

Founding of Sociology – taken from Wikipedia.com (09/20/06)

Sociology is a relatively new academic discipline among other social sciences including economics, political science, anthropology, history, and psychology. The ideas behind it, however, have a long history and can trace their origins to a mixture of common human knowledge and philosophy.

Sociology emerged as a scientific discipline in the early 19th century as an academic response to the challenge of modernity: as the world was becoming smaller and more integrated, people's experience of the world was increasingly atomized and dispersed. Sociologists hoped not only to understand what held social groups together, but also to develop an antidote to social disintegration.

The word sociology was coined by Auguste Comte in 1838 from Latin *Socius* (companion, associate) and Greek *logos* (speech). Comte hoped to unify all studies of humankind -- including history, psychology and economics. His own sociological scheme was typical of the 19th century; he believed all human life had passed through the same distinct historical stages (theology, metaphysics, positive science) and that, if one could grasp this progress, one could prescribe the remedies for social ills. Sociology was to be the 'queen of sciences'.

The first book with the term 'sociology' in its title was *The Study of Sociology* (1874) by the English philosopher Herbert Spencer. In the United States, Lester Frank Ward, described by some as the father of American sociology, published *Dynamic Sociology* in 1883 and the discipline was taught by its own name for the first time at the [University of Kansas](#), Lawrence, in 1890 under the course title Elements of Sociology (the oldest continuing sociology course in America). The Department of History and Sociology at the University of Kansas was established in 1891 and the first full fledged independent university department of sociology was established in 1892 at the [University of Chicago](#) by Albion W. Small, who in 1895 founded the *American Journal of Sociology*. The first European department of sociology was founded in 1895 at the University of Bordeaux by Emile Durkheim, founder of *L'Annee Sociologique* (1896). The first sociology department to be established in the United Kingdom was at the London School of Economics and Political Science (home of the *British Journal of Sociology*) in 1904. In 1919 a sociology department was established in Germany at the Ludwig Maximilians University of Munich by Max Weber and in 1920 in Poland by Florian Znaniecki.