

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

*What was so enlightened about it
anyway?*

What was the Enlightenment?

- **The Enlightenment** or Age of Reason is an era from the 1620s to the 1780s in which philosophers in Western Europe emphasized reason, analysis, and individualism and challenged traditional authority (absolute monarchy, etc.).
- It came about after the **Scientific Revolution** (1550-1700). As ideas about astronomy, math and science changed, people began to question politics, government and other aspects of society.

What is Enlightenment?



IMMANUEL KANT
From a portrait by
Gottlieb Schickel

Immanuel Kant

“Enlightenment is man’s leaving his self-caused immaturity. Immaturity is the incapacity to use one’s intelligence without the guidance of another. .. [It] is self-caused...by lack of determination and courage to use one’s intelligence without being guided by another. ..

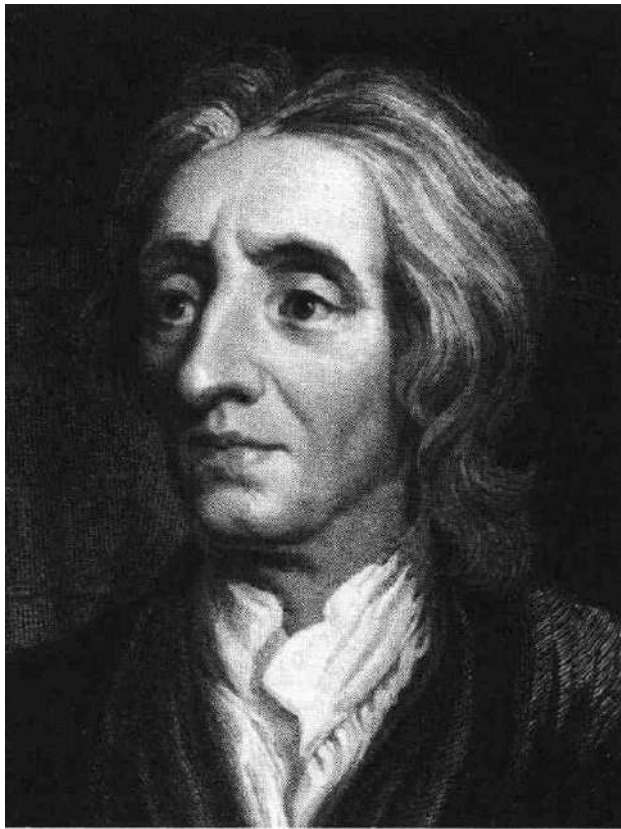
It is so easy to be a minor! If I have a book which provides meaning for me, a pastor who has conscience for me, a doctor who will judge my diet for me and so on, then I do not need to exert myself. I do not have any need to think...He has even become fond of it [immaturity] and for the time being is incapable of employing his own intelligence, because he has never been allowed to make the attempt...

All that is required for this enlightenment is *freedom*; and particularly... the freedom for man to make *public use* of his reason in all matters.

How does Kant define “immaturity”? What causes it? What does he mean by “public use of reason”? What are the implications (consequences) of his message?

The Philosophes presented new ideas on government, justice and equality

Locke's Contract ...



What is the main idea?

....Political power is that power, which every man having in the state of nature, has given up into the hands of the society, and therein to the governors, whom the society hath set over itself, with this express or tacit trust, that it shall be employed for their good, and the preservation of their property: now this power, which every man has in the state of nature, and which he parts with to the society...is to use such means, for the preserving of his own property...; and to punish the breach of the law of nature in others... this power...can have no other end or measure,...when in the hands of the magistrate, but to preserve the members of that society in their lives, liberties, and possessions; and so cannot be an absolute, arbitrary power over their lives and fortunes... but a power to make laws, and annex such penalties to them... And this power has its original only from compact, and agreement, and the mutual consent of those who make up the community....

more from Locke...

These are the bounds...set to the legislative power: first, they are to govern by promulgated established laws...secondly, these laws also ought to be designed for no other end ultimately, but the good the people. Thirdly, They must not raise taxes on the property of the people, without the consent of the people, given by themselves, or their deputies...Fourthly, The legislative neither must nor can transfer the power of making laws to anybody else,...but where the people have... Whenever the legislators endeavor to take away, and destroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to slavery under arbitrary power, they put themselves into a state of war with the people... Whensoever therefore the legislative shall transgress this fundamental rule of society; and ...endeavor to grasp themselves, or put into the hands of any other, an absolute power over the lives, liberties, and estates of the people; by this breach of trust they forfeit the power the people had put into their hands...and it devolves to the people, who have a right to resume their original liberty, and, by the establishment of a new legislative, provide for their own safety and security, which is the end for which they are in society.”

- -- John Locke, “Second Treatise on Government.” (1690) Marvin Perry, et al, Eds. Sources of the Western Tradition, 3rd Ed., Vol. II: From the Renaissance to the Present. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1995.

Hobbes' Social Contract



What's so revolutionary about Hobbes' call for absolute monarchy?

"NATURE hath made men so equal in the faculties of body and mind as that, though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body or of quicker mind than another, yet when all is reckoned together the difference between man and man is not so considerable as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit to which another may not pretend as well as he. Hereby it is manifest that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war as is of every man against every man. The only way to erect...a Common Power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of [foreigners] and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them,... is to conferre all their power and strength upon one Man, or upon one Assembly of men, that may reduce all their Wills, unto one Will...and therein to submit their Wills... and their Judgements, to his Judgement. This is ... made by Covenant ...and he that carryeth this Person, is called SOVERAIGNE [Monarch] ... and therefore, they that are subjects to a Monarch [soveraigne], cannot without his leave cast off Monarchy, and return to the confusion of a disunited Multitude..." –

--Hobbes, "Leviathan" (1651)

Rousseau's "Social Contract"

"Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains...The problem is to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before." This is the fundamental problem of which the Social Contract provides the solution. The clauses of this contract...properly understood, may be reduced to one – the total alienation of each associate, together with all his rights, to the whole community; for... "each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will, and, in our corporate capacity, we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole..." In order then that the social compact may not be an empty formula, it tacitly includes the undertaking, which alone can give force to the rest, that whoever refuses to obey the general will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body. .. the general will alone can direct the State according to the object for which it was instituted, i.e., the common good...."

-- Jean Jacques Rousseau, "The Social Contract" (1762)



More on the structure of government...

In every government there are three sorts of power: the legislative; the executive, in respect to things dependent on the law of nations; and the executive, in regard to things that depend on the civil law.

By virtue of the first, the prince or magistrate enacts temporary or perpetual laws, and amends or abrogate those that have been already enacted. By the second, he makes peace or war, sends or receives embassies; establishes the public security, and provides against invasions. By the third, he punishes criminals, or determines the disputes that arise between individuals. The latter we shall call the judiciary power, and the other simply the executive power of the state.

There would be an end of everything, were the same man, or the same body, whether of the nobles or of the people to exercise those three powers....

--Baron de Montesquieu, "The Spirit of the Laws,"



Why are 3 branches of government necessary? How do these insure better government?

On Justice...



*What is Beccaria criticizing?
How is this “revolutionary”?*

“[Despite] the productive enlightenment of this age...very few persons have studied and fought against the cruelty of punishments and the irregularities of criminal procedures...

Is the death penalty really useful and necessary for the security and good order of society? Are torture and torments just, and do they attain the end for which laws are instituted?

No man can be called guilty before a judge has sentenced him, nor can society deprive him of public protection before it has been decided that he has in fact violated the conditions under which such protection was accorded him. What right is it, then, if not simply that of might, which empowers a judge to inflict punishment on a citizen while doubt still remains as to his guilt or innocence?

The sensitive innocent man will then confess himself guilty when he believes that, by so doing, he can put an end to his torment. ..”

--Caesare Beccaria, “On Crime and Punishments.”

“What is tolerance?...We are all full of weakness and errors; let us mutually pardon our follies. This is the last law of nature....Of all religions, the Christian ought doubtless to inspire the most tolerance, although hitherto the Christians have been the most intolerant of all men. Tolerance has never brought civil war; intolerance has covered the earth with carnage...Fanaticism is to superstition what delirium is to fever, what rage is to anger. What is a persecutor? He whose wounded pride and furious fanaticism arouse princes and magistrates against innocent men, whose only crime is that of being of a different opinion.”

-- Voltaire, “Treatise on Tolerance” (1763)

*Why would these ideas land
Voltaire in prison in the 1700s?*



On Tolerance...

On equality...



What logic does Wollstonecraft present to argue for women's equality?

"Consider--I address you as a legislator--whether, when men contend for their freedom, and to be allowed to judge for themselves respecting their own happiness, it be not inconsistent and unjust to subjugate women, even though you firmly believe that you are acting in the manner best calculated to promote their happiness ? Who made man the exclusive judge, if woman partake with him of the gift of reason?

But if women are to be excluded, without having a voice, from participation of the natural rights of mankind, prove first, to ward off the charge of injustice and inconsistency, that they want reason, else this flaw in your NEW CONSTITUTION will ever show that man must, in some shape, act like a tyrant, and tyranny, in whatever part of society it rears its brazen front, will ever undermine morality.

The adoption of this system of inequality never was the result of deliberation, or forethought, or any social ideas, or any notion whatever of what conduced to the benefit of humanity or the good order of society. It arose simply from the fact that from the very earliest twilight of human society, every woman (owing to the value attached to her by men, combined with her inferiority in muscular strength) was found in a state of bondage to some man...

Under whatever conditions, and within whatever limits, men are admitted to the suffrage, there is not a shadow of justification for not admitting women under the same. .."

--Mary Wollstonecraft, "Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792)

Philosophe	Main Idea – Social Contract	How is this “enlightened” or new?
Kant		
Locke		
Hobbes		
Rousseau		
Wolstonecraft		
Voltaire		
Montesquieu		
Beccaria		