

Harriet Martineau

First Female Sociologist



June 12, 1802 (Norwich, United Kingdom) -June 27, 1876(Ambleside, United Kingdom)

Martineau's most important contribution to the field of sociology was her claim that when studying society, one must focus on all aspects of it. She emphasized the importance of investigating political, religious, and social institutions. By examining society in this way, she said, it is possible to infer why there is inequality, especially facing girls and women. In her writing, she brought an early feminist perspective on issues such as race relations, religious life, marriage, children, and home (she was never married or had children).

FUN FACTS

- Harriet Martineau was deaf and taught herself how to manage her handicap.
- She was a political economist at the age of 15.
- When Martineau's father passed, she supported herself by writing.
- She was raised under the religion of Unitarianism and declared Atheism.
- She also advocated for the Whig Poor Law reforms, which shifted assistance to the British poor from cash donations to the workhouse model.

Sources

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