

DID HARRIET MARTINEAU'S SOCIOLOGICAL METHODS INFLUENCE
EMILE DURKHEIM'S SOCIOLOGICAL METHODS?

by

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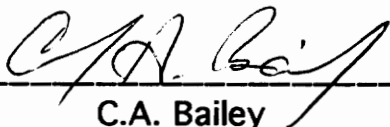
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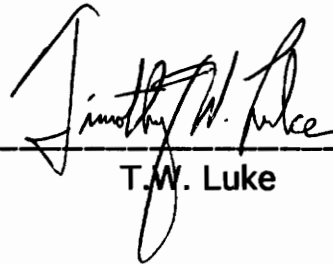
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(ABSTRACT)

Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) published *How to Observe Morals and Manners* in 1838. The book was perhaps the first sociological methodology text. Emile Durkheim (1855-1917) published *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895) 57 years later. Durkheim's book has traditionally been labeled as the first sociological methodology text, while Martineau's book has been virtually forgotten by modern day sociologists.

The author identifies significant similarities between the two texts and investigates the possibility that the work of Martineau influenced Durkheim. This work explores the life an important figure in nineteenth century European culture and argues that Martineau's name should be reinserted into the history of sociology. The ideas contained in, and the construction of, *How to Observe Morals and Manners* are discussed.

Dedication

*This thesis is dedicated to all the women who have had their ideas excluded
from history.*

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my committee, Ellsworth Fuhrman, Carol Bailey, and Timothy Luke, for giving me the freedom to pursue a project that at times must have seemed like a long shot.

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Preface

Most masters theses in the social sciences, and in other sciences, are rigidly constructed around a set of "guidelines" which define: the content of the thesis, the order in which the content is explored, the structure of the written result, and the criteria that delineate "acceptable" and "unacceptable" conclusions by committee members. Undeniably these "guidelines" serve pragmatic functions, from appeasing the fears of graduate students needing to know "how do I write this up," to keeping the enormous amount of theses manageable for graduate schools who must attempt to maintain uniformity among them. The latter problem, mechanical form, is easily overcome by the modern word processor and to a certain extent the order which ideas are presented in the work. The former problem, which is essentially a question of "how do I do science," is not as easily overcome.

If we consider that a student's masters thesis is probably his/her first serious scientific endeavor, it is easy to see why students seek out a model order, method, and style for their theses. Committees need to be satisfied, theses need to be publishable (at least if students are considering entering academia), and students need to graduate (with as little grief as possible). With these considerations in mind, it is no wonder why most masters theses appear congruent in form. Students quickly learn that what passes for science in one setting will probably pass for it in another. Guidelines make the whole scientific process easier, and this does not just apply to masters theses. A

glance through any of the major scientific journals should satisfy you of this. Most papers begin with an abstract, then continue with an introduction, a statement of purpose and utility, then proceed in outlining a methodology, describe the results, discuss the results and their implications, and suggest that "more research on the problem needs to be done." Again, all for pragmatic reasons. Scientific papers have been presented this way for decades, and judging by the enormous amount of scientific literature, science is flourishing under these conditions. But is all scientific work required to pay homage to the traditional scientific format?

I believe that it is not, and the only reason I bring it up is to argue why my thesis will not fit into the traditional scientific format. It is important for you to understand, from the beginning, why I cannot and will not, follow the traditional masters thesis format described above.

This thesis is an unconventional one. In all honesty I have tried to "fit" my work into the conventional scientific style and method (I too want to please my committee, publish my results, and graduate), but I was dissatisfied with the results. Forcing the work into a form that it does not accept is counterintuitive to the scientific process - even if that process works for most of science.

When I say "forcing the work," I mean attempting to differentiate the work into methodology, results, discussion, and conclusions. I mean stating the utility of the work before presenting the argument. I mean playing prophet to my conclusions. The unique feature of this work is that *in writing it* I am still

discovering more about the project. This is a multifaceted discovery. I am continually discovering more about the project, more about myself as a scientist, and more about the nature of historical sciences in general. Being an ongoing process, discovery (especially historical) cannot be forced into succinct categories of methodology, results, discussion, and conclusions. The normal scientific method just does not apply. You could question why I do not finish my discovery before writing, but as you will see, I cannot *definitively* answer the question I set out to answer. Although this sounds terminal from the onset, this is a criticism that can be leveled against any piece of science that does not definitively answer what it set out to. If you level this criticism against this work, you must also level it against all the self-selected scientific papers that end in "more work needs to be done" (which by my experience are a vast majority of them) - all of which, by definition, are in the "discovery" stage. The difference between my work and many other "to be continued papers" is that I am willing to admit it from the onset. Likewise, finishing my "discovery" before beginning the writing process will not facilitate the differentiation of this work into the current scientific format. If this is unclear now, I suspect that after reading this paper you will understand why it could not have been presented in any other way.

I hope I have not given you the impression that this work is lacking methods, results, utility, or conclusions. In fact this thesis has all of the crucial elements that define scientific papers (methods, purposes, results, discussions, and conclusions). But as you will see, this thesis does not lend

itself well to being written in the normal scientific form. If I completely outlined my method before I presented the results, I would have to discuss some of my results in my methodology section. If I discussed the results of the work before I presented my conclusions, I would have to draw some conclusions in my results section. If I am going to have results in my methodology section, conclusions in my results section, and presuppositions in my introduction section, I might as well abandon the normal writing structure and adopt an alternate writing system - which is what I have done. The final work contains methods, purposes, utilities, results, conclusions and discussions - just not in the normal format.

Another, and perhaps more important, reason for not trying to force this work into the traditional scientific topology is that the result would not "read" as well as the alternative. Laurel Richardson in her essay, "Writing: A method of inquiry," (1994) points out that a vast majority of qualitative research is so boring to read that the new genre of *putdownwinism* - the inability of readers to finish reading what should have been an interesting qualitative text, but is not - has proliferated. If the point of science is to share your knowledge with others, we as scientists should make reading our qualitative work as interesting as possible. Of course all forms of writing have certain limitations placed upon them, but as Richardson (1994) points out, there is no single correct way of writing a text, there are many different ways to present science. Many factors predict why someone would or would not read a scientific work, but I believe that every scientist should dutifully attempt to write with a structure and style

which makes his or her science as interesting **as possible** to read - which is what I have attempted to do in this thesis. Most scientific writing will never be competing on the "best seller" lists, and I am not suggesting that it should be. My point is that I would suspect that only a handful of scientists would even read this thesis, which demands that I at least keep those interested enough in the work to finish reading it! This, along with the fact that this thesis just does not lend itself well to the introduction - methodology - results - discussions - conclusions sequence of scientific writing, demands that I abandon that system. I should stress that this *optout* form of writing is not a *copout* form of writing. If anything, presenting my work in a scientifically untraditional manner should prove more challenging than in the regular style.

Instead of the traditional scientific format, this thesis will be written almost in the order in which I investigated it. It will begin with a simple observation and carry that observation to its logical conclusion. This thesis has proceeded heuristically and is not much different from a detective story in form and function. The most sensible way to read a detective story is sequentially, therefore, within the limitation placed on me by the structure of a masters thesis, I will attempt to present it that way.

Chapter 1: A woman, an observation, and a hypothesis

If I were to ask you to supply me with the names of some female sociologists, off the top of your head, how many could you name? If I were to ask you to supply me with the names of some classical female sociologists, how many could you name? Better yet, if you were a social science professor, as you might very well might be, how many female social scientists could your senior students name? If I asked you the same questions again, but specified that you could not include women colleagues in your list of possible answers, how many could you name?

I suspect that if many of us took this quiz, we would be ashamed to admit that we could only name one or two. Hopefully, those who specialize in feminist and women's studies could provide us with a respectable list of women social scientists - off the tops of their heads. They might even be able to supply us with several books containing the names of female sociologists (see Deegan 1991, Spender 1982). But they are a rare minority. We expect this type of recall from those specializing in women's studies, yet despite this tiny pocket of encouragement, when we get to the students, we find out how unfemale the social sciences are. We find most students cannot even name one female sociologist that was not a former professor of theirs. Even "enlightened" graduate students can hardly recall the names of any female sociologists.

The shame of it is, that as I sit here, I too would fail miserably if I took this quiz. I sat through an entire complement of masters level sociology classes and I will humbly admit that I can only name one female social scientist - off the top of my head. I can hardly recall learning about any female sociologists. Perhaps tomorrow I will wander through the department and ask my cohort, "did I miss something, or are there any female sociologists?" I suspect for the most part they will tell me, "you did not miss anything; there are not any female sociologists." I do not even need to ask them though, you see I pride myself on the fact that I never missed one graduate class meeting; I attended every one. In fact, I do not even remember being more than five minutes late for a class - ever. I was there, and I can safely say that I never learned anything about any female sociologists. We did not even talk about women in sociology (well that is not entirely true, we did have that one day of "feminist theory"). Maybe I just did not take the "right" classes? That must be it, I did not take that special "women in sociology" class. And come to think of it, I did miss that reading group. Perhaps my ignorance is my own fault, I guess I should have looked into women sociologists on my own. You know what is ironic? I do not have a bit of trouble recalling male sociologists; that list is so long it would bore you listening to it. And I did not even have to take that special "men of sociology" class to find out about all the male sociologists.

It's no wonder that when in a theory class two years ago, my professor held up a short little biography entitled *Harriet Martineau: The First Woman Sociologist* (Hoecker-Drysdale-1992), I got excited. "There actually is a

woman sociologist," I thought to myself. Although the book was not for class discussion, the professor suggested that it had potential for an interesting paper. And, it was that single action that started my discovery about the only female sociologist that I can readily profess to know anything about. If it was not for that professor holding up that book, I would not be writing this, and I would still believe that the world of sociology (at least until one - maybe two - decades ago) consisted entirely of men.

That action was important for several reasons, two of which I will mention here. First, I read the little biography and it introduced me to the unique world of Harriet Martineau. Second, and perhaps more important for this project, the biography briefly described another book, *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, which Martineau wrote in 1838. Upon hearing that the book was billed as "the first substantive treatise on sociological methodology" (Hill 1990:xi), I knew I had to read it - and I did. What I found in the book amazed even me - a person usually unamazed by matters like this - and that is what this thesis is all about.

If I recall correctly, at that time in my studies, I had read a book about Martineau and a book by Martineau. I had not searched through any secondary sources and I had not consulted with anyone who could have been even remotely considered a "scholar" of Martineau. I must admit that without any outside interference I made the following observation about *How to Observe Morals and Manners*. In my opinion, the amazing thing about the book was that **many of the basic sociological ideas discussed in**

Martineau's *How to Observe Morals and Manners* were also discussed in Emile Durkheim's book, *The Rules of Sociological Method*, published 57 years later.

As I promised in the *Preface*, this thesis will begin with a single observation and build upon it. What follows is an exploration into the notion that Harriet Martineau may have influenced the work of Emile Durkheim - an influence that went unrecognized by him. This thesis rests on the assumption that the men who established the discipline of sociology, knowingly or unknowingly, would not properly recognize the women who contributed scientific knowledge to the discipline. I am suggesting that is possible that Martineau influenced Durkheim and he did not document the influence. In the following document I will discuss many sociological and historical facts that surrounded the lives of Harriet Martineau, Emile Durkheim, the founding fathers of sociology, and in particular, the little known book *How to Observe Morals and Manners*.

Chapter 2: Who Was Harriet Martineau?

Without a doubt, contemporary theorists have failed to recognize the contributions of Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) to sociology (Hill 1989, Hoecker-Drysdale 1992, Spender 1982). Except for her translation of Auguste Comte's, *Cours de Philosophie Positive*, her name is virtually absent from most modern sociological theory texts.¹ Terry (1983) has pleaded for the inclusion of her ideas in survey theory classes. Virtually all authors who write about Martineau suggest that her ideas should be studied, not only for historical reasons, but because they are substantive and provide rare sociological analyses of nineteenth century culture. The importance of Martineau's life and work has been discussed elsewhere (Hoecker-Drysdale 1992, Lipset 1968, Weiner 1983, Riedesel 1981, Pichanick 1980, Yates 1985), and, for those readers who are unfamiliar with her life, I shall give only a brief summary here. My brevity in no way reflects the importance of her work or her life. To the contrary, this thesis contextualizes the importance of Harriet Martineau's work in the history of sociology. Throughout this thesis, I will discuss the life and work of Martineau with respect to her situation as a women in nineteenth century England, the development of her ideas, the development of sociological thought, and to exclusion of her ideas from history.

There are many biographers of Martineau (Miller 1884, Wheatley 1957,

¹A scan of some recent, more popular, theory texts should verify this. For examples of this see Martindale 1981, Ritzer 1988, and so on.

Pichanick 1980, Nevill 1973, Thomas 1985, Webb 1960, Bosanquet 1927, Hoecker-Drysdale 1992, and even Martineau herself 1877), so many that it is surprising that she is virtually unknown to most modern academics and scholars. She was a prolific writer who has been predominantly portrayed as a fiction writer - which indeed she was. Although she was a well-known novelist and story teller, her nonfiction works define her as a social scientist. Always pragmatic, Harriet combined a fictional writing style with nonfictional ideas, and used them to introduce lay England to economics, history, sociology, social psychology, and geography. She specifically wrote about issues of slavery, colonialism, women's rights, education, marriage, religion, industrialization, and capitalism. As a nineteenth century English woman, she did not have the privilege of attending a university and was self-educated after high school. Not only did the patriarchy withhold a university education, it prohibited an academic appointment for a woman who certainly should have held one. This did not stop Harriet from integrating herself into the mainstream intellectuals of the era. References to many major figures of the time fill her autobiography (1877) - which preempted her death by 21 years. It is paradoxical that the name of a woman who was such an influential educator and prolific writer during the nineteenth century has practically vanished only one century later. Spender (1982) points out that the patriarchy excluded Martineau's work, not only from sociology, but from journalism, history, and literature. Hill (1991) is continually taking critics to task concerning their patriarchal critiques of Martineau's work. Perhaps Spender sums up her

plight best when he states,

“This intellectual and creative contribution of Martineau’s deserves careful consideration. Had she been a male and made a contribution of this nature she would probably have been accorded an important place among the founders of social science. Her life and her work would no doubt have been well known and, as a distinguished intellectual, she would have attracted considerable scholarly attention - which in itself helps to perpetuate a reputation - and today there would be debates about her ideas and their contemporary relevance. But, because she was a woman, she has almost disappeared” (Spender 1982:129).

A century after Martineau’s death, Rossi (1973) retrospectively called her the first woman sociologist. At a time when sociology did not exist, it is irrelevant whether Martineau ever considered herself a social scientist. The fact is, she was a social scientist. Besides being the first *woman* sociologist, she is arguably the first sociologist, male or female, to successfully introduce her ideas (and others) to the lay public in a way that they could understand: making her the first truly “applied sociologist.” She recognized the importance of education and felt that educating the public was the first step in initiating social change. Unlike other scientists, she chose rhetoric and a style (fiction) that was familiar to the masses.

Throughout her 74 years, Martineau traveled extensively. Fortunately, she documented most of her excursions. The results of her travels are found in *Society in America*, *Retrospect of Western Travel*, *Eastern Life*, and many other publications. These texts provide unique insights into nineteenth

century culture - insights that are difficult, if not impossible, to get from other sources. The fact that today they are being reissued hundreds of years after they were last printed attests to their value and importance. When historians attempt to interpret these texts, they must understand the methodological framework with which Martineau made them. Undeniably, *How to Observe Morals and Manners* is required reading for those studying her pre-Comtian (1850) sociological texts, such as *Society in America*, *Retrospect of Western Travel*, and *Eastern Life*.

Chapter 3: Did Harriet Martineau Influence the Discipline of Sociology?

In chapter 1, I introduced the notion that Harriet Martineau may have influenced the work of Emile Durkheim, and throughout this thesis that will be my working, or stem, hypothesis. Later in this work other hypotheses will develop from this stem.

In this chapter I would like to generalize my stem hypothesis to include all of sociology. In this chapter I ask the question, "what part did Harriet Martineau play in the development and/or proliferation of sociology as a discipline?" Although it may appear that this issue is a diversion from my stem hypothesis, it is not. If anything, this expansion encompasses the essence of this entire project, which, I believe, is to give Martineau credit for her contributions to the field of sociology - credit that has often been overlooked or methodically excluded by the patriarchy (Hill 1991, Spender 1982). Martineau could have influenced the field in many ways - influencing the work of Emile Durkheim is only one of these. I emphasize it because it has not yet been explored, it is plausible given some basic historical information, and to me it is a captivating notion. But for the purpose of this chapter, I would like to set it aside. Actually, "set it aside" may not be entirely true, because the argument that Martineau influenced other areas of sociology will have significant bearing on the notion that she influenced the work of Durkheim.

As I stated in chapter 2, most of the work of Harriet Martineau has been: forgotten, ignored, unrecognized, uncredited, and simply unexplored. This is a recurrent theme in almost every paper written about Martineau. But the fact that she is forgotten by today's standards does not mean that she did not influence the founding fathers of sociology. Whether techniques of historical reconstruction can exactly identify the sequence of events that happened during the lifetime of Martineau is debatable, but the fact is, history does have a true sequence. With that said, the notion that I can define every influence Martineau made on the then unborn discipline is doubtful. Especially if you consider that Martineau published so many books (most multi-volume) and newspaper articles (over 1500 by Webb's (1959) count) that there is no single complete bibliography of her work, you can imagine what a monumental task it would be. But in this thesis, I am not attempting to address all of the potential influences of Martineau; I have a few specific ones in mind.

Undoubtedly, most scholars would point to Martineau's translation of Auguste Comte's *Positive Philosophy* as evidence that Martineau played a part in the assimilation of sociology into the English speaking, and even the French speaking, world. But even this contribution gets marginalized, ignored, and discounted. Below I will argue that the impact Martineau had on the introduction of the sociological doctrine deserves more than a "footnotes award" in the annals of sociology.

Martineau began translating what she called the "great book" in 1851 (Auto v2:371-2). An old friend persuaded her that she should not only

translate Comte's *Positive Philosophy* from French to English, but she should condense it into one or two manageable volumes. Both agreed that Comte's original, highly repetitive, six volume work was unruly and unlikely to be accepted by readers - in English or French. And since the whole point of the translation was to introduce English readers to Comte's work, anything that facilitated its introduction would be welcomed. A two volume *Positive Philosophy* would surely secure more readers. Martineau comments on this in her preface to the translation.

"M. Comte's work, in its original form, does no justice to its importance, even in France, and much less in England. It is in the form of lectures, the delivery of which was spread over a long course of years; and this extension of time necessitated an amount of recapitulation very injurious to its interest and philosophical aspect. M. Comte's style is singular. It is at the same time rich and diffuse. Every sentence is full fraught with meaning; yet it is overloaded with words . . . My strongest inducement to this enterprise was my deep conviction of our need of this book in my own country in a *form which renders it accessible to the largest number of intelligent readers*" (italics mine, Martineau, in Comte 1853:v1:vi-vii).

Clearly, Martineau's motive for translating the work was the same as her motive for just about every other work she produced: to diffuse scientific knowledge to the working class. A working class whom she believed, correctly or incorrectly, was experiencing a "growth of scientific taste" that was a "most striking signs of the times" (Martineau, in Comte 1853:v1:vii).

So if we are to determine if Martineau influenced sociology by condensing and translating the *Positive Philosophy*, what evidence is there that this attempt was successful? That question depends on how we measure

success.

If we measure success by the number of people who purchased the book (assuming that those people read the book), then Miller's statement suggests that the book was a success. She states, "there was a considerable demand for the work on its first appearance; and up to this present date a fair number of copies is annually disposed of" (1884:164). I should stress that "up to this date" was 31 years after its introduction. Any scientific work that is still selling 31 years after its introduction must be "successful." Unfortunately, it is unlikely that we will ever know how many translations were published, because the printing industry, which consisted of tiny artisan like printing shops, did not keep printing records that are readily available today. But although we cannot verify the number of circulating copies, thanks to Rivlin's (1946) meticulous cataloging of Martineau's books in the New York Public Library System, we still can get an *indirect* indication of how successful the book was.

The translation was printed in its first edition in London and New York in 1853, in New York in 1855 (which Rivlin suggests might be the second edition), the third edition was printed in New York in 1856, 1858, and 1868. Rivlin reports a second edition was printed in London in 1875 and again in 1890, a third edition in 1893 and 1896, and in various places in 1903, 1913, and 1915. And Rivlin's list consists only of books found in the New York public library system. Since only a few of the European printings would make it to the New York Public Library System, where Rivlin could catalog them, I

decided to check with the computerized *Online Computer Library Center, Inc.* (OCLC). The OCLC revealed even more printings: an edition in New York in 1854, a third edition in 1890 and again in 1893 in London, a 1900 printing in New York, and even a 1971 and 1981 printing. And due to the limitations of the OCLC system, there could be even more printings of the translation. If a book is printed on 20 separate occasions, in three editions, in at least two countries, over a period of almost 130 years, somebody is reading it, and books that are read are successful. But to determine if Martineau's translation of Comte's *Positive Philosophy* really effected the discipline of sociology, is widespread reading, multiple printings, and longevity an adequate indicator? I think it is. And I think that knowing the demand for the book was coming from intellectuals, educated laypersons, and clergy (for support see Hawkins 1938 which I will discuss shortly), lends credence to my claim of its importance.

There is stronger evidence that Martineau's translation had a direct impact on sociology, and that evidence comes from Comte himself. Comte praised Martineau in three letters that he wrote to her regarding the translation. Of it and her he says:

"I feel sure that your name will be linked with mine, for you have executed the only one of those works that will survive amongst all those which my fundamental treatise has called forth"

Perhaps the ultimate compliment paid to Martineau, was not in Comte's words, but in his actions. He ratified his praise by replacing his six-volume

French work with her two-volume *English* version for use in his *French* speaking university course on positivism (Miller 1884:163). He must have thought highly of the work to juxtapose a linguistically non-native text for his own native French version. Obviously, the intellectual content of Martineau's translation far outweighed the difference in language.

Some critics have concentrated more on the validity of Martineau's translation than on its impact, preferring to denigrate her interpretation rather than herald her accomplishment (see Bridges 1915, Hoecker-Drysdale 1992). Others have pointed out that Comte was a better scientist than a prophet - concluding that Martineau's work had no impact on the discipline of sociology - simply because 140 years later we do not equate Martineau with Comte. And they are in a sense correct - Martineau is not Comte, nor did she ever pretend to be. If we measure success by asking who's left after a century of patriarchal science, Martineau, who exists as a Comtean footnote today, is not very successful. But, if we forego the notion that we can measure Martineau's achievements using today's standards, i.e., longevity in written history books, and ask what impact Martineau had on positivism at the time, we see that she heavily influenced the discipline of sociology.

Both supporters and critics of Martineau offer little empirical evidence to either support or refute the notion that Martineau was an important influence on the discipline of sociology. By intuition and a few passages in historical biographies, supporters claim that her accomplishment was an important one, but have trouble assigning a magnitude to this importance. For example,

Riedesel (who I think for the most part wants to be a Martineau supporter) says, "Martineau's impact on the discipline of sociology was small and indirect" (1981:77) and simultaneously claims that she "played a major catalytic role in establishing the discipline of sociology" and she "made a unique contribution to the discipline of sociology" (1980:61-62). As Hill (1991) reminds us, ambiguous interpretations of Martineau's work along with discounted importance by historians at best "exemplifies the patriarchal bias" and "damns with faint praise." Critics that choose to characterize Martineau's accomplishment by emphasizing improper or inconsistent translation have sold out history to metaphysics.

Past attempts to establish the importance of the translation on the formation of sociology, which are based on intuition and a few historical passages, are weak at best. Differential interpretation confounds conclusions drawn in this way. To determine how important Martineau was in the formation of the discipline, we need some empirical observations. I have already presented some evidence as to the translation's impact. If widespread publishing in 20 printings, three editions, over a period of 100 years, and public accolades by one of the most powerful sociologists of the time, still does not convince you that Martineau influenced the development of sociology, perhaps Hawkins' (1938) review entitled, *Positivism in the United States*, will.

Although Hawkins' intent is not to assess the impact of Martineau on sociology, his work is unique in that it is one of the few texts that I have read that refers to the sociological importance of Martineau's translation directly

and repetitively, by name and in action, throughout the work (and does not relegate it to a footnote or brief introduction). The importance of Hawkins' work is that it shows laypersons, intellectuals, and theologians in the United States reading, using, learning, and arguing about positivism because of Martineau's translation. It also demonstrates that she was at the center of intellectual discourse in America. They were quite familiar with her work. One can hardly read Hawkins' historical account of the reception of positivism in the United States without wondering, what would have happened to sociology and other positivistic sciences, if there were no translation?

I suppose the purist could claim that, although Martineau was responsible for the proliferation of positivist thinking, being the translator, her importance took a back seat to Comte's. And yes, if we are arguing about intellectual ownership of ideas, wisdom, and novel thinking, *in this instance* Martineau takes a back seat to Comte.² But the fact that most historians adopt a purist position with respect to Martineau's translation and its impact on the discipline of sociology, shows that these historians recognize the importance of the translation at some superficial level, but refuse to acknowledge that it and Martineau had a significant impact on the development of the discipline of sociology. This is tantamount to doing history solely with metaphysics. It seems that some historical sociologists do not want to accept the fact that a

²In fact she clearly says that she would not critique or correct Comte's original ideas in the preface to her translation, so expecting her to expand Comte's ideas into her own positivistic system (in the translation) was unrealistic.

woman played an important sociological role in establishing the discipline of sociology. I can only wonder where the historians who discount Martineau's contribution to sociology, got the idea that there is not a sociology of sociology. Likewise, those that view Martineau's accomplishment as merely a translation, which is just about everyone, apparently do not consider the enormous amount of interpretation that went into translating a six volume tome. And as Kathleen de Beaumont-Klein, translator of Levy-Bruhl, reminds us, although the original ideas of the *Positive Philosophy* were Comte's, "in Harriet Martineau's case, both the substance of the book and the English form in which it was offered to the public were her work" (Levy-Bruhl 1903, xiii).

So I believe the only correct answer to the question posed at the beginning of this chapter is, yes, Harriet Martineau did influence the discipline of sociology, and that influence was much more than simply translating an important book.

Chapter 4: Introduction to Martineau's American Trilogy

In the last chapter, I provided evidence that Harriet Martineau had a significant impact on the formation of sociology as a discipline - an impact far more than that in which she is usually credited. By the time of her death in 1876, she had worked her way into the discourse of intellectuals and the talk of laypersons in London, the United States, and France. Although I primarily addressed the proliferation of her translation in the last chapter, by the time of her death she had published over 1500 newspaper articles and numerous books. She was a regular contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, *Westminster Review*, *Daily News*, and *Monthly Repository*. Knowing that she outsold most of the major literary figures of the time indicates the success of her work and the familiarity of her name.³ It is hard to imagine that there existed an intellectual person in England who was not familiar with her work.

Martineau influenced the world of sociology in other ways. Ways that are not as easily clouded by historians stuck on metaphysics. These influences were direct and measurable, even if some historians choose to ignore them.

In 1834 Martineau decided to visit the burgeoning United States for the purposes of obtaining some "rest and recreation" (auto v2:2). Before leaving for America she explained to J.S. Mill that, although several publishers were

³This will be discussed later in this work.

attempting to solidify a book deal out of her travels, she would not be bound by any financial contracts - even though she knew she would probably write a travel upon her return. In typical Martineau fashion she completely financed the trip herself, not wanting to be financially strapped to anyone - especially a bookseller. Her trip lasted two years, during which time she intentionally wrote little if anything. That is, except one short chapter during her 42-day sailing ship voyage to America.

Martineau recalls,

“A friend, whom indeed I was bound to oblige, requested me to write for him a long chapter for a book he contemplated, to be called ‘*How to Observe.*’ The subject he gave me was *Morals and Manners*. Before my return, his proposed volume was given up; and Mr. Knight was arranging about a series of volumes, under that title. The Chapter I wrote on board ship served as the basis of my own volume for that series” (auto v2:6).

Hill (1989) speculates that the friend Martineau was speaking of was the English legal reformer, Charles Henry Bellenden Ker (1785-1871). Ker’s initials are found in the preface of *How to Observe Geology* written by Henry Thomas del la Beche and published by Charles Knight in 1835 (Knight, 1864 v2:121). All four persons, Knight, Ker, del la Beche, and Martineau were active participants in the *Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*. Thanks to the foresight of Hill, who reproduced the introduction of *How to Observe Geology* at the end of his sesquicentennial edition of *How to Observe Morals and Manners* (1989) we gain insight into the goals of the *How to*

Observe Series. In it H.B.K. (Ker) states that the intention of the *How to Observe Series* is to,

“afford assistance to the scientific traveler and student, it will also be the means of inducing others to collect information on all or some of the heads noticed. Thus the listless idler may be changed into an inquiring and useful observer . . .” (Hill 1989:250).

H.B.K. also quotes from Sir John Herschel’s work, the *Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy*,

“to make a perfect observer in any science, an extensive acquaintance is requisite not only with the particular science to which the observation relate, but also with every branch of knowledge which may enable him to appreciate the effects of extraneous and disturbing causes. Yet,” he continues, *“there is scarcely any well-informed person who, if he has but the will, has not also the power to add something essential to the general stock of knowledge, if he will only observe regularly and methodically some particular class of facts”* (italics mine, Hill 1989:248).

The above passages show that Herschel’s suggestion that the world needed more trained and educated “scientists” heavily influenced the goals of H.B.K.’s books on *How to Observe*. Although *How to Observe Morals and Manners* was the terminal volume in a retrospectively optimistic series, H.B.K. had intended on publishing other volumes on: natural history, agriculture, fine arts, and general statistics. As we will see in the next chapter, Martineau clearly restated this purpose in her volume, a purpose that continued throughout her work.

After spending two years in the United States, Martineau returned to England and to the same barrage of publishers that hounded her before she

left. Her autobiography reveals a comical, but poignant look at the male publishers who courted her still unwritten book (auto v2:93-102). Eventually, she settled on Saunders and Otley publishing house and *Society in America* was published in 1837.

Martineau wanted her first America book to be called *Theory and Practice of Society in America* (auto v2:102) - revealing that she identified her work as that of an empirical scientist and sociologist, even if she would have not used those terms. But, the publishers, who were presumably searching for a larger audience, truncated the title to the less scientific sounding title, *Society in America*. Methodologically, Martineau approached the book with the notion that "it was most fair to take my stand on the American point of view, - judging American society, in its spirit and methods, by the American tests" stating that "It had become a practice so completely established to treat Americans in a mode of comparison with Europe" (auto v2:1-3). It was this untraditional method, an alternative to the endomethodology of past observers, which she predicted would be the downfall of her name and the book. With pessimistic candor she told Saunders, the would be publisher,

"I told him that I believed it would ruin me, because it would be the principle of the book to regard every thing American from the American point of view: and this method, though the only fair one, was so unlike the usual practice, and must lead to a judgment so unlike what English people were prepared for, that I should not be surprised by a total condemnation of my book and myself" (auto v2:97).

Always the impeccable scientist, she was not going to allow any

compromises to her work, maintaining complete intellectual freedom over it.

She continues the above thought,

“I told him that after this warning, he could retreat or negotiate, as he pleased: but that, being thus warned, he and not I must propose terms: and moreover, *it must be understood that, our negotiations once concluded, I could listen to no remonstrance or objection, in regard to the contents of my book*” (italics mine, auto v2:97).

Although she vehemently defended her observations and conclusion in *Society in America* (v2 :103-5), Martineau was dissatisfied with the theoretical feel of the book (after all she originally wanted the book to be called *The Theory and Practice of Society in America*),

The fundamental fault of the book did not become apparent to me for some time after; -its metaphysical framework, and the abstract treatment of what must necessarily be a concrete subject” (auto v2:103).

So to satisfy her own self-criticisms and that of others, she issued another book on America called *Retrospect of Western Travel*, where she corrected the metaphysical feel of her first attempt. Although in her mind the latter book superseded the former, it never secured the fame, notoriety, and readership of the first.

After completion of the two books on America, Martineau turned her attention to finishing the chapter on *How to Observe* that she penned on the voyage to America. Seymour Martin Lipset called *How to Observe* the “first book on the methodology of social research in the then still unborn disciplines of sociology and anthropology” (1968:6). Personally, Martineau felt that it was

a “piece of tough work, which required a good deal of reading and thinking” (auto v2:118). The only correct way to view the work is as a triad with *Society* and *Retrospect*. Hill (1989) points out that the original chapter Martineau wrote while on her way to America was the functional equivalent of a research proposal. It outlined the methodology that Martineau would use in her two-year study of the country. It was tried, tested, and refined on the American people. And for the most part, it was successful as the basis for two sociological assessments of America. Eventually, Martineau’s methods were published as a *methodological system* for observing societies. There is no question that, although there was no discipline of sociology at this time, Martineau’s accomplishments were that of a seasoned sociologist. As if the fact that she was doing sociology before there was a discipline of sociology is not enough to convince you of her accomplishment, remember that she was entirely responsible for her development as a sociologist - she had no formal training.

Because of the sequence in which Martineau wrote her trilogy (see Appendix A), the only proper way to view the three books is as a trilogy. The methodological observations detailed in *How to Observe*, although not directly dictated, are present in the execution of each book on America, as are the critical ideas on observing societies that defined Martineau’s methods. In latter portions of this work I will argue that the trilogy was available for Durkheim to read. Durkheim could get a decent idea of Martineau’s methodology from *Society*, but he would get a comprehensive and dictated

account of what is undeniably a sociological methodology from reading *How to Observe*.⁴

I would like to finish this chapter much as I did the previous one: by putting Martineau's accomplishments into context using empirical evidence rather than assessing her accomplishments within a patriarchal framework.

Clearly Martineau's *Society in America* was successful, but how successful was it? Again, we can use written accounts of the reception of the book to define success, but I believe there better are indicators as to the success and impact of the book. Publishing history, with its previously described drawbacks, is still probably the best way to determine the impact of Martineau's sociological work. Again we are indebted to Rivlin for his extensive characterization of Martineau's works in the New York Public Library.

Society in America was first published in 1837 in London. The book, obviously in demand, was published a second, third, and fourth time later that year in London. It was also published that same year in New York in four

⁴ From an entry in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* we know that *How to Observe* was in the French library system, and therefore would show up in a search. The only problem is that the *Bibliothèque National* catalog available to me (and by most accounts the only one available) was published after the writing of *Rules*. Therefore, we cannot say, definitively, that if someone such as Durkheim were looking for books by a certain author, such as Martineau, that a catalog search would reveal the book *How to Observe Morals and Manners*. It is likely though, that because most of Martineau's books were freely exchanged between England and France almost immediately after they were published, that *How to Observe* was in probably in France, and probably in the French cataloging system, a long time before Durkheim wrote the *Rules*. And although the book was not in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* compilation until the 1931 edition (that one that I had access to), it most likely would have been in the French equivalent of our old "card-catalog" system or some other dynamic retrieval system.

editions. Another second edition was published in London in 1839.

Martineau must have caught on in France, because an English edition was published in Paris in 1837 and again in 1842, with the inscription that the book was being sold at six of the major booksellers in France (which are identified directly), and "by all the principal booksellers on the continent" (Rivlin 1946:36-37). And if that is not enough to convince you that the Martineau's book was being widely read in France, perhaps knowing that *Society in America* was translated into French by M. Benjamin Laroche in 1838-9 will attest to the popularity and influence of the work. Undeniably, there was significant exchange of sociological ideas between England and France, or at least Martineau and France, fifty years before the *Rules. Retrospect*, which was not as successful as *Society*, was published on five separate occasions on two separate continents.

So by the time Emile Durkheim was born in 1858, Martineau was about as "household" of a name as most authors ever get. Her work was widely available on both sides of the Atlantic and in France.

Chapter 5: Postulating that Durkheim knew of Martineau

By the time Emile Durkheim was born in 1858, we see that Harriet Martineau was a major literary figure and practicing sociologist. I have shown that her work was known in England, the United States, and France. She was the subject of discourse in the press, in intellectual circles, and among laypersons. Her multi-volume sociological works, *The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte*, *Society in America*, and *Retrospect of Western Travel*, had been printed multiple times on both sides of the Atlantic. Her name was crystallized in sociological history with Auguste Comte's. Students in Comte's classes were reading Martineau's translation and Americans were learning the *Positive Philosophy* via Martineau (Hawkins 1938:21). *Society in America*, which was highly successful in its English version, had been translated into French along with at least seven other Martineau works.⁵ By the time Durkheim read Comte (1880 - 1881; dated from Lukes 1985:66:n2), Martineau's English translation of the *Positive Philosophy* had become even more accessible to the French people when it was translated into French (C. Avezac-Lavigne 1871-72). Not only was the French book influencing the

⁵ For evidence of this see the Bibliotheque Nationale, the eight books it listed are 1) Le Fjord, scenes de la vie norwegienne (1856), 2) Le Foi de l'Eglise universelle d'apres les Saintes Ecritures (1834), 3) Contes de miss Harriet Martineau sur l'economie politique (1833-39), 4) Contes choisis sur l'economie politique, avec une biographie de l'auteur (1881), 5) Les Lutins norwegiens (1876), 6) La Philosophie positif d'Auguste Comte, condensee par miss Harriet Martineau (1871-72), 7) De la Societe americaine (1838), 8) Traditions de Palestine, par Miss Harriet Martineau. Traduction de M'Amble Tastu (no date listed).

people of France, it was exported to Brazil. The French translation of Martineau's translation was printed at least twice (1871-72 and 1894) on each continent. The three letters that Comte had written to Martineau were reproduced in the front of the French translation. Later in their relationship Martineau and Comte publicly criticized each other (Yates 1985, Hoecker-drysdale 1992). With all this activity surrounding Martineau, and knowing that Durkheim was a Comtean scholar, it is hard to imagine that Durkheim did not know of Martineau.

Furthermore, some *Illustrations of Political Economy*, perhaps Martineau's most successful series of writings,⁶ were translated into French between 1833-39 (for a total of eight volumes), and contained a French biography of Martineau in them. The eight-volume work was reprinted in 1859 and then several selections of the French *Illustrations* were condensed and printed in two volumes in 1881 - again with a French biography of Martineau. Apparently Martineau's ideas were still important and still present in France 42 years after they were originally penned and five years after she had died. Based on the contents and the influences of the *Illustrations of Political*

⁶ The *Illustrations of Political Economy* were economic principles set in fiction and based on the principles of James Mill, Smith, Malthus, Steward, Ricardo, (Hoecker-Drysdale 1992) and - Spender poignantly argues - Martineau herself. The distribution and impact of the series is best shown by a quotation from Pichanick (1980:50), "by 1834 it was selling ten thousand monthly copies while by contrast John Stuart Mill's *Principles of Political Economy* (1848) sold a mere three thousand copies in four years," and Hoecker-Drysdale's (1992:34) who said that "Dickens' novels, which had been serialized first, had a sale of 2,000 or 3,000 and were considered very successful." Martineau had a direct impact on the political thought of England (Spender 1982, and just about every other scholar of Martineau). The economic knowledge of Martineau is validated knowing that she was twice asked to edit new economics journals.

Economy it is hard to believe that Durkheim did not know about them. And if he had access to the French version of them, he had access to a biography of Martineau.⁷

Knowing of Martineau does not prove that Durkheim read her or that she influenced him, and an argument from personal incredulity certainly does not prove anything. But what the above does show is that, it is highly unlikely that Durkheim did not know about Martineau. It suggests that there is a distinct possibility that he read some of Martineau's work, and if nothing else, the above suggests Martineau was available to him to read or not to read. Without further evidence, it does not prove that Martineau influenced Emile Durkheim and the discipline of sociology, and I do not offer it as such. It is solely a historical plausibility; its rigor only strengthens that plausibility.

With it in mind, it should not seem quite so preposterous that I would propose that Martineau influenced the work of Durkheim, and it should validate what I am about to do. And to do that, we need to go back to my stem hypothesis.

If you remember, in Chapter 1 I introduced the observation I had made about *How to Observe* and *Rules*.⁸ Without reading or consulting any other

⁷I was unable to get a copy of these books, and therefore I was unable to check the contents of this French biography of Martineau. The important thing for this argument is that the biography existed and that it was readily available to Durkheim.

⁸To improve readability of this manuscript, I will from here on use the abbreviations *How to Observe* or *HTO* for *How to Observe Morals and Manners*, *Rules* for *The Rules of Sociological Method*, *Society* for *Society in America*, *Retrospect* for *Retrospect of Western Travel* -unless otherwise stated.

work I concluded that many of the sociological ideas expressed in *How to Observe* were also detailed in *Rules* that was published 57 years later. Curiously, I found no Martineau references in Durkheim's text. Not finding any references in a particular text at this time in history is not too surprising; science at this time was not as reference conscious as we are today. Still, the similarities in the two texts struck me oddly, and the fact that Martineau was a woman made me wonder if, *in some way*, the sociology of Harriet Martineau had influenced Emile Durkheim and for some reason he did not recognize the influence.⁹ I thought *How to Observe* (or some part of the trilogy) would be a likely candidate as to the way.

If I assessed myself, I would probably conclude that I am generally not a conspiracy theorist. For the most part, in the past I have usually come down on the doubter's side of most conspiracy fences. And to be honest, for me to be proposing an idea like this made me uncomfortable. Being a unique experience, I sought some validation. Certainly, I thought, someone else must have already posed this notion. To my dismay (that there was so much Martineau, but so little about Martineau), surprise (that I had stumbled into something potentially fruitful), and concern (that I would be challenging the integrity of a founding father), no one had. To be honest, with the exception of

⁹I will elaborate on this later. There are several reasons why Durkheim would potentially not recognize the work of Martineau - if influence occurred. Obviously her gender is the cornerstone of this speculation. The primary question is, if she influenced him, why did he not reference the influence? Did he not feel that a woman was worthy of credit, that her work was not worthy of credit, that he had any duty to credit her (since she was a woman), or that it would have been unacceptable to his male colleagues to credit her?

Hill's introduction to *How to Observe* and a short blurb about it in Lipset's introduction to *Society in America*, there was nothing of substance in the literature about *How to Observe*, which made my search for validation even more difficult.

Although, I never found any secondary sources that mentioned my stem hypothesis, a few other researchers had made observations about Martineau's and Durkheim's work that were similar to mine.

Hoecker-Drysdale observed,

"In fact she had developed a topology of suicides in her treatise of 1838 on *How to Observe Manners and Morals* {sic} which anticipates the very categories of Durkheim's analysis: suicides based upon shame ("fatalism"), complete devotion to others ("altruism"), honor ("egoism"), and withdrawal from duty and expectations of others ("anomie)" (Hoecker-Drysdale 1992:125:n11).

Also, just before I began writing this thesis I found a statement by Shulamit Reinharz that Martineau's book "predates his {Durkheim's} by sixty years and is nearly analogous" (1989:92). Hill (1989) and Lipset (1968) imply, what I believe to be, a somewhat similar conclusion.¹⁰ But to my knowledge,

¹⁰Lipset (1968) characterized *How to Observe* as the first sociological methodology based on a contingent set of both philosophical and mechanical ideas that stemmed partially from the defining set of sociological doctrines of the time, i.e., Lipset based his characterization on standards set by the founding fathers of sociology, which includes Durkheim - who had traditionally been credited with writing the first sociological methodology text. Similarly, Hill, in his mini-biography on Martineau (1989) reaffirmed Martineau's accomplishments by using nineteenth century patriarchal terms; terms that are often employed in analyzing the works of other sociological texts of the time, e.g., reason, positivism, empiricism, intellectualism, etc. Whether clearly stated or implied, there are some researchers that have suggested that there are important similarities between the methods of Durkheim and Martineau.

none of these authors took these observations to their logical historical conclusions - at least not in print.

So I did have some support that my initial readings of the texts were in line with those of other Martineau researchers (and I did have the validation of my committee). Proposing the idea that Martineau influenced Durkheim's *Rules* raised several questions though.

"Would it be likely that, if Durkheim read Martineau, he would cite her work - whether it was *Society in America*, the translation, *How to Observe*, or *Retrospect of Western Travel*?" Although I can provide no evidence (other than I have never seen a woman's reference in any of Durkheim's work, which actually is no evidence at all - it's just an observation), my gut feeling tells me that he probably would not acknowledge that she influenced him. It would be so antithetical to the status quo regarding women of the times. Could you imagine, Durkheim, who was trying to establish the discipline of sociology and himself as an important sociologist within the discipline, admitting (or knowing) that Martineau, a high school educated Victorian woman living inside the English patriarchy that wrote everything from fiction to travels with no academic appointment and no scientific support, had influenced his "sociology?"

We could also ask, "if conditions were what we think they were in nineteenth century Europe, would Durkheim have read Martineau in the first place?" Again, I cannot answer this question; I simply do not have the historical resources available to me to make that argument. But I think I have

successfully shown that Durkheim must have known about Martineau's work - he would have had to crawl out from under a rock not to know about it. I can only speculate what would motivate Durkheim to read Martineau's work - interest in America, comparison to the observations of Alex de Tocqueville, study of the *Positive Philosophy*, scholar of Comte, reader of English history, comparison to the work of other British economists, interest in fiction - I just do not know. Most definitely though, if Durkheim ever wanted to read Martineau, historically her work was there for the reading.

This line of thought seems to beg the reflexive question, "if Martineau was a man, would I still be proposing a connection between Martineau and Durkheim?" I think that the answer is a definitive yes. The fact that I, and others, have noticed that there was a "resemblance" between the sociological methodology outlined in both authors books, demands further investigation. Why is there this similarity? What does the similarity mean? Did Durkheim read Martineau and just conclude that her work just was not that important, or was there so much other work that he drew upon that superseded hers? Is the similarity a strong one? Is there a similarity at all? What are the differences?

Irrespective of Martineau's gender, exploring the fact that Martineau's sociological methods were similar to Durkheim's methods and preceded his by 57 years is interesting in and of itself. Determining if a nineteenth century case of scientific misconduct occurred is not, and should not be, the make or break conclusion of this work. Exploring the anomaly is the important part, and it is the part that is sure to generate important information concerning a

virtually unknown social scientist, Harriet Martineau, and an even lesser known sociological methodology book, *How to Observe Morals and Manners*.

Chapter 6: Methodology

There are many ways in which Martineau could have potentially influenced the intellectual development of Durkheim. Influencing him via the translation, and other less direct means, could be one of them. And although they are important, for the time being they are not my primary interest. I have already argued as to the importance of the translation, and if Durkheim did read Martineau's rendition of Comte, it would tell us several important historical things: 1) that Durkheim and Martineau made a temporal "connection," 2) that Durkheim knew about Martineau's work, and 3) that she may have influenced his intellectual development. Despite this, it would not tell us anything about the influence that I am really looking for. What I am primarily interested in is the influence of Martineau on Durkheim's methods. This chapter begins my exploration into my stem hypothesis - that Martineau's *How to Observe* directly influenced Durkheim's *Rules*.

Influence can be positive or negative. Assuming for the moment that Martineau influenced Durkheim, this influence could have been an example of a good (sound and useful) sociological methodology or a bad (unsound and useless) sociological methodology. Because Durkheim left no references to Martineau in *Rules*, I could prove ¹¹ the latter if I could first show that the ideas

¹¹ I use the term "prove" only in the sense that we first must show the assumptions of our argument - that there are similarities or differences in the texts - are valid, if we are to be able to make the argument at all. I am not suggesting that this would prove that she influenced Durkheim in a good or bad way - or any way at all.

expressed in *Rules* completely excluded any of the ideas expressed in *How to Observe*, or that the rhetoric in *Rules* criticized ideas expressed in *How to Observe*. I could prove the former if I could first show that there are ideas expressed in *How to Observe* that are also expressed in *Rules* (and to further complicate matters, there is the possibility that influence could consist of positive and negative influences). Regardless, if I am to say anything about influence - positive or negative, good or bad, direct or indirect - *without having any references*, I must first show that there are at least some similarities between the texts.

I could presuppose similarities in the two texts and continue building my case for a historical connection between the two authors, but my case would already be much weaker. Critics could claim that I have not even shown that the two works are similar. Reinharz (1989) calls the texts "nearly analogous" but does not state what is nearly analogous in them. Hill (1991) points out that Martineau's *How to Observe* was a "precedent-setting work of theory . . . decades before Emile Durkheim." To his credit he quotes many passages in *How to Observe* that critically define Martineau as perhaps the first sociologist, but he does not compare and contrast these passages with Durkheim's, instead opting to have the reader take it for granted that the ideas are the same (and to be fair about the matter, Hill never directly said that he thought the two books were similar, he just implied it). In this work, to simply presuppose away the notion that the two books are highly similar would be illogical. It would be unfair, not only to Martineau and Durkheim, but to my

entire argument. And besides, as suggested by the lack of a comparison in the literature, it is time for someone to finally make one.

For reasons that I will outline later, it is highly unlikely (and unquestionably incorrect) that someone would read *How to Observe and Rules*, and conclude that Durkheim *plagiarized* Martineau's work. There is nothing in sentence structure or content that would even remotely suggest plagiarism, and I must stress that I am not stating, implying, or indicating otherwise. Main ideas and themes are what are similar in the texts. Therefore, qualitative analytical methods, such as those outlined in Denzin and Lincoln (1994), and quantitative methods, such as content analysis (Weber 1985), both which are heavily dependent on similar words and passages, simply will not work. This entire project is an exercise in historical reconstruction, but the methods used by most historical reconstructionists - biologists, historians, cladists, stemmaticists, linguistics, and geologists (see Hoeningwald and Weiner 1987)- simply do not apply here either. Most of them require more than two pieces of evidence in which to "reconstruct" with any accuracy. Simply stated, the development of intellectual thought does not lend itself well to being examined with our present techniques - at least not at this level and with this type of data. Essentially, I want to answer the question "can I identify *ideas* in Martineau's work that are also present in Durkheim's work." If Durkheim plagiarized Martineau's work this would be a rather easy task, but remember I am not looking for plagiarism, I am looking for *influence*. And the only methodology that has any promise in regards to inferring influence is

perhaps the most simple method of doing qualitative analysis - reading, making inferences, and comparing and contrasting those inferences.

This is not to say that there are not important issues raised in the techniques described above. For example, how do we differentiate important ideas from less important ones? Although word counting would not prove fruitful here, idea counting could tell us an enormous amount about what each author thought was important. In my analysis, however, I will neither count words nor count ideas, but I will note recurrent themes. Why? If an idea appears repeatedly in Martineau's text, we know it was important to her. Similarly if an idea appears repeatedly in Durkheim's text, we know it was important to him. Knowing that an idea was present five times in her work and six times in his will tell us little about the importance above what we could derive by noting that there is a recurrent theme present in each author's work. When analyzing the texts, I will provide passages that I believe show similar sociological concepts and ideas. I will compare and contrast the inferences I make from reading the texts. I will take every opportunity to build a stronger case by providing several passages in support of my inference that a recurring theme is present. To prevent monotony, I expect that the reader will give me the benefit of the doubt, if after I have presented an argument that a recurring theme exists, I simply say that "the idea is expressed throughout the text." There is another reason I doubt that quantifying ideas in the texts would be a worthwhile exercise. I am attempting to demonstrate the possibility that Martineau influenced Durkheim's work. It is possible that a single idea

expressed in Martineau's text influenced him. Quantification would discount this type of influence.

Content analysis offers other insight into important issues that surround my analysis, issues which further reinforce that counting words and sentences is inapplicable. I am searching for ideas, which means that I must have some way of drawing inferences from text. The words, their sequence, and their quantity, are not unimportant, but they are much less important than the context in which they are written. It would be an interesting project in the development of positivist thinking in sociology to quantify the number of "positivistic" words used in texts at certain periods in time (I would argue that *How to Observe* and *Rules* would suffice as two solid data sources), and in this instance quantifying words would be important. However, I am trying to show *influence* through *ideas*. The only way to do this is to consider the context in which Martineau and Durkheim wrote their words.

Determining the context in which the text was written - i.e. making inferences - places a heavy burden on myself as an author and an equally heavy burden on you as a reader. I must demonstrate to you that I have offered an interpretation that was as close to the original intention of the passage as possible. Quoting multiple passages should hedge against an interpretative error on my part and offer the reader more security knowing that I have correctly contextualized the authors' words. Undeniably, this process has a reflexive component. I, being the interpreter, have to consider that I have my own biases to account for. That aside, I should point out that the

success of this project does not depend on me “proving” that Durkheim read *How to Observe* (or the trilogy), so my biases may not be of the magnitude that some readers might speculate. Still, no matter how much I attempt to eliminate my biases, critics will justly claim that my interpretation has its own “slant.”

Things that are important in my mind may not be important in your mind, or may occupy less importance in your mind. In the following analysis I have provided what I believe to be a correct and thorough interpretation of each authors original thoughts when they penned their texts. There are many ways in which your interpretation could differ from mine, and although I believe my analysis is complete, in the end you might claim that I missed, over-stressed, or dismissed something. If it is any consolation, the fact that I will be providing quotes directly followed by my interpretations of them, provides you with a set of falsifiable conclusions to examine. If you cannot accept that my comparisons of the texts are valid (whereby you will have to show why they are not), surely you will have to at least admit that it is better than presupposing *How to Observe* and *Rules* are “nearly analogous” and continuing to work as if this assumption were true.

At this point it would be difficult for me to outline what I consider proper and improper interpretation of text without giving examples from each text (which is what I will be doing in the following analysis). There are correct and incorrect interpretations of both authors' works. Obviously, (I believe) my analysis illustrates, methodologically, a correct interpretation of the works.

Outlining all of the potential incorrect interpretations throughout the work would be futile; there are an infinite number of ways to incorrectly draw inferences from written text. Instead, several times throughout the analysis, I will point out where an unwary interpreter might go astray or be too “liberal” with his/her analysis.

Before continuing I would like to make another comment on the nature of our synthesis. At the end of this work, some readers may hope that I can say how “alike” the two books are - after all “nearly analogous” (as Reinhartz 1989 suggests) implies “mostly similar”, if not downright “identical”. I will give my opinion on this issue, but with some reservations. Drawing this type of conclusion would mean that I think there are more similarities than differences in the two texts, which may or may not be true. As I have stated, it is not my purpose to quantify the content of each text. In synthesizing grand conclusions it would be easy to assume that because there are some similarities in the texts, these similarities must be important (therefore more important than the differences). Yet, making value judgments such as this would demand that I assume a preferred position with respect to the data and conclusions. The difference between the person who adopts the stance that the books are concordant and those who adopt the stance that they are discordant may come down to splitting hairs. Rather than arguing about split hairs we should note that how we synthesize our grand conclusions regarding the two texts is dependent upon what we want to say about the two texts. To satisfy my stem hypothesis, I must first show that there are some similar ideas

in Durkheim's and Martineau's texts.

Chapter 7: The Analysis - Comparing *How to Observe* and *Rules*

In the last chapter I noted that reflexivity issues might influence this work. With that in mind I will begin this analysis with a quotation from Martineau on observation, sample bias, and reflexivity,

“If such judgments {about people} were attempted, would they not be as various as those who make them? And would they not, after all, if closely looked into, reveal more of the mind of the observer than of the observed?” (HTO 16).

Later in the work, Martineau returns to issues of reflexivity. She tells us that we should record our personal thoughts in a journal so that we can document our own reflexivity,

“Some travelers unite in one {of} the functions of the query list and the journal: having the diary headed and arranged for the reception of classified information. But this seems to be debasing the function of a journal, whose object ought to be *to reflect the mind of a traveler, and give back to him hereafter the image of what he thought and felt day by day*. This is its primary function...” (italics mine, HTO 234).

Most readers would admit that one of the most important reflexivity issues is that of prejudicial observations and interpretations. Both Martineau and Durkheim believe that alleviating prejudice is perhaps the most critical methodological step in producing the best interpretations of sociological phenomenon. This is a recurrent theme throughout both texts. Throughout this work I will be quoting passages that support the idea that prejudice must be removed from the mind of the observer. And to both authors' credit, they

realize the ideological and sociological ramifications of not removing prejudices from observations. Ideologically Martineau believes her "science of morals" (*HTO* 15), an idea that I will return to later, should adopt a stance that contradicts the typical methods of past travelers. She warns of the impact that certain observations may have on the scientist and suggests that there are ideological reasons for not propagating these prejudices, concluding,

"Here then is the wise travelers aim, - to be kept in view to that exclusion of prejudice, both philosophical and national. He must not allow himself to be perplexed or disgusted by seeing the great ends of human association pursued by means which he could never have devised, and to the practice of which he could not reconcile himself" (*HTO* 25).

Similarly, Durkheim concludes of his "sociology,"

"If there is to be a social science, we shall expect it not to merely to paraphrase the traditional prejudices of the common man but to give a new an different view of them" (*Rules* xxxvii), and later goes on to say, "he must be prepared for discoveries which will surprise and disturb him." (*Rules* xlv).

At this point it may concern the reader that the two authors are using different sets of words to describe the science we know today as sociology. Therefore, we could ask, since Durkheim is using the term "sociology" and Martineau is using the term "science of Morals," does this suggest a distinct difference between the two texts? To this I must issue a resounding, "no." Martineau is not using the term sociology, because she wrote her text in 1838, when there was no "sociology." Clearly Martineau and Durkheim are talking about the same science though - the science of human society. But how do

we know that Durkheim and Martineau are talking about the same science?

On the third page, just before the Martineau introduces the "science of morals," she calls her science,

"the science which, of all the sciences have yet opened upon men, is, perhaps, the least cultivated, the least definite, the least ascertained in itself, and the most difficult in its application" (*HTO* 15).

And then stresses the importance of the science, which she is about to outline in her book by asking,

"But what work on earth is more serious than this of giving an account of the most grave and important things which are transacted on this globe?" (*HTO* 28).

Throughout her introductory chapter Martineau indicates that most travelers have given little thought to how they arrive at their conclusions about society. For example,

"Every man seems to imagine that he can understand men at a glance; he supposes that it is enough to be among them to know what they are doing; he thinks that eyes, ears, and memory are enough for morals ... (*HTO* 14).

Clearly, the passage shows that Martineau set out to establish a science of society complete with qualified observers. She notes that this science is undeveloped, that it does not have a worthwhile method, that it is of global importance, and it is more difficult to apply than all the other sciences. In accordance with this purpose, Martineau offers her book on *How to Observe* as an alternate method to the hasty, prejudice filled, observations offered by

past travelers,

“Above all things, the traveler must not despair of good results from his observations. Because he cannot establish true conclusions by imperfect means, he is not to desist from doing any thing at all. *Because he cannot safely generalize in one way, it does not follow that there is no other way. There are methods of safe generalization of which I shall speak by-and-by*” (italics mine, HTO 20).

It should stand as a tribute to the success of Durkheim’s work that I do not feel like I have to provide evidence as to his attitude about the discipline of sociology, his motive for writing the *Rules*, and his conception of the importance of sociology; most students of sociology are well aware of them. For those who need to be reminded, Martineau’s above argument stands as an excellent mnemonic tool. But, since my intent is to show that Martineau’s “science of Morals” is equivalent to Durkheim’s sociology, I offer the following comparison.

Durkheim too, offers *Rules* as an alternative method,

A “method that is, we believe, more precise and more exactly adapted to the distinctive characteristics of social phenomena” (*Rules* lx).

Throughout the text he emphasizes the idea that sociology should be a distinct science from all others, concluding that,

“Sociology is, then, not an auxiliary of any others science; it is itself a distinct and autonomous science” (*Rules* 145).

Durkheim also believes that,

“Sociologists have given little thought to describing and defining the method they employ in the study of social facts” (*Rules* lix).

The above shows a similarity between how Martineau and Durkheim approached their subject matter, but, specifically, what did they take as their subject matter? A quick scan through *How to Observe's* table of contents reveals that Martineau focused on things (a notion I will explain shortly) and actions. Examples of “things” are birthplaces, children, health, songs, proverbs, marriage, women, grave sights, classes, religious objects, newspapers, schools, objects of persecution, and art. Examples of “actions” are suicide, progress, superstition, and crime to name a few. In *Rules* (113), Durkheim notes that collective action finds expression in legal rules (which occupies two sections in *HTO*), moral regulations (which is an entire chapter in *HTO*), popular proverbs (which Martineau deals with in at least two sections of the work), and social conventions (which Martineau covers throughout *HTO*) among others. Like Martineau, he also writes of suicide, domestic organization, marriage, punishment and economic life as the subject matter of sociology.

Call it the “science of morals” or call it “sociology.” Either way, both Martineau and Durkheim are referring to the same thing when they each use their respective terms.

On a similar note, Durkheim uses the term “scientist” and “observer” to

represent the person doing the sociological observation, Martineau uses the term “traveler” and “observer” to represent the same person. This difference also should not mislead the reader. The fact that an “observer” is an “observer” aside, Martineau uses the term traveler just like Durkheim uses the term scientist - at least with respect to their methodologies - as the person doing the observing. I believe Martineau would have used the term scientist throughout the work except it would have been counter intuitive, and turnoffish, to the purposed goal of the entire *How to Observe Series* (which, if you remember from the previous chapter, was to establish a pool of persons, laypersons and intellectuals, who were qualified to report on their foreign excursions). Durkheim, true to his goal of establishing sociology as a bonafide psychology free science, chooses the word scientist. Word choice also reflects each author's intended audience. Martineau wrote her text for widespread public distribution, while Durkheim wrote his for fellow professionals.

We have yet to define what Martineau meant by “Morals and Manners.” Hill (1989) provides us with an eloquent definition of both. He defines ‘manners’ as observable and empirical “patterned social relationships in society,” and ‘morals’ as the deeper nonmeasurable underpinnings of social construction” (Hill xvi). Martineau stresses the connection between morals and manners in the following passage:

“Manners have not been treated of separately from Morals in any of the proceeding divisions of the objects of the traveler’s observation. The

reason is, that manners are inseparable from morals, or at least, cease to have meaning when separated. Except as manifestation of morals, they have no interest, and can have no permanent existence." (*How to Observe* 222).

To Martineau, manners are empirical observations made by the observer while morals are the inferences the observer derives from observing manners. They (manners) are context dependent and change. Durkheim shares a similar approach to drawing conclusions about societies. In respect to his famous "social fact" he states,

"we assert that social facts are things but they are things by the same right as material things . . . what, precisely, is a 'thing'. . . Things include all objects of knowledge that cannot be conceived by purely mental activity, those that require for their conception data from outside the mind, from observations and experiments, those which are built up from the more external and immediately accessible characteristics to the less visible and more profound" (*Rules* xliii).

In this passage, Durkheim uses 'thing' rhetorically like Martineau uses 'moral'. Both are derived from observations, neither can be synthesized by purely mental activity, and both "conclusions" exist independent of society. Likewise, Durkheim never names a 'manner', but it is clear his social facts are "built up from the more external and immediately accessible characteristics" of society (i.e., are dependent on manners). Both authors suggest that their conclusions about society exist. In Durkheim, the latter is seen indirectly in the above passage and directly in the "first and most fundamental rule {for the observation of social facts}: consider social facts as things" (*Rules* 14). In

Martineau, the existence and autonomy of morals appear in the above passage where she says that manners cannot have a “permanent existence” - only morals can. Durkheim points out that social facts are things that “the most important characteristic . . . is the impossibility of its modification by a simple effort of the will” (*Rules* 28). There is little difference, in practice and in application, between Durkheim’s ‘social fact’ and Martineau’s ‘moral’.

Any good methodology will tell us important things about the observer. Both authors agree that observers should be specially trained in sociological methods. This was implied in the passages above and stated in Durkheim’s “Authors Preface to the First Edition,” and Martineau’s “Requisites for Observation” - “The observer of Men and Manners stands as much in need of intellectual preparation as any other student.” (*HTO* 13-14). With typical positivism each author points out that the observer must begin his/her discovery with a clear mind - free from prejudice - and a predefined problem to solve. After defining the problem each author tells us the correct way to observe social behavior. Both authors stress that sociological facts cannot be measured with psychological methods. For Durkheim this is a critical argument which not only defines him methodologically, but with which he dissects sociology from psychology. It is also one of the larger contributions of *Rules*. Martineau, on the other hand, does not share Durkheim’s motive,¹² but

¹² Martineau wrote this text during a time when there was no “sociology” (at least no discipline of sociology). I think, Martineau had no desire to carve out a niche for herself within the social sciences. Intuitively, this makes sense because she did not, and never would have, held an academic appointment.

does share his method. Compare the following two passages - the first from Durkheim the second from Martineau:

"If we begin with the individual, we shall be able to understand nothing of what takes place in the group . . . Consequently, every time that a social phenomenon is directly explained by a psychological phenomenon we may be sure that the explanation is false . . . " (*Rules* 104).

And Durkheim continues with this thought,

"If collective life is not derived from individual life, the two are nevertheless closely related; if the latter cannot explain the former, it at least can facilitate its explanation" (*Rules* 111).

And Martineau,

"The discourse of individuals is an indispensable commentary upon the classes of national facts which the traveler has observed. To begin the work of observation with registering this private discourse, is, as has been said, useless. . . The testimony of no two {individuals} would be found to agree; and if the traveler depended upon them of his general facts, he could never furnish a record which could be trusted. But, the facts being once obtained by stronger evidence than individual testimony. . . the discourse of individuals assumes its proper value, and becomes illustrative when before it would have been only bewildering" (*How to Observe* 223).

These passages, perhaps more than any others, are important because they effectively: reject the individual as the unit of analysis, imply that group behavior is different from individual behavior, differentiate sociological methods from psychological methods, and state that generalizations based on data collected from individuals are most likely false. Finally both authors

provide a role for psychology (and psychological methods) within sociology - a sort of "methodological check." But are these the only two passages that make these points?

The fact that both authors believe that group behavior is different from individual behavior is a recurrent theme throughout both texts. We see that both authors believe that there is an external force that is not the sum of any one individual, but the product of the interaction of many minds. To Durkheim this was the "collective conscious." Martineau does not repetitively stress the influence of the collective conscious like Durkheim does, but obviously she recognizes that there exists a character that transcends the individual. Some examples are found in the following passages from Martineau, on liberty,

"the Idea of Liberty, which can only be the product of many minds" (*HTO* 193). She speaks of "prevalent virtues and vices {that} are the result of gigantic general influences" (*HTO* 51) and tells the observer that, "He must obtain at least some general idea of what the mental philosophy of the society is - not so much because mental philosophy affects the nations mind, as because it emanates from it" (*HTO* 148).

Further support for the conclusion that psychological methods should serve only as a methodological check is found in the following passage from Martineau, which is perhaps the statement that summarizes her entire methodology.

"The grand secret of wise inquiry into Morals and Manners is to begin with the study of THINGS, using the DISCOURSE OF PERSONS as a commentary upon them" (capitals NOT mine, HTO 73).¹³

Martineau goes on to qualify this statement,

"Though the facts sought by travelers relate to Persons, they may most readily be learned from *Things*. The eloquence of Institutions and Records, in which the *action of the nation is embodied and perpetuated is more comprehensive and more faithful than that of any variety of individual voices*. The voice of a whole people goes up in the silent workings of an institution, the conditions of the masses is reflected from the surface of a record. The institutions of a nation, - political, religious or social, - put evidence into the observer's hands as to its capabilities and want, *which the study of individuals could not yield in the course of a lifetime*" (italics mine, HTO 74).¹⁴

Durkheim also recognized the importance of things in sociology,

"Social facts, on the contrary, qualify far more naturally and immediately as *things*. Law is embodied in codes; the currents of daily life are recorded in statistical figures and historical monuments; fashions are preserved in costumes; and taste in works of art" (italics mine, *Rules* 30).

How important was the study of things to Durkheim's sociology?

"Consequently, we believe that, once this principle of sociological

¹³ This quotation, where Martineau uses the term "THINGS," is a perfect example of how someone might arrive at an incorrect textual interpretation that I described in the previous chapter. Initially, one might compare this passage to Durkheim's first rule, "consider social facts as THINGS." Here a THING to Martineau represents a material thing - something you can physically touch or see. Here a THING to Durkheim represents the way that you treat sociological observations. Although both Durkheim and Martineau tell us what to observe and how to treat our observations, it is not evidenced here. This idea also reinforces the idea that word counting would not have been a valid method to use in evaluating the similarities in the two texts (see chapter 6).

¹⁴ Note Martineau's use of the term "fact" in this quote.

method {*the study of things as described in the passage above*} is generally recognized and practiced, sociology will progress with a rapidity difficult to forecast from its present tardiness of development and will even overtake psychology. . ." (*Rules* 31).¹⁵

We know that Martineau went to America with the idea that she would not fall into the trap, like the Trollops had, of judging American society with English morals. In *How to Observe*, Martineau's anti-comparitive method position shines. The rejection of the comparative method is a recurrent theme throughout the work. She says in following passages,

"In short, he is to prepare himself to bring whatever he may observe to the test of some high and broad principle, and not to that of a low comparative practice. To test one people by another, is to argue within a very small segment of a circle" (*HTO* 26).

Martineau was an idealist who thought that all sociological inquiry could be ascertained with respect to the principle that every element of social life derives its importance from the relative amount of human happiness. This is a recurrent theme throughout the work and she offers many examples of it. The use of the word happiness may alarm some modern social scientists, but it should not. The purpose of Martineau's book, was to offer a methodology which travelers could use as a guide to reporting on foreign lands.

"Happiness" was philosophically necessary to differentiate the good from the bad, or for Martineau, to differentiate good and bad things about a society.

¹⁵The ironic thing about this passage from Durkheim is that Martineau "recognized and practiced" this "principle of sociological method" more than 57 years before the writing of *Rules*. Yet, no one took note.

But, if we continue to read on in this passage we see that Martineau stresses that happiness defined normatively by the individuals that comprise the study group,

“The two considerations just mentioned must be subordinated to the grand one, - the only general one, - of the relative amount of human happiness. Every element of social life derives its importance from this great consideration. The external conveniences of men, their internal emotions and affections, their social arrangements, graduate in importance precisely in proportion as they affect the *general happiness of the section of the race among whom they exist* . . . He is not to conclude unfavorably about the diet of the multitude because he sees them swallowing blubber, or scooping out watermelons, instead of regaling themselves with beef and beer. He is not to suppose their social meetings a failure because they eat with their fingers, instead of with silver forks, or touch foreheads instead of making a bow. He is not to conclude against domestic morals, on account of a diversity of methods of entering upon marriage. He might as well judge of the minute transaction of manners all over the world by what he sees in his native village. There to leave the door open or to shut it bears no relation to morals, and but little to manners, whereas, to shut the door is a cruel an act in a Hindoo hut as to leave it open in a Greenland cabin” (italics mine, HTO 25-26).

Thus Martineau is telling us that manners and morals are context dependent. Methodologically, the observer needs to first decide what the moral is and then judge the people by it (i.e., have they lived up to their morals). Happiness in this sense is how Martineau measures the *success* of a society. I believe this is similar, if not almost the same, as Durkheim’s division of the normal from the pathological. If the above passage has not convinced you, I will provide another that sounds a lot like Durkheim, which may sway you,

"A person who takes for granted that there is a universal Moral Sense among men, as unchanging as the who bestowed it, cannot reasonably explain how it was that those men were once esteemed the most virtuous who killed the most enemies in battle, while now it is considered far more noble to save life than to destroy it . . . It was once thought a great shame to live in misery, and an honor to commit suicide; while now the wisest and best men think exactly the reverse . . . there are parts of the world where mothers believe it a duty to drown their children, and that eastern potentates openly deride the King of England for having only one wife instead of one hundred" (*HTO*, 34).

With this passage, we are much closer to Durkheim. In his chapter entitled, "Rules for Distinguishing Between the Normal and the Pathological," he states,

"The principle object of all sciences of life, whether individual or social, is to define and explain the normal state and to distinguish it from its opposite" (*Rules* 74).

In *Rules*, Durkheim says that the proper method of studying a society is to "make as exact and complete a monograph of it as possible, then to compare all these monographs among themselves to see wherein they are the same and wherein they diverge, and then according to the relative importance of the similarities and divergences, to classify the peoples into groups" (*Rules* 78). I think it is fair to claim that even a novice scholar would say that Martineau's analyses of cultures (found in most of her sociological works) employs this method. And without reading anything except *How to*

Observe, one would definitely see examples of this.¹⁶

The actual method that Durkheim outlined in *Rules* is hard to decipher.¹⁷ Gane (1988) has discussed the widely accepted notion that most readers find Durkheim's method virtually unidentifiable. And although Durkheim offers us a summary of his method (*Rules* 141-146), the metaphysical feel of it makes a direct comparison between the exact methods of Durkheim and Martineau difficult. Martineau clearly delineates her method in *How to Observe*, which exist in a true sense of *How to Observe* - as a technical protocol. Regardless, there are multiple and significant similarities between Durkheim's and Martineau's texts on several levels.

¹⁶ For some examples of this see her analysis of religion, suicide, children, marriage, domestic state, class, etc.

¹⁷ Here I am referring to more of a protocol-type method (i.e., the actual execution of a sociological experiment) rather than the philosophical-type methods described above.

Chapter 8: The Chances

What began as an observation early in this thesis has grown into a serious anomaly in the history of sociology. A woman wrote a text 57 years before a man did. The texts not only had many similarities, but the similarities were major ones - ones that modern day sociologists would probably herald as defining the field of sociology - both in methods and key concepts. The chances that the man knew of the woman were great. We have every reason to believe that the anomaly occurred during a time when the ideas of women were not properly recognized by the men who adopted the ideas as theirs (Deegan 1991, Spender 1982, Hoecker-Drysdale 1992). There are no references to the woman anywhere in the man's work. Why?

In this chapter I will attempt to account for the anomaly by asking a series of "what are the chances . . . ?" questions that will examine the causes of the anomaly. As you will see, I cannot account for the exact causes of the similarities in the texts, but there are several causes that I can eliminate.

What are the chances that a "Comte Connection" explains the similarities in texts?

According to her autobiography Martineau learned of Comte and his *Positive Philosophy* in 1850 (auto v2:371), 12 years *after* the publication of *How to Observe* (1838), and 14 years *after* her trip to America (auto v2:92).

Therefore, it is impossible that the similarities in *How to Observe* and *Rules* are due to an influence of Comte on both Martineau and Durkheim.

On a similar note, it is virtually impossible that Martineau was unknowingly under the influence of Comte. Comte's *Positive Philosophy* was a series of lectures that appeared over a period of 1830 - 1842 (dates from Martindale 1981:77). Even under the remote chance that the beginning of the lectures was assimilated by some European intellectuals of the time and passed to Martineau, it is still virtually impossible that she was under his indirect influence; Martineau was in America from 1834 until 1836 and wrote *How to Observe* in 1838. If we are to assume that Comte influenced Martineau by an intermediate, that intermediate would have had to have come shortly after the beginning of the lectures.

The chances that the work of Auguste Comte influenced Martineau's America trilogy are essentially nil, which means that the chances that the "Comte Connection" adequately explains our anomaly are nil.

What are the chances that "*similar influences*" explain the similarities in texts?

The similarities in texts cannot be explained by similar influences on each author, because Martineau had no methods texts on which to base her methodology. Also, there are ample reasons to believe that Martineau's sociological methods were primarily a result of two things - *personal trial-and-error* and her *humanism*. Most likely, she did not construct her methods in response to other scientific writings of the time. Therefore it would be unwise

to claim that she and Durkheim shared similar influences. Why do I say this?

Martineau's methods had to come from within her, because in writing *How to Observe*, Martineau had no significant body of methodological knowledge with which to base or compare her methods. She was not university educated, and at this time in her career she did not have any significant exposure to the social sciences at the academic level. Her methods were primarily those of a seasoned traveler and the style and content of *How to Observe* reveals this. The simple fact that it is so difficult to pinpoint influences in her text suggests that it is unlikely that these influences were the foundation of her methods. Moreover, the **sequence** in which she made her observations and wrote *How to Observe* suggests that she primarily relied on trial-and-error experiences to construct her actual methods.¹⁸

Besides trial-and-error, Martineau's primary methodological system resulted from her humanism. Her entire method can be traced to an anti-prejudicial ideology. In *How to Observe*, Martineau repetitively stated that one culture cannot be measured with the morals of another culture. She

¹⁸Hill (1989) argues the historical importance of **sequence** noting that the initial shipboard chapter of *How to Observe* was essentially a research proposal - a guide on which Martineau based her observations and generalizations. When the chapter was expanded into a book, Martineau was forced to expand, reconsider, and possibly revise her methodology. Because Martineau had already written two books on America (*Society and Retrospect* - a total of five-volumes of observations) before she wrote the book *How to Observe*, she had the benefit of a long personal history of social science field research. Hill correctly points out that her two-year excursion of America was essentially a trial and error period under which she refined her methodology. *How to Observe* shows this. Martineau's continually intertwines her methodological position (with respect to the philosophy of observation) and her revelations of American culture. Martineau developed a method that worked for her and its success was repetitively validated by her experiences in America.

introduced the dangers of a flawed sociological measurement system - the proliferation of blatant prejudices and stereotypes - within the first few pages of *How to Observe*. Martineau constructed morals - the context dependent workings of a culture - to combat prejudicial observations. Her primary data were things, which further decreased access to prejudicial judgments by the observer - she removed the people and as a result removed the prejudice. In Martineau's system the removal of bias was accomplished by completely observing a society (i.e., having a sufficient sample size) before making generalizations. Even the idea that psychological methods could not determine the morals of a culture are rooted in the notion that morals should be free from individual prejudice. Clearly, Martineau's humanism played a major part in the construction of her methodological system. She constructed an ideological methodology purposefully and functionally.¹⁹

This is not to say that Martineau was not influenced by anyone. There are references, and some scholars claim - influences, in *How to Observe* (which I will discuss in the next section). And Martineau surely did not produce the book *tabula rosa*. But, as I will argue below, it is likely that the influences were limited to influences on *content of the book* and *not conceptual, sociological methods, outlined in the book*.

¹⁹Although for all practical purposes Martineau's methods were entirely her own, they were reactionary. Amazingly, her methodological stance was probably not triggered by major scientific figures of the time; we have every reason to believe that her methodology was a response to the Trollops, who she saw as judging Americans by English standards. In a sense, the first "substantive treatise on sociological methodology" (Hill 1989) was in effect a reaction to earlier attempts at pseudo-sociological observation making by amateurs.

In the next question we will compare Martineau's and Durkheim's influences. Right now we do not need to know anything about the influences of Durkheim. Knowing only that her methodology was "personal" in construction, we can safely argue that the chances that "similar influences" explain the similarities in texts are very small.

What are the chances that "independent development of ideas" explain the similarities in texts?

If we assume that Durkheim was not familiar with Martineau's work, the chances are good that "independent development of ideas" explains the similarities in texts.

In the previous question, I argued that Martineau's *methods* were basically "independent" in construction and were not based on the sociological methods of other scientists of the time. Now, I would like to suggest that Martineau did have influences, but those influences did not dictate her methods. If we are going to argue that the chances are strong that Martineau and Durkheim "independently developed" their ideas, we first have to show that the influences on their methods were different. And to do that, we first have to figure out what the influences were. I will start by outlining the influences on Martineau.

In her autobiography, Martineau said that *How to Observe*, the methodological portion of her American trilogy, was a "piece of tough work, which required a good deal of reading and thinking" (auto v2:118).

Unfortunately, Martineau does not tell us exactly what and who consisted of a “good deal of reading” in her autobiography. And, as Hill (1989) points out, her *How to Observe* references are few. We can only assume that the references reported in *How to Observe* reflected this reading, as Martineau specifically recalls having to do some preparatory research before this book. Who did Martineau read and what was their impact on her?

If we look for major sociological figures of the time, we find none. And, to a certain extent, we expect it. Before 1840 the field of sociology, if it existed at all, was amorphous and undefined. *How to Observe*, which Martineau wrote as a guide for laypersons, had references to non-traditional sources of social knowledge. Several times Martineau referenced fictional tales she had penned in the past (though most were rooted in nonfictional principles). More “accepted” (by today's scientific standards) references include one to Adam Smith's, *Wealth of Nations*, one to Rousseau, two to Bacon, a reference to Herschel, one to Pascal, and one to “a philosopher.”

The Martineau biographer, Hoecker-Drysdale, points out that Martineau was in contact with some major thinkers of the era - D'Eichtal, Malthus, Fox, Carpenter and had read Priestly, Montesquieu, Locke, and Lessing (1992:26). She claims that the influence of Montesquieu, Locke, and Condorcet is identifiable in *How to Observe*, *Society*, and *Retrospect* (1992:75:n2).²⁰

²⁰Hoecker-Drysdale may be more correct in saying that the ideas of other male social scientists can be identified in the work of Martineau, rather than the work of Martineau was influenced by them. In all fairness, this type of argument can rightfully be leveled against this work.

Curiously Martineau mentioned none of these authors by name in her book. We know that Martineau read Saint-Simon's *Introduction to the Scientific Studies of the 19th Century* (1808) and *Essay on the Science of Man* (1813), early in the 1830's (eight years before the book version of *How to Observe* was written), but she did not comment on the French positivistic system - or directly reference Saint-Simon either. *The strange thing is that she did reference other intellectuals whom she felt influenced her book.* And for someone who had done "a good deal of reading" before the final writing of her sociological treatise, these names are conspicuously absent?²¹ I believe that they are absent, not because Martineau was not "under their influence," but because *her methods* were not under their influence (as I argued above). Martineau may have developed a positivistic slant because of them, but the methodological construction of her sociology was clearly her's even if "early positivism" was becoming popular with intellectuals of the time. For all practical purposes, she was fully responsible for her "methodological leap."

The reason that the chances are good that Martineau and Durkheim developed their ideas independently (remember we are still assuming Durkheim did not know of Martineau) is because they did not share similar influences. I have outlined Martineau's "influences." Is there any overlap between the people who influenced her and the people who influenced him?

There are several sources that detail the influences of *Rules* (see Gane

²¹There is also a strong possibility that these authors were not part of the "good deal of reading" Martineau mentions. Martineau read most of these authors before 1832.

1988, Catlin 1938, Lukes 1985), and, for my purposes, an exhaustive review of them is not necessary here. Instead, I will point out the significant, known, influences of Durkheim and *Rules*. This should be sufficient to claim that the chances are strong that the “independent development of ideas” explains the similarities in texts (again assuming Durkheim did not know of Martineau).

Unquestionably, Comte influenced Durkheim’s *Rules*, and Durkheim freely acknowledged his debt to him (Lukes 1985:67-68). Durkheim was under the influence of Montesquieu: his thesis was on Montesquieu (Lukes 1985:60,279-82). Before the publication of *Rules*, Durkheim had published a “secondary thesis concerning the originality of Montesquieu’s contribution to method in the social sciences” (Gane 1988:27) in 1892. There is evidence in *Rules* that Durkheim drew upon his knowledge of Montesquieu; he referenced him repetitively.

Clearly Durkheim read and analyzed the work of Saint-Simon (Gane 30, 113). Most certainly his historical review of the History of Sociology in France would demand a reading of *Introduction to the Scientific Studies of the 19th Century* (1808) and *Essay on the Science of Man* (1813). Durkheim was under the influence of Spencer when he expanded Spencer’s formulation of organic society (Lukes 1985:79). Next to Comte, Spencer is perhaps the most referenced author in the *Rules*. References include Spencer’s *Principles of Sociology* (*Rules* 119). There are other authors that influenced Durkheim. These include Wundt (Catlin 1938), Espinas (Catlin 1938, Gane 1988:27, Lukes 1985), Tonnies (Catlin 1938), and even Simmel (Catlin 1938). There

are references to Bacon (*Rules* 32,79), Hobbes and Rousseau (*Rules* 121), Locke, and J.S. Mill's *System of Logic* (1846) in *Rules*.

If we compare the known references of *Rules* and *How to Observe*, we find only a small amount of overlap. Durkheim predominantly referenced post-1838 male scientists (mostly social scientists), while Martineau referenced a hodgepodge of pre-1838 social scientists and fiction authors. The only possible "similar influences" that the two could have shared were to pre-1838 sociologists (1838 was the year *How to Observe* was published). This amounts to Bacon, Montesquieu, Locke, and Saint-Simon. It is difficult to accept that either author could have constructed their methods from the ideas of these authors. Certainly, the influence of these authors is present in the texts, but I find it hard to believe the influences are responsible for either authors' methodological construction. And since most of Durkheim's significant (*Rules*) influences were to post-1938 sociologists, my claim that there is a strong chance that "independent development of ideas" explains the similarities in texts is a valid one. Also, for the purposes of this work, the above comparison supports the conclusion put forth in the previous section, that the chances that "similar influences" explain the similarities in texts are very small.

Merton (1961) points out that most scientific discoveries occur in "multiples." The history of science is full of "rediscoveries" of the same concepts. This is in opposition to truly singular discoveries, by which a discovery is made only once in the history of science. Throughout the history

of science, multiples are the rule and singularities are the exceptions. We see this with Wallace and Darwin, with Mendel and Gibbs, with Cavendish and Gauss, just to name a few (Merton 1961). My above argument coincides with Merton's suggestion that scientific discovery develops from the underlying culture of science. I have argued that both Martineau and Durkheim had an underlying scientific culture (positivism in a primitive and developed form, respectively) from which their methods developed, but their methodological ideas (i.e., their "methodological leaps") were essentially theirs. If we assume that Durkheim did not know of Martineau, the chances that the similarities in text can be explained by independent development of ideas is supported by the notion that most scientific discoveries are rediscovered many times. Although 57 years separated Martineau's and Durkheim's text, it is possible that the similarities are due to multiple and not singular discoveries.

What are the chances that a "Martineau influence" explains the similarities in texts?

In the previous section we argued that there is a strong chance that "independent development of ideas" explained the similarities in texts, *under the assumption that Durkheim did not know of Martineau*. But, we have every reason to believe that Durkheim did know of Martineau.

As argued above, both Martineau and Durkheim made a methodological

leap from the ideas of their predecessors.²² Did the ideas of Martineau help Durkheim make the methodological leap from all the other sociological ideas of his time? Certainly the textual similarities suggests that it is plausible.

As I sit here, I have no way of knowing this. To demonstrate it I would have know if Durkheim read any portion of *Society, Retrospect, or How to Observe*. Since I could not “get into Durkheim’s head,” I had to search for evidence in his work. The only problem is that I do not have access to the resources that I need, to search for the evidence necessary to argue this point either way. So, I cannot.

Despite this, there is some evidence- although circumstantial - which further mystifies our anomaly, and suggests that it is even more plausible that Durkheim read Martineau. Here I am speaking of Durkheim’s references to “travelers,”

“Thus it often happens that they {sociologists} assign the same value to the confused, hastily made observation of *travelers* as to the carefully prepared texts of history” (italics mine, *Rules* 133).

and more directly,

“ . . . attempt(s) to distinguish and classify the different family types on the basis on the literary description given us by *travelers* and historians is exposed to the danger of confusing the most diverse species and of

²²This “methodological leap” is the primary reason *Rules* has been given the accolade that it has, and is therefore evidence that Durkheim made the leap. Likewise throughout this chapter I have argued that Martineau also made a “methodological leap,” by constructing her own methods (and not expanding the ideas or “methods” of others).

bringing together the most dissimilar types” (italics mine, *Rules* 46).

and again *in apparent reference to the method employed by travelers,*

“One proves nothing when . . . one is content to show by more or less numerous examples that, in scattered cases, the facts have varied as the hypothesis demands . . . To illustrate an idea is not to demonstrate it” (italics mine, *Rules* 135).

Since Martineau’s name is not directly mentioned in Durkheim’s *Rules*, I wondered if the above quotations were not anonymous, unquoted, or implied, references to Martineau.²³ Here is what I found.

The first two quotations imply that Durkheim had a set of travelers in mind - those who made the “confused, hastily made observations of travelers,” and those who issued the “literary descriptions given us by travelers and historians.” Was it a criticism of Martineau, because if it was, the last quotation implies a knowledge of method?

The first quotation was not referenced, and the second quotation was referenced to Durkheim’s own “Introduction a la sociologie de la famille” (Durkheim 1889). A search of the French source again revealed no direct references to Martineau. As referenced, Durkheim’s criticized travelers who described families, which certainly did include Martineau, but could have been generalized to the status quo of travelers of the day (throughout *Rules*, one

²³It would not be philosophically sound to use the results from my analysis to argue that there are anonymous, unquoted, or implied references in *Rules* until it is validated by an outside source and until we have more historical evidence that Durkheim read Martineau.

gets the impression that he universally regarded all travelers in this manner). If Durkheim was directly thinking of Martineau in the above quotation, it remains to be seen.

If Durkheim read any of Martineau's American trilogy, the chances are *fair* that a "Martineau influence" explains some the similarities in texts. If not, the chances are close to *nil*. If Durkheim read (or otherwise had knowledge of) *How to Observe*, the chances are "good" that a "Martineau influence" explains the similarities in texts. All we need to know is did he read her?

So, what are the chances?

Although we currently do not know if Durkheim read Martineau's sociology, we can still argue probabilities if we allow for an assumption. To this point in my investigation, I believe that the "best and safest" explanation for our anomaly is that each author was responsible for his/her own "methodological leap" and, therefore, the probability is small Martineau influenced Durkheim's sociology. Simultaneously, I believe that, if we assume (or find) that Durkheim read Martineau's sociology, the probability is "good" that she could have influenced his "methodological leap." Although this is not a "comfortable" conclusion, I think it is the only fair one.

Chapter 9: Conclusions

The truth of the matter is that there is truth in history. We may not possess the techniques necessary to reconstruct history, but that does not change the fact that it does have truth. The critical question for this work is, have I shown that the history that I have proposed more accurately explains, corrects, or revises the history proposed by those before me?

I am afraid that I am not willing to throw out the history books based on the arguments I have put forth. This does not mean, that I do not think that I am correct; I think there is truth in my account. What it does mean is that I am not satisfied that I have definitively demonstrated, to myself, that the work of Harriet Martineau influenced that of Emile Durkheim. It should not come as a great surprise to anyone that I am unable to “definitively answer the question I set out to answer”; I stated it in the *Preface*.

Either Martineau influenced the work of Durkheim or she did not. I am proposing a “by default” conclusion. Durkheim wins by default - either Martineau did not influence him, or, we simply do not have the evidence necessary to denounce him. The former speaks for itself. The latter needs some elaboration.

There are large repositories that house the work of Martineau and Durkheim. There are many Durkheim scholars - and a few Martineau scholars - who have greater access to the authors' works than I do. My access to the

works of Harriet Martineau is limited to the biographies of Martineau, which for the most part rehash the same information about Martineau with slightly different twists, and widespread primary sources, which are mostly books that have been available since they were penned (and even those consists of only a minute fraction of the work of Martineau).

If my access to the work of Martineau is limited, my access to the work of Durkheim is even more so. Much of Durkheim's personal work is still in France and in French. Due to the inaccessibility and unavailability of important historical resources, I simply did not have the data sources that I needed to definitively state a *de facto* conclusion. I do not feel like I had access to the resources I needed to truly determine if Durkheim knew of Martineau and her work. This lack of resources leaves this project open ended. This too should not come as any great surprise; I also stated it in the *Preface*.

I feel safe in saying that I have completely exhausted the potential information from the limited resources available to me. And to a certain extent, since I only had access to well know works,²⁴ it is highly unlikely that they would have revealed what I was looking for anyway. If Martineau's name was plastered throughout the works of other sociologists, there would be no need to investigate what I have investigated. The chances are small that I would

²⁴These sources typically are major works of the authors, which means that most of them did not contain letters and informal documents - the items that would most likely suggest a knowledge of Martineau or a reading of Martineau.

come across a common Durkheimian source that contained Martineau's name in the first place. If it were likely, someone else would have already investigated it.

This thesis has documented the strong possibility that Durkheim knew of Martineau. If Durkheim read Martineau's work, it is possible that she influenced him. We may never know, but I expect that the evidence that would demonstrate a knowledge of (or a reading of) Martineau will have to come from Durkheim's personal archives. I propose that those scholars who have access to the repositories of Durkheim keep this notion in the backs of their minds as they are perusing these sites. It would not take much evidence, if a connection actually exists, to directly establish that Durkheim read, or knew of, Martineau: an entry in Durkheim's journal, a library book, a reference to Martineau or her methods in another of Durkheim's work, a letter, discussion, comment, or syllabus of Durkheim's that contained Martineau's name - almost anything.

I believe that there are important similarities between *How to Observe* and *Rules*, and I expect that future scholars will continually validate this; the overlap is that obvious. Regardless of etiology, the similarities between *How to Observe* and *Rules* at least suggest that Martineau, because of possessing a method that is like the method of an accepted standard - Durkheim, should enter sociological history as an important thinker, a solid social scientist, and a methodologist. I believe that Durkheim knew about Martineau and her work, and I hope that one day we will find evidence to support this. My personal

opinion is that it is likely that Durkheim knew of *Society in America*. We will have to wait and see if he knew of *How to Observe*. I suspect that we will find that Martineau's work influenced the French similarly to the ways that it affected the English and Americans. Future studies should explore the impact that Martineau had on the people of France.

Epilogue

I must admit that there is something that has troubled me since the inception of this thesis. Why didn't some else think of this? I wish that I knew answer to this. Perhaps the relative obscurity, and the recent rediscovery, of *How to Observe*. Perhaps others, like myself, have been "raised" to believe that Victorian women did not participate in sociology. Perhaps some scholars believe that the origins, or at least the important ones, of sociological methods have already been documented, discovered, uncovered, and recorded by Durkheim and his scholars. Perhaps the notion that Durkheim could have been influenced by a now obscure, but then highly prolific, woman in England was more than some scholars could fathom. Perhaps the connection between the two seemed so preposterous that no one but me could even imagine it. Perhaps the texts fit Merton's idea of a multiple. Whatever it is, I just hope that it is not due to apathy.

A historical anomaly catalyzed this thesis. A woman was perhaps the first person to write a sociological methodology text, yet today hardly anybody knows it. I suspect that Martineau influenced the social sciences in ways that we will never know. Hoecker-Drysdale reminds us that, "evidence is emerging that her work was read by numerous people whose names became more prominent than hers in sociology in Europe and America" (1992:168). Throughout this thesis I have argued that Martineau was an important figure in

nineteenth century sociology and deserves proper credit for her contributions to the discipline of sociology. She deserves a place in our textbooks and our classrooms.

Some readers may still think that the primary goal of this thesis was to prove that Martineau influenced Durkheim, but it was not. The exploration was the goal. I must admit that it would have been exhilarating to prove that “the founding father of sociological methodology” is guilty of “nineteenth century scientific misconduct,” but I did not feel, or prove, that. And to be honest, my “gut” tells me it is still a long shot. This should not tarnish Martineau’s accomplishments. To the contrary, *How to Observe* stands alone as an intellectual success irrespective of gender or influence. So, even if I did not prove that Martineau influenced Durkheim, this thesis has achieved what I hoped it would.

We exclude women from science in two ways. Historically, fields like physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, and sociology, excluded women by not providing the opportunity for women to participate in them, i.e., occupational exclusion. The social sciences, on the other hand, are blessed with an additional type of exclusion. To a limited extent those women who were allowed to “participate” in social sciences, had their ideas excluded, i.e., idea exclusion (for numerous examples see Spender 1982 and Deegan 1991). I believe the latter was the case for Martineau. Clearly she was a practicing social scientist, but today we hardly remember her name, much less her ideas. Obviously, we continue to accept “idea exclusion” in the social

sciences as normal. I stand as a perfect example of it. If it were not for the fact that I wrote my thesis about Martineau, I would graduate with an M.S. degree in sociology not knowing the name of one single female “classical” sociologist.

This thesis was an unconventional one. I wrote it in a style that was as interesting and as easy to read as I knew how to. Whether I was successful is debatable. Although I am by no way validating myself by association, this was a principle that Martineau herself would have appreciated. In discovering Martineau’s life and work, I have discovered things about sociology that I would have never discovered if it were not for this project.

*I imagine that I will always wonder what Emile Durkheim thought about
Harriet Martineau.*

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Appendix A: Important Historical Dates

1802 Birth of Harriet Martineau

1830 Comte begins Positive Philosophy

1834 Martineau leaves for America

Pens the Chapter on *How to Observe* for the Ker book

1836 Returns to England

1837 Martineau writes *Society in America*

1838 Martineau writes Retrospect of Western Travel

1838 Martineau expands *How to Observe* into a book

1838(9) *Society in America* Translated into French

1842 Comte ends Positive Philosophy

1850 Martineau finds the work of Comte

1853 Martineau Translates the Positive Philosophy

1853-4 Martineau and Comte Correspond with each other

1857 Death of Comte

1858 Birth of Emile Durkheim

1871-72 Positive Philosophy is retranslated into French (Bibliotheque Nationale)

1876 Death of Martineau

1880 Durkheim Reads Comte

1895 *Rules* Published

1897 *Suicide* Published

1916 Death of Durkheim

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