comte (1798 - 1857)



- Coined the term "Sociology"
- Considered the father of positivism
  - Positivism = Way of thinking based on the assumption that it is possible to observe social life and establish reliable, valid knowledge about how it works
- Came up with the law of 3 stages
  - 1. Theological (Fictitious)
  - 2. Metaphysical (Abstract)
  - 3. Scientific (Positive)



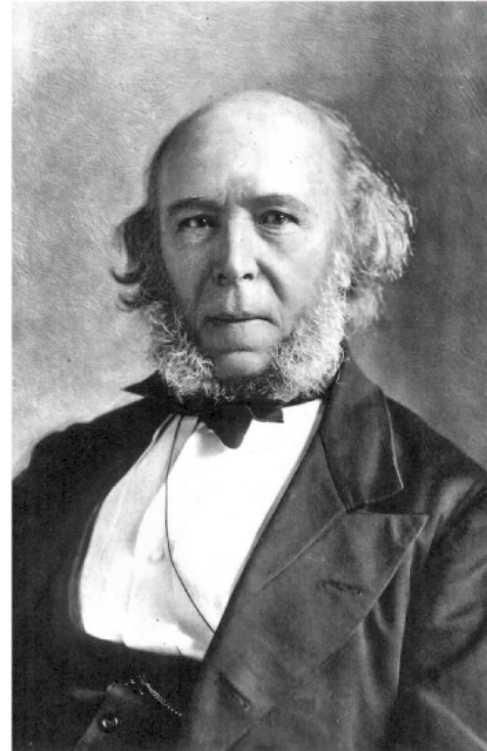
## Emile Durkheim (1858 - 1917)



- Became interested in a scientific approach to society
- Published "Suicide: A Study in Sociology"
  - Case study that explored differing suicide rates among Protestants and Catholics and argued that stronger social control among Catholics results in lower suicide rates

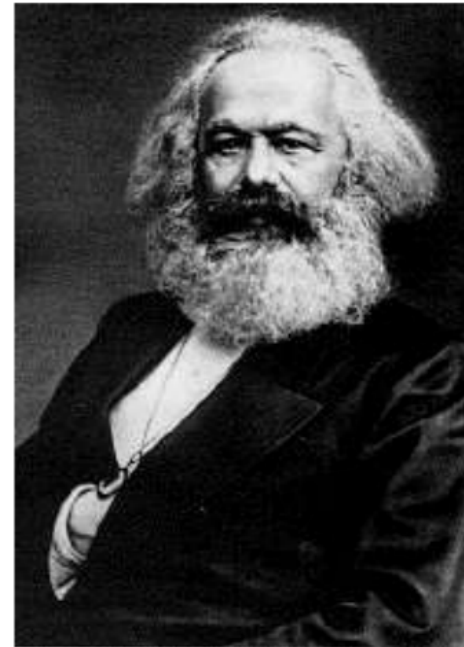
## Herbert Spencer (1820 - 1883)

- Developed and applied evolutionary theory to sociology
- Presented Social Darwinism (idea that societies are organisms that progress through a process of evolution similar to that experienced by living species)
  - Survival of the Fittest



## Karl Marx (1818 - 1883)

- Came up with the theory known as "Marxism"
  - Argued that all society progresses through the dialectic of class struggle and conflict
- Critical of capitalism and believed that socialism would eventually be replaced by a stateless, classless society called pure communism



## Max Weber (1864 - 1920)

- German sociologist who studied rationalization
- Focused on religion and government
- Combined economic sociology and sociology of religion
  - Emphasized importance of cultural influences embedded in religion as a means for understanding the genesis of capitalism
- Focused on individuals





## Jane Addams (1860 - 1935)

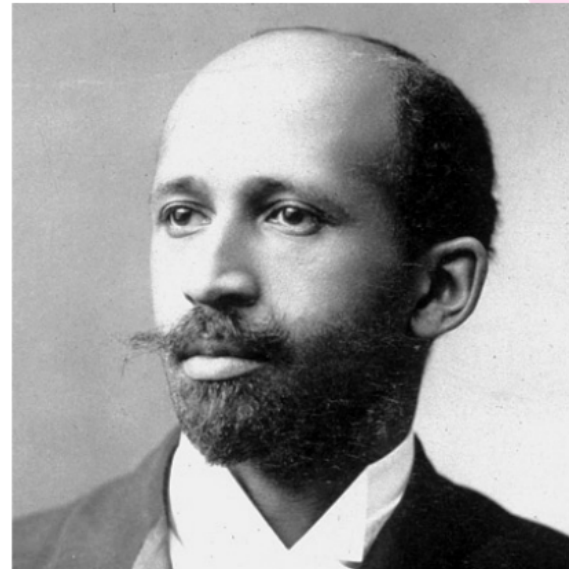
- Early feminist
- Social and political activist
- Interested in studying urban life
- Created Hull House (1st settlement house in US)
- Questioned roles of women in society and the social pressures on a woman to marry and devote her life to family





## W.E.B. DuBois (1868 - 1963)

- Played a leading role in the struggle for black civil rights
- Studied blacks as a social system
- Wanted to learn as much as he could in an attempt to "cure" prejudice and discrimination
- Used scientific method to study the race problem



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## Max Weber (1864 - 1920)



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- Focused on religious and government
- Linked non-rationalistic sociology and sociology of religion
  - Proposed that Protestantism and other religions were essential in religious movements for understanding the growth of capitalism
  - Focused on technology

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- Early feminist
- Social and political activist
- Interested in studying urban life
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- Found a leading role in the struggle for black civil rights
- Studied blacks as a social system
- Wanted to learn on terms as he would in an attempt to "see" prejudice and discrimination
- Undoubtedly needed to study the race problem