

As you read *The Worldly Philosophers* and learn about Malthus and Ricardo, please keep an eye out for the Corn Laws. The debate over the Corn Laws is a key episode in the history of economics.

Also, Heilbroner mentions Maria Edgeworth and suggests she was the first woman to express opinions on economics. Her nephew, F.Y. Edgeworth (perhaps you've heard of the Edgeworth Box diagram in economics?) was a famous mathematical economist and will appear in *The Worldly Philosophers* in an upcoming chapter.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria\\_Edgeworth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria_Edgeworth)

On p. 86, Heilbroner mentions that Malthus had a speech impediment, but here is a better description:

Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834) was arguably the most famous social scientist of the nineteenth century, on the basis of his *Essay on the Principle of Population, As It Affects the Future*

*Improvement of Society* (1798). The Reverend Malthus was variously described as cheerful, with a mild and easy temper. The literary editor Sydney Smith wrote this description to a friend:

Philosopher Malthus came here last week. I got an agreeable party for him of unmarried people. There was only one lady who had had a child; but he is a good-natured man, and, if there are no appearances of approaching fertility, is civil to every lady. . . . Malthus is a real moral philosopher, and I would almost consent to speak as inarticulately, if I could think and act as wisely. And the author Harriet Martineau wrote of him:

A more simple-minded, virtuous man, full of domestic affections, than Mr. Malthus could not be found in all England. . . . Of all people in the world, Malthus was the one whom I heard quite easily without my trumpet;—Malthus, whose speech was hopelessly imperfect, from defect in the palate. I dreaded meeting him. I was delightfully wrong. His first sentence—slow and gentle with the vowels sonorous, whatever might become of the consonants—set me at ease completely. I soon found that the vowels are in fact all that I ever hear. His worst letter was *L*, and when I had no difficulty with his question—“Would not you like to have a look at the lakes of Killarney?” I had nothing more to fear.

In 1804, Malthus became the recipient of the earliest chair in political economy to be established in England, with no less a prodigious title than “Professor of General History, Politics, Commerce, and Finance.”

Source: Meier, *Biography of a Subject: An Evolution of Development Economics*

Harriet Martineau might have been the first woman sociologist.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet\\_Martineau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Martineau)